

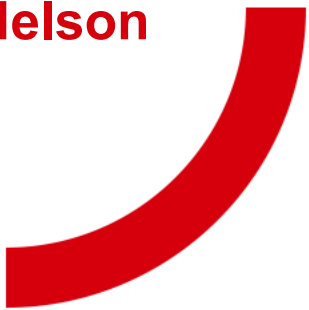


Clearing Reimagined at Queen's University Belfast

Digital Transformation Team

Michelle McGaughey and Jessica Nelson

30 November 2023



Clearing

- During Clearing, universities advertise courses that have availability to prospective students, matching applicants to places.
- The opening of Clearing on A-Level results day is one of the most impactful periods on University business but also the most stressful for staff.
- Add the high monetary impact that a successful campaign can bring, and the stress only intensifies.



Clearing before Covid-19



Clearing after Covid-19



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Admissions Enquiry Form 2022

This Enquiry Form should only be completed on or after Thursday 18 August.

Please note, only one Enquiry Form should be submitted per applicant.

While every effort will be made to accommodate the wishes of applicants, the outcome of any request will be dependent on vacancies being available and also on your academic qualifications.

* Required

Student Details

1. For tuition fees purposes I am classified as *

☐ NI (including EU Nationals who have Settled or Pre-settled status in Northern Ireland)

☐ GB and Islands (including EU Nationals who have Settled or Pre-settled status in GB and Islands)

☐ ROI

☐ EU (EU Nationals who do not have Settled or Pre-settled status in the UK)

☐ International (not EU or GB)

Next





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Outbound Calls

Search List

Info

Qualification

Offers

UCAS ID	Fees Classification
NI	Second Name
First Name	Email
Mobile Number	Assigned To
Workflow Status	
Requires Outbound Call	

Assign To Me



**QUEEN'S
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Clearing

Search Enquiries

Info

Qualifications

Offers

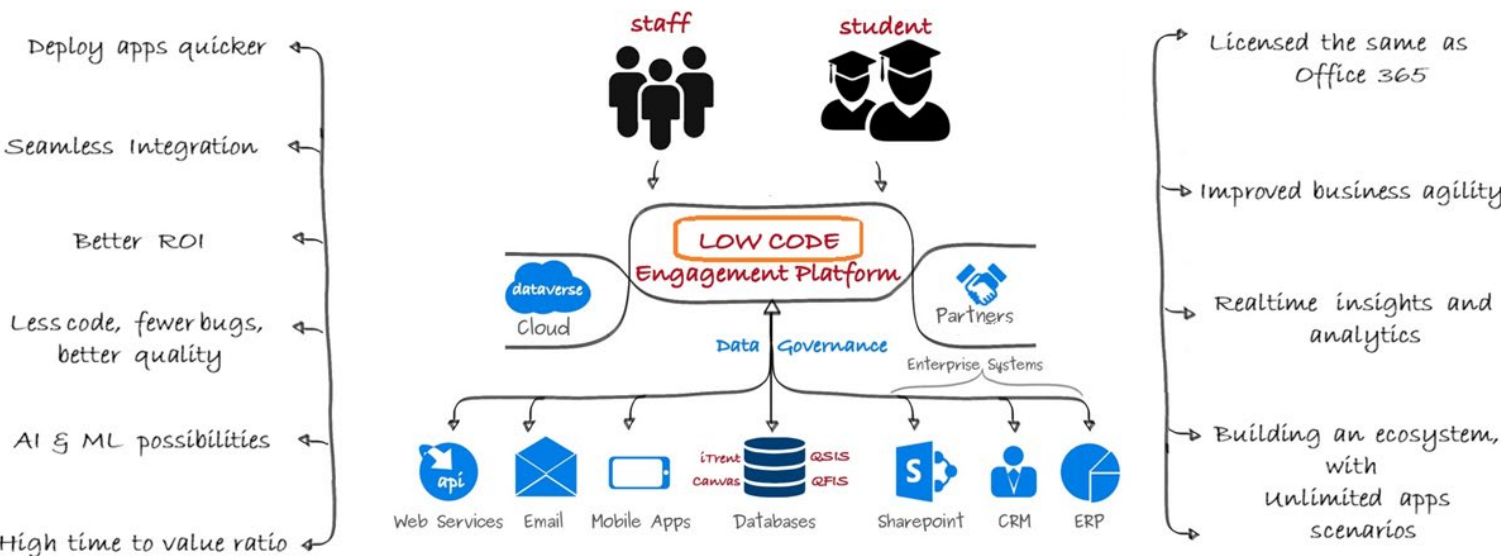
Transcript

Enquiry Type	In Clearing
Change Course	
Fees Classification	UCAS ID
EU	
First Name	Surname
Contact Number	Email
Workflow Status	App Assignment
Pending First Choice Decision	

Assign To Me

The new Application Management System (AMS) is one of the key projects in the Queen’s Digital Transformation Roadmap, aligned to the Strategy 2030 objectives.

