

MAY 2021

UCAS MEDIA INSIGHT NEWSLETTER

All data from April 2021



Welcome to May's newsletter

As we write this, there is a sense of restoration in the air. The student atmosphere is trickling back into university towns, and they are cautiously welcoming back something like the status quo. Upper sixth pupils gear up for their final hometown summer, and freshers put a strange old first year behind them.

Many of the prophesied consequences of the pandemic on higher education have not yet come to fruition. Compared to last year, we can see significant growth in 2022's potential applicant pool, and chances to learn from a year of virtual open days, which may yet become a staple of the cycle. Plus, it's crunch time for the 2021 intake, with opportunities still available for those yet unplaced.

Let's get started.

What are students doing?

ON UCAS.COM

WHO'S ENGAGING WITH UCAS?

TOP SEARCHED FOR SUBJECTS ON UCAS SEARCH IN APRIL 2021

Position for
Apr 2021

▲ ¹	1	Medicine
▲ ²	2	Law
=	3	Psychology
▼ ³	4	Nursing
=	5	Midwifery

▲ ⁴	6	Business
▼ ¹	7	Physiotherapy
▲ ³	8	Computer science
=	9	Economics
▲ ⁴	10	Social work

▲
Change in
position since
Apr 2020

WHO'S ENGAGING WITH UCAS?

UCAS.COM USERS: TOP 10 NON-UK COUNTRIES IN APRIL 2021



Position for
Apr 2021

=	1	United States
=	2	India
=	3	China
=	4	Ireland
▲ ²	5	Nigeria
▲ ²	6	Pakistan
▼ ²	7	Hong Kong
▲ ²	8	South Africa
▲ ³	9	United Arab Emirates
▼ ¹	10	Spain

Change in
position since
Apr 2020

WHO'S ENGAGING WITH UCAS?

UCAS.COM USERS: TOP 10 UK CITIES IN APRIL 2021



Position for
Apr 2021
▼

=	1	London
▲ ¹	2	Birmingham
▲ ²	3	Glasgow
=	4	Manchester
▲ ¹	5	Bristol
▲ ¹	6	Leeds
▼ ⁵	7	Newcastle
▲ ¹	8	Nottingham
▲ ¹	9	Edinburgh
▼ ²	10	Liverpool

▲
Change in position
since Apr 2020

POSTCODE DISTRICT MAP



WHO'S ENGAGING WITH UCAS?

TOP UG PAGES ON UCAS.COM IN APRIL 2021

Position for
Apr 2021



=	1	Track your UCAS application
=	2	Replying to your UCAS Undergraduate offers
▲ ⁵	3	Applying to university
▼ ¹	4	How to write a UCAS Undergraduate personal statement
▲ ¹	5	When to apply

▲
Change in
position since
Apr 2020

Audience in focus

Potential applicant database (PAD)

POTENTIAL APPLICANT DATABASE

DID YOU KNOW?

Our potential applicant database (PAD), consisting of potential applicants interested in starting university in 2022, is up **11%** from this point last year.

We now have over:

100K

potential applicants opted in to receive Education emails.

Please get in touch with your account manager if you'd like to contact this audience.

VIRTUAL OPEN DAYS

In one of our recent focus groups, we asked students to tell us what they particularly liked about any previous virtual open days they'd attended.

Q: *Thinking about the VO's you have been to what did you like, did anything 'wow' you?*

”
“

virtual tour of the University

”
“

speaking to students, teachers of the course that was of interest and tours

”
“

listening to students doing my course, looking at the work they did, placement/year abroad

”
“

the presentations were really good as they featured current students, q&a, they sent out a mini welcome pack a few days before, was able to talk to someone individually about applying

”
“

I enjoyed having a question and answer session with a student on the course I was applying for. I liked when they were course-specific rather than university-wide

Key words and phrases mentioned for this question included:

TALKING TO STUDENTS

TALKING TO LECTURERS

VIRTUAL TOUR

Q&A

VIRTUAL OPEN DAYS

Focus group insight

Q: *Have you received a great communication about a virtual open day - why was it great?*

”
“

very aesthetic views of campus and its facilities attracted me

”
“

the main thing was how interesting the actual course I was looking at was

”
“

the university was already appealing to me in itself so I decided to. The campus was also really beautiful

”
“

the students outside the school building smiling and looking really happy and the aesthetic look of the campus

”
“

the best open day I attended was an email invitation with a series of smaller meetings to sign up for so I could tailor the day to my course and what I wanted to know

Key words and phrases mentioned for this question included:

AESTHETIC
CAMPUS/BUILDING

COURSE OF INTEREST

VIRTUAL OPEN DAYS

Focus group insight

Q: *What info might you find useful over the next few months?*

”
“

The effects of covid on the start of the year

”
“

definitely knowing the extent of physical/ online classes

”
“

life like at uni, what my specific course timetables is like

”
“

Covid regulations and the type of learning there will be. If online learning happens the quality of this learning

”
“

what life will be like, changes because of covid, freshers timetable and opportunities before your course starts.

