

Brief description	ucas.com, web-link, Course Collect, and some support applications used internally to assist learners were briefly unavailable.	Intermittent issues logging into web-link for some users.	Some applicants experienced issues while making payments using Visa credit/debit cards.	Automated emails from learner-facing systems were not sent when triggered.	Web-link for applicant data was briefly unavailable.
Open date and time	10 January 09:33	11 January 09:42	12 January 08:43	13 January 09:54	13 January 12:53
Details of problem experienced	Multiple services, and some support tools used internally, were unavailable for approximately four minutes due to a third party supplier issue. Our Customer Experience Centre (CXC) did not receive any calls regarding this issue from learners, but there were a couple of mentions of the issue on social media.	Some providers were intermittently unable to access web-link for application processing. The issue was first noticed around 09:20, and was thought to only affect internal UCAS users. Later, application connectivity was lost and seven HEPs reported access issues.	Applicants trying to process Visa credit/debit card payments when submitting applications experienced payment failures, due to a global third party supplier issue.	Automated emails generated by learner-facing systems – such as verification and change of address emails – were sent to our third party email partners but not to the intended recipients.	Some HEPs were unable to access web-link for applicant data, to process and manage applications, for approximately four minutes.
Resolution	This was a brief outage which resolved itself in four minutes. IT and Operations teams monitored for a period of stability until they were confident the issue was resolved. The incident was closed that afternoon.	The web-link database was running at a very high capacity, which affected its ability to allow users to log in and use the service. This was due to long queries being run by some providers. The queries were stopped to allow capacity to return to normal levels. The service was monitored for a period of stability, and the issue was resolved by 15:30 the same day.	The third party supplier confirmed this was an emergency outage which affected all of their customers. The service was restored by 09:13 the same day.	The UCAS account with our email-managed service partner had been suspended. This was due to the supplier detecting high volumes of emails from UCAS (due to the 15 January deadline), which triggered proactive measures to prevent potential malicious mass emailing. This was rectified following contact from UCAS, and the service was restored by 10:30 the same day.	This was originally thought to be a brief outage, due to a third party service issue, which resolved itself and was detected by UCAS IT monitoring systems.
Actions taken to prevent a repeat incident	Analysis has been completed and a case raised with one of our third party suppliers, to investigate the root cause.	A potential fix for the issue is to stop providers running open-ended queries e.g. searching without entering a name / Personal ID. A problem record is now open to allow this fix to be prioritised.	Close engagement will continue with the third party supplier to ensure we are made aware of such issues as and when they occur, and we receive assurances that they are working on mitigating a repeat of the issue.	UCAS informed the third party supplier of all operational activity which may generate large volumes of emails, to prevent the account being suspended again. The subscription with the supplier is also being renewed to allow flexibility to upgrade and downgrade during major business events.	Following investigations, this was found to be an isolated incident affecting only one provider, which was incorrectly escalated. Steps are being put in place to ensure correct triage is performed before escalating to major incident status.