The low-code approach has allowed us to develop systems internally with the support of a delivery partner, enabled the development of a Queen’s engagement platform where staff and students can pull and push relevant information and managers can access real-time data for decision-making.



The Platform



Application Management System

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Applications, Home and International



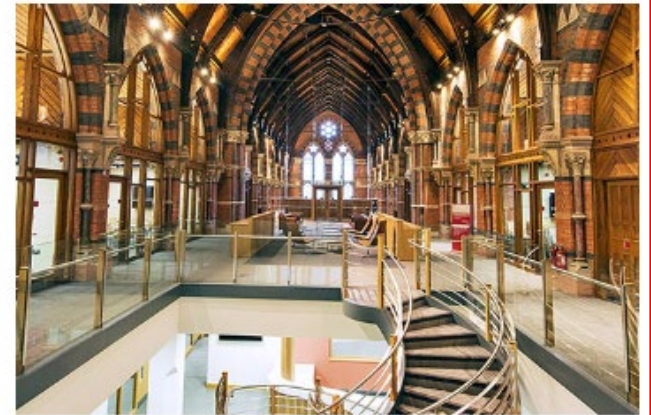
What was imagined?

- 24/7 access to the enquiry form via the mobile-responsive Queen's Portal.
- Secure exchange of evidence to support enquiries.
- Built-in notifications and a way for enquirers to track the progress of their enquiry.
- Giving decision makers access to the information captured, enquiry progress and engagement.
- Integration with other systems (including Student Information, Content Management, and Accommodation) to speed up the journey.
- Real-time reporting through Dynamics 365 views and embedded Power BI charts, with in-app notifications for staff.



Power Pages

WELCOME TO QUEEN'S PORTAL



Clearing and Admissions Support

Submit a Clearing and Admissions Support Enquiry.

Thank you, Michelle McGaughey

Your enquiry has been submitted and your Enquiry ID is
CL-2023-10000125

Queen's University Belfast will contact you on Email: m.mcgaughey@qub.ac.uk with further updates.
Please check your list of enquiries via the My Enquiries link below.

[My Enquiries](#)

Clearing and Admissions Support Enquiries

This service is for managing all of your Clearing and Admissions enquiries.

If you are enquiring about a place through Clearing you may be asked to upload evidence of your qualifications, so please have your evidence ready before you start a new enquiry. Please note that a good quality picture or screen shot of your evidence is acceptable for uploading.

If you are classed as International and English is not your first language, you will also be asked to upload evidence of an English language qualification.

My Enquiries

Request Number	Enquiry Type	First Choice Course	Request Status	Created On	Modified On	Actions
CL-2023-10000125	Clearing	Biological Sciences (BSC HONS) C100	Submitted	23/Oct/2023 3:26 PM	23/Oct/2023 3:38 PM	



Clearing and Admissions Support Enquiry

- Enquiry Details
- Course Selection
- Current Offers
- Qualifications
- Documents
- Review Information
- Personal Data

Enquiry Details

Contact Details *

First Name

Michelle

Last Name *

McGaughey

Email *

m.mcgaughey@qub.ac.uk

Date of Birth *

DD/MM/YYYY

Preferred phone number *

+ 07400 123456

For tuition fee purposes I am classified as *

Please Select

Have you ever applied for a course via UCAS? *

Please Select

Enquiry Details

Course Selection

Current Offers

Qualifications

Documents

Review Information

Personal Data

Course Selection

Are you holding a Conditional Firm (CF) or Conditional Insurance (CI) offer from any university? *

No

Are you currently in Clearing? *

No

Please select your first choice course *

Only courses with clearing vacancies will be available for selection

Biological Sciences (BSC HONS) C100

Do you have a second choice? *

No

Qualifications

A-Level and Equivalent Qualifications

Please select your qualification type *

I have ONLY completed AS or A-Levels

Examinations

Add an examination

Regarding ↑	Exam Year ↑	Exam Type	Subject ↑	Grade	Actions
CL-2023-10000125	2023	A-Level	Biology	B	
CL-2023-10000125	2023	A-Level	History	B	
CL-2023-10000125	2023	A-Level	Mathematics	B	

Documents

If any evidence listed below indicates Yes under Required, you must upload it in order to continue with your request. Please click the Actions arrow to upload your evidence documents.

