Verification Team

The UCAS Verification Team are tasked with the prevention and detection of fraud in applications and similarity in personal statements. All applications are screened by our databases and any potentially fraudulent applications are investigated.

Having a centralised fraud detection service helps protect all providers from fraudulent applications. We are available to support you in making informed decisions by ensuring applications are true, complete and accurate and that places are not gained by deception. Please stay alert to possible fraudulent activity and if you identify anything that needs our investigation, please get in contact with us. We are available by email at verification@ucas.ac.uk or phone on 01242 545494.

If an application is brought to our attention:
- ✓ We will write to the applicant and/or the referee seeking to establish the veracity of the application.
- ✓ We may ask the applicant to provide us with original, or photocopies, of qualification certificates declared in their application.
- ✓ We will use our knowledge and experience to check whether UK and international qualification certificates are genuine.
- ✓ We work with awarding bodies and other issuing authorities to verify declared qualifications.
- ✓ We will check for incorrectly declared qualifications as well as omitted qualifications.
- ✓ We may check for omitted previous attendance.
- ✓ We may check the authenticity of IELTS Test Report Forms (TRF)
- ✓ We will seek to check the authenticity of the reference provided on the application.

Unfortunately, we are unable to investigate:
- 'Fitness to practice' or professional standards
- Criminal convictions or DBS checks
- Tier 4 status or residency issues
- Information that is not included in the application, i.e. additional references

There are 4 possible outcomes from an investigation:
- The application is cancelled for fraud. Examples include, if a fraudulent reference is provided or if the applicant provides non-genuine qualification certificates/documentation or a non-genuine IELTS TRF.
- The application is suspended due to the applicant not responding to verification enquiries by the set date, or not providing the requested

documentation by the set date. The case may be reopened if the required documentation is received at a later date in the cycle.
- The application is cleared and no further action is taken.
- The application is amended so that it is true, complete and accurate, and is then cleared.

We will always inform the applicant's choices of our findings and any amendments made to an application so that you can make an informed decision based on accurate information.

Similarity in personal statements:
Each incoming personal statement is compared against a library of personal statements already in the UCAS system, and a library of sample statements collected from a variety of websites and other sources. After it has been processed, each new personal statement is added to the library.

Any statements showing a potential level of similarity of greater than 30% will be reviewed by members of the Verification Team and either cleared or marked as containing similarity. The Verification Team will also ensure that personal statements have not matched with a previous personal statement from the same applicant.

For those personal statements considered to contain a sufficient degree of similarity to the matched source(s), automatic emails are generated to:
- the applicant - referring them to My Application where they will be able to view a copy of the colour-coded transcript of their personal statement
- the applicant's choice(s) - with a link to the colour-coded transcript

A Similarity Detection Service report will be emailed to the Similarity Contact at all course providers listed in the application. This email will contain a link (active for 28 days) to the colour-coded transcript of the personal statement where we have identified a sufficient degree of similarity. The Similarity Detection Service report is designed to provide admissions staff and decision makers with additional information to be considered when making decisions about applicants. The decision about what action, if any, to take regarding notified cases rests with the individual providers. UCAS is not involved in the decision-making process.

If you are not receiving Similarity Detection Service reports, please contact the Verification Team who can set up a Similarity Contact for you.

If the link to the colour-coded transcript has expired, please contact the Verification Team and we can get this re-activated for you.

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