

Summary of audit findings and recommendations

The University of California is committed to a fair and transparent admissions process based on each student's merit and achievement. We share in the outrage over fraudulent activity to try to gain admission at public and private universities across the nation, including, in a few instances, at UC. As the preeminent public higher education institution, we hold ourselves to the highest standards, so we are taking proactive steps to strengthen our admissions practices and procedures and protect the integrity of the UC admissions process.

To help guide our efforts, UC's Ethics, Compliance and Audit Services (ECAS) — the independent audit and investigative arm of UC that reports directly to the UC Board of Regents — recently completed a systemwide audit of our admissions procedures. Following the audit, we are confident that the UC admissions process is effective overall and has established safeguards in place, but ECAS did identify a number of improvements and enhancements to refine our admissions procedures, all of which we are implementing. Our goal is to provide an admissions process that represents a fair and level playing field for all those who apply, one that employs the strongest defenses and controls against those who attempt to inappropriately, illegally or unethically influence the outcomes and decisions of admissions.

ECAS is conducting two audits. The first audit examined processes related to admissions, and provided an initial list of observations and recommendations. The second audit will include a deeper dive into selected areas, such as application verification controls, IT system access and student-athlete participation. The first audit was completed in **June 2019**, and the second audit will be completed **by the end of 2019**.

It is important to provide context around UC admissions more broadly, and the steps we are taking to improve our admissions process:

- Overall, UC's longstanding admissions process has worked very well, admitting millions of well-qualified, accomplished students who have helped maintain UC's reputation as a preeminent public academic institution.
- Each campus — with its own local admissions processes, per local Academic Senate policies and priorities — has established generally effective controls over the admissions process to enforce compliance, including *existing* controls ECAS identified within athletics and admissions to address admissions fraud risk.
- There are no widespread problems or weaknesses, but the ECAS audit did identify recommendations to help the system — and individual campuses — better focus our efforts to reduce risk and prevent fraud.
- Only a few cases of fraudulent activity related to admissions at UC campuses have been identified by federal investigators thus far. We recognize that even one case is too many,

and the university is doing everything it can to identify those who are culpable and prevent any additional wrongdoing.

Based on the ECAS audit findings, UC is undertaking the following comprehensive steps to strengthen our policies and procedures, and prevent bad actors from taking advantage of the system in the future:

- Clearer documentation
 - Ensuring a clear documentation trail for admissions evaluations that support an admission decision
 - Ensuring that there is sufficient documentation, approval and rationale for ancillary admissions processes and admission decisions on the basis of athletics or special talent
 - Implementing the monitoring of donations to prevent admissions decisions from being made on the basis of expected financial gain to the university
- Improved verification protocols
 - Strengthening existing processes in place to identify falsified application information
 - Enhancing controls to verify special talents and make it more difficult for third parties to influence admission decisions based on special talent
 - Improving mechanisms in place to monitor student-athletes' participation in athletic programs
- Stronger procedures
 - Adding mechanisms to identify and manage potential conflicts of interest in admissions and existing relationships that may give the appearance of inappropriate influence on admissions decisions
 - Improving IT system access controls to ensure access is granted only when required for specific job responsibilities
 - Strengthening the organizational independence of the athletics compliance offices by modifying the reporting structure
 - Ensuring personnel are appropriately trained on these new protocols

UC campuses are developing individual plans for implementing the changes outlined above, which will be completed by the end of **July 2019**. The campus internal audit departments, with oversight from ECAS, will then track these plans over the next several months, helping to ensure the changes are implemented in a timely manner.

As we look ahead to the second audit, we will remain transparent and accountable in our findings, and keep the public, the UC community and others apprised of our steadfast efforts in this matter. By proactively identifying and addressing the processes that can be improved by this audit, we will ensure our best efforts in preventing these types of illegal activities in the future.