File Upload

Document Bucket ↑	Description ↑	Required	Uploaded	Actions
Evidence of AS/A-Level Results		No	No	

Next



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Dynamics 365

CL-2023-10000125 - Saved

Clearing Request · Information

Michelle McGaughey

Submitted

Gatekeeper Team | Clearing

Applicant

Request Status

Owner

BPF | Clearing Request

Active for 29 minutes

Submission

Enquiry Type Review (16 Min)

Gatekeeper Review

Complete

Enquiry Details

Qualifications

Documents

Comments

Timeline

Administration

APPLICANT DETAILS

Request Number

CL-2023-10000125

Applicant

Michelle McGaughey

Date of Birth

31/08/2023

Preferred Phone Number

+447795571328

First Name

Michelle

Last Name

McGaughey

Email

m.mcgaughey@qub.ac.uk

ENQUIRY DETAILS

Enquiry Type

Clearing

Tuition Fees Classification*

GB and Islands (including EU Nationals who have Settled or Pre-settled status in GB and Islar

Applied via UCAS*

No

Currently in Clearing*

No

Applied for QUB Current Admission Year*

No

Are You Holding a CF or CI?*

No

CLEARING COURSE CHOICE

First Choice Course*

Biological Sciences (BSC HONS) C100

First Choice Decision (11 Min)

Active for 11 minutes

First Choice Course

Biological Scien...

First Choice Decision

...

