College Meeting on UCAS Days  
Monday 17th January 2005  
Ashworth Labs, Seminar Room C.

The main task of the meeting was to examine three scenarios and discuss in groups possible reasons for each one.

The scenarios were:

1) You are a parent of an applicant, you've come to visit and you've had a great day.

2) You are a prospective student, you haven't had such a great visiting day and you're having second thoughts about coming to Edinburgh.

3) You are prospective student who's had a great experience at the visiting day.

Issues noted by groups:

Positive Student visit experience
Spent the night on the town (perhaps with brother/sister)  
Great sports facilities  
Great social facilities/scene  
Has unconditional offer  
Friendly – ‘face fits’  
Reaffirmed choice of subjects  
Taken by Edinburgh  
Great accommodation (Pollock Halls)  
Clear info on courses/maps (especially KB)  
Opportunity to speak with DoS  
Well-organised events  
Free food and drink  
Seeing facilities – sport, union, accommodation, schools/labs, and city.  
Friendly staff and student guides

Positive Parent experience
Well organised  
Happy about career prospects  
Happy about the city (safety)  
Happy about accommodation (and costs)  
Addressing parental issues (specific session?)  
Happy about pastoral care/health/DoS  
Happy about course choices, flexibility and standing  
Accessible from home  
Fantastic views/cityscapes  
Realistic entry offer  
Efficient admin  
Efficient answers to questions  
Well-informed staff and students
Excellent lecture and lab facilities
Discussed fees, other costs
Clear info on courses and careers
Friendly staff
Info on cost
Seeing accommodation
Like Edinburgh as a city

**Negative student visit experience**

Weather
Negative information (factual)
Large class sizes
Campus
Cost
Staff attitude (lack of team effort)
3yr/4yr
Personal attention – during visit
Lost (or parted from group) or never found
Travel problems
“Crap food”
No chance to ask their own questions
Bad personal interaction/met stuffy academics/snotty students/pg.
“Face doesn’t fit”
Too formal/impersonal
Insufficient contact with students
Chaotic
Not getting all info required
Boring talks
Unhelpful/unfriendly staff
Ugly buildings

School Representatives then shared info on post-application visiting day procedures. At random, here's some info on what other Schools do:

- Biology: they have 14 visiting days (every Tuesday starting mid-January). Some of their visiting days get 3 visitors, others get 250. They spend £20,000 in total on all their post-application visiting days. No other Schools had concrete information on costs.

- Engineering: can employ up to 30 student guides for one visiting day but they pay them a flat fee of £10 a day. They also pay students £10 to tidy up their rooms at Pollock Halls (for prospective students to see a sanitised view of student life?). They also give parents a separate talk, 20 minutes long + questions. Isabel Stevenson has slides, maybe we can ask to see them? Engineering also have a cut-down version of the accommodation talk which they were going to send to Gillian.
Other ideas aired:

- Biology has Saturday visits but other Schools thought Saturday visits are not good as the campus looks rather dead.

- Chemistry asked whether we should consider visits with overnight stay but the proposal wasn't received well.

- Have a separate College of Sci & Eng Open Day? It seemed to be voted against as the afternoon of the October Visiting Day is in effect a College Visiting day.

What everybody asked Lorraine Corbett to do:

- get College to tell Central University Services such as SRA (former RALS), CPA, etc, to work closely together on recruitment i.e. pull their activities together

- get Appleton Tower ground floor (concourse, lecture theatres and toilets) + mezzanine rooms refurbished as it is the first contact many prosp applicants have with the University at June Open Day. On this point we must let Mike & co know that all people present were hoping that the new Informatics building could become an alternative venue for the Open Day!

Lorraine will circulate:

- a summary of the discussions (included above: “Issues noted by groups”)
- a summary of the 'decliners' survey' she has just carried out (these are students who had offers to come to Edinburgh but didn't come)
- a request to all schools to circulate to each other copies of: visit programmes, information on costs.