**Notes from “Advising Students on Studying Abroad”**

**Delivered by David Hawkins**

**Background**

* David is a CIS affiliated consultant who works as an independent advisor connecting and supporting students with applications systems beyond the UK
* In addition to this he runs a podcast on University Admissions

**Overview of studying abroad**

**Why is this becoming more relevant?**

* An increasing number of International universities are attending UK fairs
* Particularly in independent schools, 15-20% of students might be applying to at least one non-UK university
* There is currently a campaign to make the student loan portable beyond the UK
* With increasing competition, should UK universities be thinking carefully about how to make a coherent case for studying in the UK?

**How does the UK compare with international universities, particularly in the US?**

UK

* In the UK for most courses students need to specialise early, whereas in many other countries they won’t apply for a specific subject. This can be attractive for students who have diverse interests or don’t yet know what they’d like to study in depth.
* In the UK lectures and exams dominate and grades are important in the application process. In other countries wider factors are taken into account.
* Around the world most universities don’t have a centralised system, so UCAS is more of an exception to the rule.

USA

* Students will just apply to the University, without specifying a course.
* The liberal arts courses mean students can pick and choose from different subject areas. They’ll major in one subject, but this could only make up a third of their subject studies.
* Assessment is usually continuous.
* There are around 4,500 universities in the US and around 700 of those use the common app for applications. Through the common app students can apply to up to 20 universities at a time, though in practice many will apply to less (8 on average) as the process can be time consuming. There are common questions but each University they select might have University specific questions included too.
* Demonstrated interest in the University and legacy can be taken into account, along with scores in the SAT and ACT tests.
* In the common app students complete a general essay. This is broadly equivalent to the personal statement, but is not designed to be an academic essay. In the general essay students answer three questions from a choice of seven.

**Entry Requirements – examples outside the UK**

* David flagged that some of the top ranking universities globally actually have lower academic requirements than you might expect. These can be attractive options for students who want to study at a top university but are perhaps not getting the grades to study at a well ranked UK university.
* One example was Leiden University College The Hague where entry requirements are three Cs **but** students need to get good grades in their first year there to continue.

**Finances**

* At the moment the UK student loan is not portable
* The UK repayment system is fairly unusual in an international context
* US universities have massive endowments which means that at a University like NYU might charge up to $80,000 but the course could also be free for the ‘right’ student