Admissions Officer Comment

--Select--

Next Stage

Approved

Unsuccessful

Waitlist

No Longer Required

Michelle McGaughey

Successful

Rachel Stewart

Applicant

Request Status

Owner

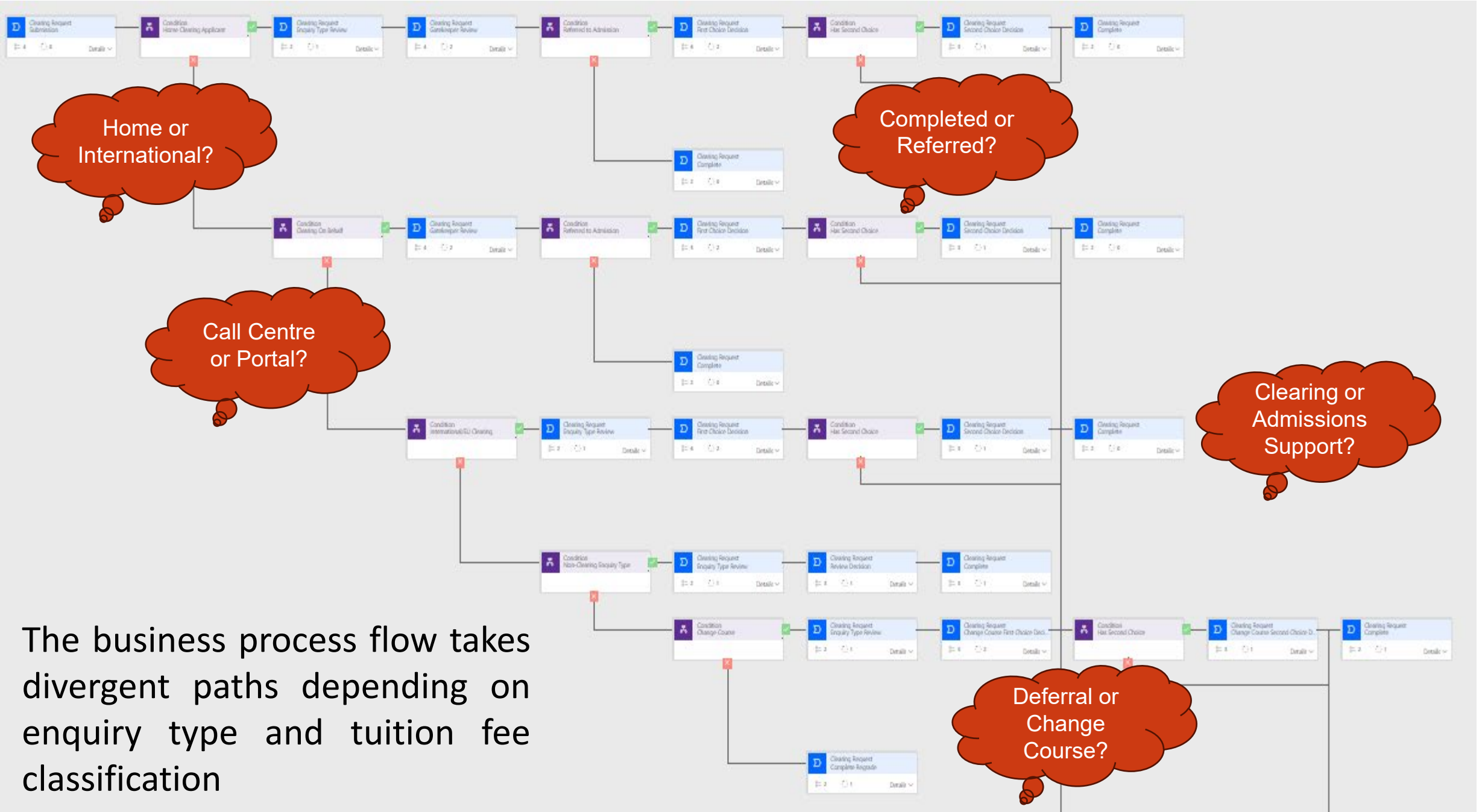
Complete

Completed

Yes

Finished





The business process flow takes divergent paths depending on enquiry type and tuition fee classification

Active Clearing Requests

Search views

AS12 and Accommodation Status for Conversion

Call Centre Team Completed Clearing Requests

Call Centre Team Pending Clearing Requests

Completed Deferral and Register Unsuccessful Clearing Requests

Gatekeeper Team Completed Clearing Requests

Gatekeeper Team Pending Clearing Requests

Gatekeeper Team Referred to Admissions

Home & EU Admissions Clerical Team Pending Other Enquiries

Home & EU Admissions Team Completed Clearing Requests

Home & EU Admissions Team Pending Clearing Requests

International Admissions Team Completed Clearing Requests

International Admissions Team Pending Clearing Requests

Pending Deferral and Register Unsuccessful Clearing Requests

Active Clearing Requests

Default

Clearing Request Portal

Draft Clearing Requests

Inactive Clearing Requests

My Completed Clearing Requests

My Pending Clearing Requests

Waitlisted Clearing Requests

Withdrawn Clearing Requests

Gatekeeper Team Pending Clearing Requests*

Request Number	Request Type	Enquiry Type	Tuition Fees Classification	Applicant	First Choice Course	Owner	Request Status	Stage Reached
CL-2023-0000729	On Behalf	Clearing	GB and Islands (includin...	Kiera McGill	Accounting with Spanish (BSC joint honours) N4R4	Gatekeeper Team ...	Submitted	Referred to Gatekeeper
CL-2023-0000730	On Behalf	Clearing	GB and Islands (includin...	Kiera McGill	Applied Mathematics and Physics (MSCI HONS) GFC3	Gatekeeper Team ...	Submitted	Referred to Gatekeeper

Home & EU Admissions Team Completed Clearing Requests*

Request Number	Enquiry Type	Tuition Fees Classification	Applicant	UCAS Personal ID	First Choice Course	First Choice Decision	Second ...	Review Decision	Owner	Request Status
CL-2023-0000730	Clearing	GB and Islands (including ...	Kiera McGill	1999999999	Applied Mathematics and Physics (MSCI HONS) GFC3	Approved			Fred Ruddle (Offline)	Successful

Query Builder - View: International Admissions Team Pending Clearing Requests

- codec_iscompleted
- codec_admissionsdecisioncode
- ownend
- or
 - owning_team.teamid eq 4456d9a0-88df-ed11-a7c5-000d3aba6e97
 - team_membership.teamid eq 4456d9a0-88df-ed11-a7c5-000d3aba6e97
- codec_name
- codec_clearingrequestid
- codec_submitteddate
- codec_ucasidtxt
- codec_enquirytype
- codec_decisioncommenttxt
- createdon
- and
 - statecode eq 0
 - codec_requeststatus in
 - team (owning_team)
 - (and)
 - teamid eq 4456d9a0-88df-ed11-a7c5-000d3aba6e97
 - systemuser (owning_user)
 - teammembership (team_membership) M:M
 - (and)
 - teamid eq 4456d9a0-88df-ed11-a7c5-000d3aba6e97
 - codec_transcriptreceived

