

UTS response to *Consultation paper: Next steps on improving the transparency of higher education admissions*

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the *Consultation paper: Next steps on improving the transparency of higher education admissions*. UTS generally supports higher levels of admissions transparency where the information is meaningful and supports prospective students' decision-making. We agree with many of the proposals put forward in the consultation paper. However, we oppose the proposal to publish ATARs for admissions based partially or wholly on non-ATAR criteria. This information is most likely to confuse and mislead prospective students as they have no basis to compare their non-ATAR performance with other applicants.

Specific responses to the consultation questions are provided below.

Inclusion of postgraduate courses

- 1 Do you agree with the proposed two applicant grouping to target admission information to prospective postgraduate students?**
 - a. Completed higher education study, bachelor degree level or above**
 - b. Work, study and/or life experience.**

UTS supports the proposed applicant grouping for postgraduate student admissions. This information aligns to UTS admission criteria and is readily available in our systems.

- 2 What are your views on the proposed inclusion of information about the availability and allocation of Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) in postgraduate courses, which some students have indicated may assist in choosing the best course for their needs?**

UTS supports the publication of information on the availability of Commonwealth Supported Places in postgraduate courses. UTS currently provides this information for the small number of postgraduate courses that have CSPs available.

Inclusion of information for international students

- 3 Do you agree with the proposed approach of integrating the minimum required admission information to enable course comparisons for international students without creating a separate applicant grouping?**

UTS is of the view that the complete integration of admission information may be confusing or misleading for prospective students. While much of the admission information is the same, language can be tailored to the specific audience and additional information provided as required if the information sets are separate. A requirement for prospective students to have to swap back and forth between relevant information sets or identify which information is relevant and which is not is likely to lead to misunderstanding and possibly incorrect decision-making by prospective students.

- 4 Is it appropriate and workable to separate out different cohorts of international students in the student profile tables on the same applicant grouping basis as domestic students (higher education, VET, Recent Secondary, work and life experience, etc.), rather than a single figure for international students as in the current information sets?**
NOTE: If you are a provider, does your institution have data that would enable this approach?

While not opposed in principle to this proposal, the information proposed to be included for cohorts of international students would require a disproportionate amount of work for UTS to provide.

International student admission data is recorded in a number of different application channels that are not linked to our enrolled student system.

5 What are your views on the proposed:

a) inclusion of offshore students in enrolment profiles where they are studying and engaging with onshore students on an equal basis; and

Tracking and publishing information about students studying offshore as part of an onshore class is currently volatile given the continuing Covid restrictions in some countries. We continue to experience students moving between Australia and their home countries depending on their ability to travel at any particular point in time. We do not see the value in adding this information at this point given the likely continuing changes in students' status.

b) exclusion of purely offshore course offerings, for instance courses offered at an overseas campus, as out of scope for this exercise?

UTS agrees that courses offered at an overseas campus should be out of scope for this exercise. Offshore arrangements may be quite varied in their structure, particularly when conducted with third parties and do not readily align with onshore course arrangements.

Enhancing the reporting of ATARs for places offered to recent secondary students

6 Do you see any difficulty with including the ATARs of all recent secondary students offered a place in the ATAR profile table for a course?

UTS strongly opposes the publication of ATARs for applicants who have been admitted partially or fully on non-ATAR criteria. In this context, ATAR information would be extremely misleading as the range of possible ATARs and their relative contribution to the admission decision cannot be articulated in the admissions transparency structure. The provision of this information would be misleading to students as they have no capacity to assess the non-ATAR contribution in the context of their own circumstances.

Overall feedback on admissions transparency initiatives

7 Are there any other aspects of either the previously agreed common terminology definitions or information set specifications or the implementation of admissions transparency that you wish to provide comment on?

As noted above, UTS opposes the publication of ATARs when not the sole criteria for admission. In that context, we are of the view that "ATAR-related indicators" is a misleading category of information when the basis of admission may not include the ATAR at all.

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