Key words and phrases mentioned for this question included:

COVID

LIFE AT UNI

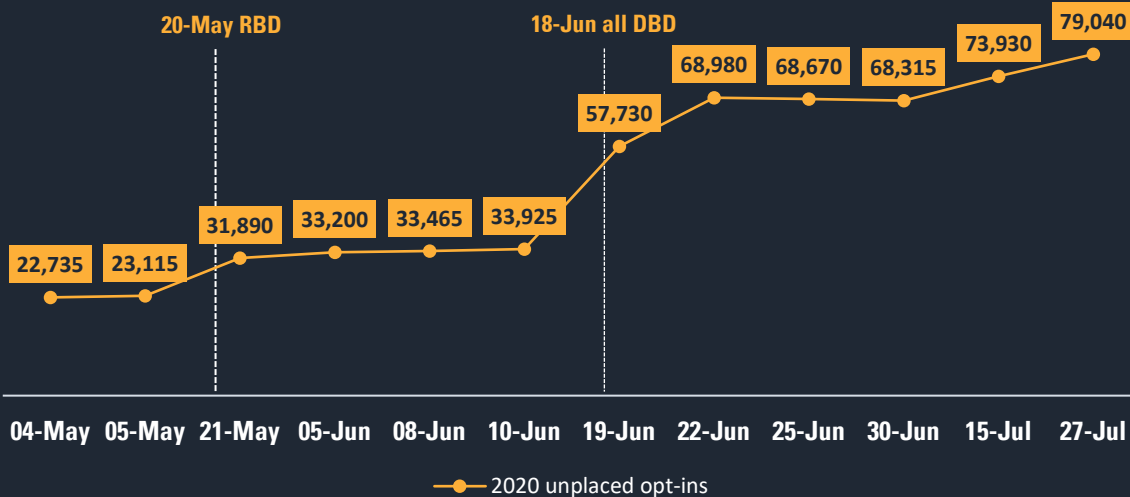
WHAT THE START OF
THE YEAR WILL LOOK
LIKE (ANY COVID-
RELATED
RESTRICTIONS)

Audience in focus

Extra unplaced applicants

EXTRA UNPLACED APPLICANTS

2020 UNPLACED OPT-INS



After the DBD (decline by default) deadline in mid June, our Extra unplaced opt-ins increased by **70%** last year.

As of the 10 May 2021, we currently have **28.7k** unplaced applicants opted in to receive communications.

EXTRA UNPLACED APPLICANTS

2021 OPT-INS: TOP TEN SUBJECTS AS OF 10/05/2021

1	CAH01-01	Medicine and dentistry
2	CAH02-01	Nursing
3	CAH02-03	Subjects allied to medicine not otherwise specified
4	CAH21-01	Creative arts and design
5	CAH22-01	Education and training
6	CAH17-01	Business and management
7	CAH15-04	Health and social care
8	CAH11-01	Computing
9	CAH10-01	Engineering
10	CAH05-01	Veterinary sciences



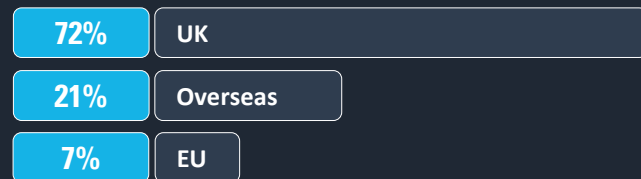
EXTRA UNPLACED APPLICANTS

2021 OPT-INS: DOMICILE



Region of domicile (UK)

Domicile



It is a welcome sight to see green arrows and upward trajectories on our dashboards.

The uptick of the PAD22 audience is a sign of hope for the sector, giving marketing and recruitment departments a healthy database of leads. And a year's worth of accelerated insight in remote learning and virtual open days may have come at just the right time for a sector so dependent on global demand.

As yet we don't know the long term effects that 18 months of economic pressure and difficulty will come to mean for higher education, but here are already some reasons to be optimistic about 2022 recruitment.

We'll be back next month, with more from May 2021.

If you want to combine this snapshot, the full insight of UCAS, and the reach of UCAS Media, we're only a [click away](#).

Get in touch

For further information and insights contact your UCAS Media account manager or email us at ucasmediaeducationteam@ucas.ac.uk.