FetchXML

```

1 <fetch version="1.0" output-format="xml-platform" mapping="logical" distinct="true" n
2 <entity name="codec_clearingrequest">
3   <attribute name="codec_name" />
4   <attribute name="codec_tuitionfeesclassificationcode" />
5   <attribute name="codec_applicantid" />
6   <attribute name="codec_secondchoicecourse" />
7   <attribute name="codec_firstchoicecourse" />
8   <attribute name="codec_stagereachedcode" />
9   <attribute name="codec_requeststatus" />
10  <attribute name="modifiedon" />
11  <attribute name="codec_iscompleted" />
12  <attribute name="codec_admissionsdecisioncode" />
13  <attribute name="ownerid" />
14  <filter type="or">
15    <condition entityname="owning_team" attribute="teamid" operator="eq" value="445
16    <condition entityname="team_membership" attribute="teamid" operator="eq" value=
17  </filter>
18  <order attribute="codec_name" descending="false" />
19  <attribute name="codec_clearingrequestid" />
20  <attribute name="codec_submitteddate" />
21  <attribute name="codec_ucasidtxt" />
22  <attribute name="codec_enquirytype" />
23  <attribute name="codec_decisioncommenttxt" />
24  <attribute name="createdon" />
25  <filter type="and">

```

Views based on team membership



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Reporting with Power BI

A Power BI dashboard was embedded in Dynamics 365 to provide real-time reporting to management. Insights covered a range of metrics on the information gathered within the enquiry and its lifecycle, as well as on feedback received.

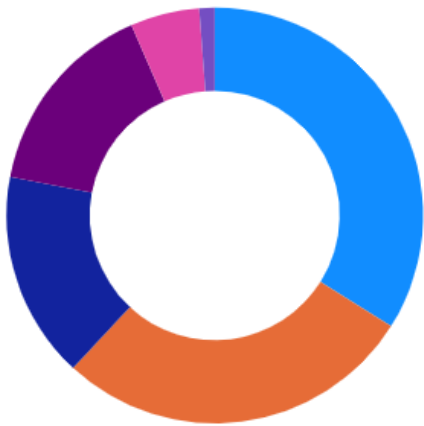
First Choice Courses



Experience of registration



Request Status



Qualification Type



Clearing and Admissions Support

Our Clearing and Admissions Support lines are now open.

Clearing Enquiries **+44 (0) 28 9244 3498**

Support with current application **+44 (0) 28 9097 3838**.

Alternatively please submit an enquiry about clearing or a current application on the enquiry portal. Please have your UCAS number ready and evidence of your qualifications.



Clearing and Admissions Support enquiry portal opens 10:00am on Monday 14 August.

Call Centre opens 8:00am on Thursday 17 August.

Project Team provide support 7:00am to 10:00pm across campus.



Be quick to get to top unis in clearing - Ucas

🕒 10 August • 💬 Comments



GETTY IMAGES

By Hazel Shearing

Education correspondent

Students will need to be "quick off the mark" to get a place at a top university through clearing this year, according to the head of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (Ucas).

Record number of UK school leavers gain university places through clearing

Ucas says 10,400 had been admitted through clearing by Friday, amid concern over lower grades awarded in England

Record numbers of British teenagers have won university places through clearing, as the post-pandemic readjustment of A-level grades meant thousands in England missed out on their initial course offers.

The [Ucas admissions service](#) said 10,400 UK school leavers had been admitted through its clearing service by Friday, the day after A-level results were published in England, Wales and Northern Ireland - a sharp increase on the 6,600 placed at the same point last year.

Ucas reported that 205,000 school leavers had gained places at their first or second choices, nearly 10,000 fewer than in 2022. The difference is largely explained by this year's [steep fall in top A-level grades](#) compared with 2022, as fewer entries were awarded A*-B grades.

