

## Delivery Partnership Steering Group

### Media Q&As

#### **Why was the DP set up?**

It was established to enhance the efficiency, transparency and fairness of the current applications process, following a UK-wide consultation on the HE applications process by the DfES under Sir Alan Wilson in 2004. The results of the consultation were published in September 2005 and the Government published their response with a number of recommendations for reforms in 2006 including the establishment of the Delivery Partnership as the mechanism for taking these reforms forward.

#### **How does it propose to do this?**

It will implement a number of changes to the current HE applications process from 2008 entry to University and will undertake a review in 2010/11 with a view to considering further the implementation of PQA from 2012.

#### **Will the DP's work result in a full Post-Qualification Application (PQA) system by 2012?**

This proposed DP review into PQA in 2010/11 will enable time for the reforms to bed down and for the Delivery Partnership to take account of the timing and implementation of a range of other developments such as, the increasing electronification of the HE applications process and the reform of qualifications taken by school and college students. The DP is charged with giving further consideration to the benefits of PQA as well as the practical obstacles to achieving it in this timeframe.

#### **Why is the introduction of PQA proving so problematic?**

It is important not to become overly transfixed by the letters PQA. The Government has charged the DP with making incremental changes now, with the option of moving to full PQA by 2012. To focus solely on the PQA strand of the group's work over-simplifies the broader changes to the whole applications process. We are also at the early stages of the group's deliberations. For some parts of the country and for some categories of applicant, post-qualification application is already a reality, but for others there remain a number of stated hurdles/conditions to tackle before consideration is given to moving to full PQA by 2012. These include: earlier publication of level 3 results, improvements in the advice and guidance services provided to students, progress in widening participation and ensuring that the timing of higher education admission processes will not be detrimental to the recruitment of students from outside of the UK. In addition the nature of the university applications cycle and the technical requirements mean that it is impossible to effect change immediately. Before making any changes, we will wish to ensure that the changes have a positive effect and do not introduce any new inequities for particular groups of applicants.

#### **How will the proposed changes affect students making applications in future?**

The details of some of the changes will be announced as they are agreed, but we can confirm that for students applying from Autumn **2007** to enter University in **2008** we will have:

- implemented a change to the number of applicant choices from 6 to 5

- enabled the provision of more information for UCAS EXTRA.
- Ensured that more universities provide entry profile information on their courses
- Agreed a protocol for the provision of feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

For students applying from Autumn **2008** to enter University in **2009** we will aim to:

- Implement an agreed process to allow applicants to make fresh applications if they have achieved higher grades than expected once the results have been published but before clearing begins. This will be dependent on such things as changes in the timing of the publication of A and AS level results.

Following University entry in Autumn **2010**, we will review the effect of the changes on applicants and then decide whether any further changes are required to move to a full system of post-qualification application.

Some other recommendations could result in: consideration of the removal of predicted grades after the first year of operation of the new system; and changing the timing of the release of offers to students, amongst others.

#### **How can we find out more information on future DP developments?**

The Delivery Partnership has resolved to meet every two months and will publish a DP Progress Report after each meeting which will list all the substantial decisions. These will be available on Universities UK/GuildHE websites.

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/activities/admissions.asp>