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HIGHEST NUMBER EVER OF STUDENTS ACCEPTED THROUGH CLEARING

[Explore this section](#) ▼

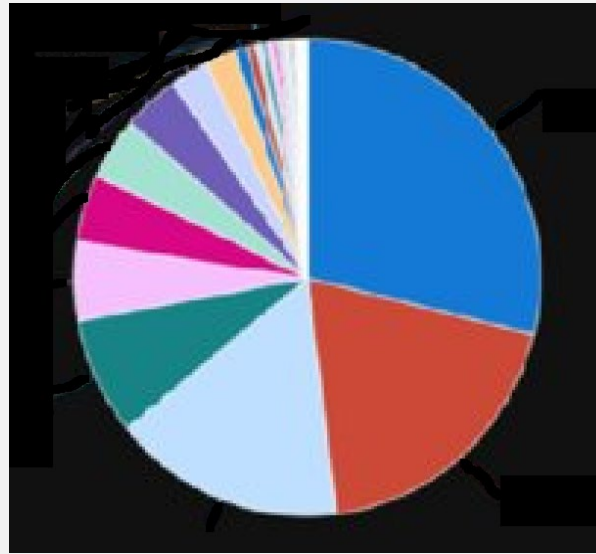
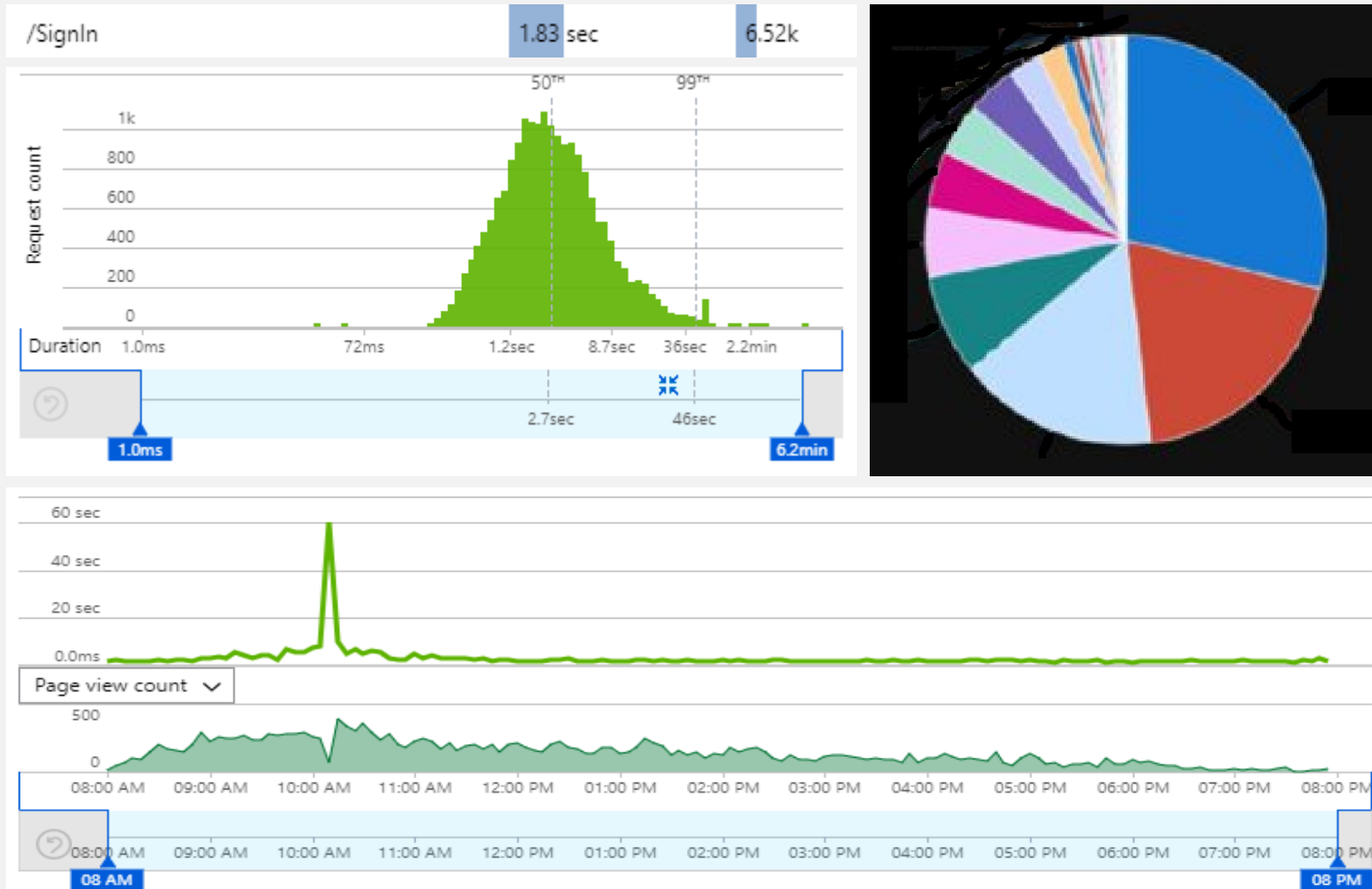
A record number of UK 18-year-olds have secured a place at university or college through Clearing, new UCAS data shows.

Clearing 2023: It gave me hope and the support I needed



System Performance

Monitoring via Azure Application Insights.



- Over 70% of sessions were from mobile devices.
- iOS was the most common operating system.
- Safari was the most common browser.
- The Azure B2C sign in process averaged 1.83 seconds.
- Requests started at 8:00am as soon as results were released, with a spike just after 10:00am.

Feedback

Applicant: *"The speed of response was the biggest positive in comparison to other universities. Everything was clear and simple to follow. The availability of the hotline was also a big positive as QUB ended up providing more than one way to contact them which opens up possibilities and chances to more people/potential applicants."*

6. How did you find the speed of the enquiry form as you moved between the various steps? *

- ☒ Response was quick
- ☐ Response was OK
- ☐ Response was slow

Staff: *"The Digital Transformation of the Clearing and Admissions Support Management System was a great enhancement to a previously more manual solution. The implementation of the portal has made the clearing experience more user friendly and accessible to the end user and the decision-making process more efficient from a business user viewpoint. The functionality within the system has made the entire process more fluent, with clear workflows and comprehensive reporting capabilities. The attention to detail from the team pre-production and during the busy clearing and confirmation period was fantastic. Thank you."*

Clearing and Admissions Support Enquiries Portal Feedback

Thank you for submitting a Clearing and Admissions Support Enquiry to Queen's University Belfast via the Clearing Portal. We would appreciate any feedback you could provide on your experience of using the service. Your response will be anonymous.

Registration

How did you find the registration process on the Clearing Portal?

1. Please rate your experience of the Clearing Portal sign in process *



What helped?

- Having in-depth knowledge of the current system within the project team
- Having Dynamics 365 knowledge within the project team
- Working with a partner who brought Power Pages experience to the table
- Engagement with Global Student Recruitment on the Call Centre and Gatekeeper journeys
- A dedicated team and an understanding manager when the timeline slipped!

What really didn't?

- Having two Solution Architects with different opinions and ways of working
- Deployment pipelines
- Lack of stakeholder engagement on the Admissions journey
- Lack of user familiarity with the solution despite training sessions, documentation and practice data
- User error within the Call Centre when logging email addresses
- Reliance on Microsoft stack at every stage of the solution made disaster planning worrying

What's next?

- Project review held at the end of August to gather suggestions for improvements.
- Updates include:
 - ✓ A new home page which clarifies the enquiry types available for the user.
 - ✓ Separate forms to reduce reliance on JavaScript.
 - ✓ New conditional steps to reduce API bottlenecks on course vacancies.
 - ✓ Enhanced email functionality with the inclusion of the Rich Text Editor Control.
 - ✓ In-app toast notifications to request owners when the applicant responds.
 - ✓ New contact validation for Call Centre agents to ensure that the name and email address captured are correct.
- All amendments for Clearing 2024 delivered and the updated solution pushed to production ready for next August.

Lessons Learnt

- Overestimate on the timeline – it's going to take longer than you think.
- Ensure all stakeholders are included in discussions – even the ones you don't know about!
- Despite all the discussion, design, development and delivery – something will turn up once you're live that was never mentioned previously.
- The solution is only as good as the engagement.
- Staff will embrace new solutions when the benefits to them are clear.
- Lack of experience in a specific technology is not a blocker when you have a dedicated team.

The Digital Transformation Roadmap

Student Admin Processes

- Exceptional Circumstances
- ISSA-Related Adjustments

Application Management System

- Clearing and Admissions Support
- Undergraduate Admissions (International)

Application Management System

- Postgraduate Admissions
- Study Abroad
- International Scholarships

Artificial Intelligence

- Chatbot

Thank you for listening.
We're happy to take any questions.



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