

Boost student leads

The Definitive Guide To Marketing in Education



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- > Homerton Changemakers
- > What's on in College

contra



Against the norm. Experienced, pragmatic do-ers that will propel you forward using creativity and technical prowess.

Contra makes it happen.

It's painful, isn't it? You're responsible for increasing student leads for an education provider... and everything's an absolute mess.

The website looks like it belongs in the noughties. The copy is as bland as a lawyer's legal papers. And you've got more seats to fill than Wembley stadium. On top of all this, you've got to contend with hundreds of other institutions. Breathe.



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AGENCY

Help is at hand.

We're here to help. In this comprehensive guide, you'll learn how to rapidly increase admissions. You'll learn how to write copy that sells dreams, not just courses. And we'll reveal how you can create a marketing strategy that's a cut above competitors. Sounds like we're promising a lot... but it's what we do, day in, day out. We've helped a range of schools, colleges, and universities increase admissions, including Oxford and Cambridge. Now, it's your turn.



Before we get started.

If you're responsible for marketing or student recruitment, life can feel like you're spinning plates at times, right? This guide is comprehensive at 212 pages. So, if you don't have time to read it all right now, save it to an easily accessible folder so you can refer to it whenever you need inspiration. Or, if you want to dive straight in, read on below.

What is marketing in Education?

Marketing in Education specifically involves marketing activities conducted by education providers, including schools, colleges, and universities. The primary purpose is to increase student leads and student recruitment.

While many standard B2C (Business to Consumer) marketing activities apply to marketing in Education, student marketing also incorporates various B2B (Business to Business) strategies due to the complex nature of the purchase. Therefore, a strong inbound marketing and content strategy is needed to engage and persuade prospective students at each stage of their buying journey.



Stage 1:

Website and analytics audit.



The foundations for success.

Conducting detailed research is the foundation for a robust student marketing strategy. This section details the research process. This is where you will need to analyse fundamental areas such as your website, content, SEO, social media, and competitors.

We understand the intense pressure on marketing and student recruitment professionals to boost student leads and get fast results. However, doing your research in the first three months will pay dividends later. Your marketing will resonate more with prospective students and your conversion rates will be much higher.



Stakeholder interviews.

Begin by conducting stakeholder interviews. Stakeholders include department members, representatives of the student body, and anyone else who has strategic input on future institutional goals. The goal is to understand each stakeholder's goals and perceptions of the school, college, or university.

During these interviews, you should also aim to understand what role the website plays in driving admissions. From our experience conducting research with education providers, we often discover that each stakeholder will have different goals and perceptions. Once you have gathered the research, prioritise institutional goals and identify what makes your institution truly unique.

Ursula. Undergraduate applicant.

Background & demographics:

Age: 17
Gender: Female
Location: UK
Education: A level.
Extra info: BAME

**"I am not even sure if
Cambridge is for me."**



Ursula's story.

Ursula is the first in her family to go to university and is from a state school that rarely sends students on to Oxbridge. Ursula had not considered Cambridge but changed her mind after watching a video on Youtube by a Cambridge student who seemed "normal". After further research, Ursula decided to apply and is now evaluating colleges.

Goals.

1. I want to find out if Homerton College is the right choice for me

Challenges.

1. Lots of colleges to choose from but hard to separate them
2. I'm not not familiar with Cambridge terminology or traditions

Attitude.

1. Socially minded
2. Cynical

Common objections.

1. Homerton is a bit out of the way compared to the others
2. Will I miss out on the Cambridge experience if I go to modern college?
3. Cambridge is elitist and/or out of touch, do I even want to go?

Student persona working session.

Student personas are semi-fictional representations of your ideal students based on data, interviews, and some educated guesses. Student personas help you to understand prospective students' goals, challenges, wants, and needs. This will enable you to truly connect with them with your marketing activities.



The student persona working session will allow you to sit down with stakeholders and discuss their perceptions of prospective students. Speaking to department members is useful but the real value comes from speaking to current students, alumni, and prospective students. “Focus groups are a rich source of market research,” states Claire Matthews, Associate Director of UK Student Recruitment at the University of Greenwich.

“I recently hosted a group of adult learners on discussions around a new programme development for a suite of ‘Elevate’ degrees. These are designed for busy lives to fit study around work and other responsibilities. The group provided direction and insight around flexible timetabling, terminology, and assessment modes. Once the conversation was flowing some of the feedback was brutally frank. This helped me to speak to my teams on pre-entry support needs and a new project.”



Dismiss all assumptions and listen to the people that matter, your students.



Claire Matthews, Associate Director of UK Student Recruitment, University of Greenwich



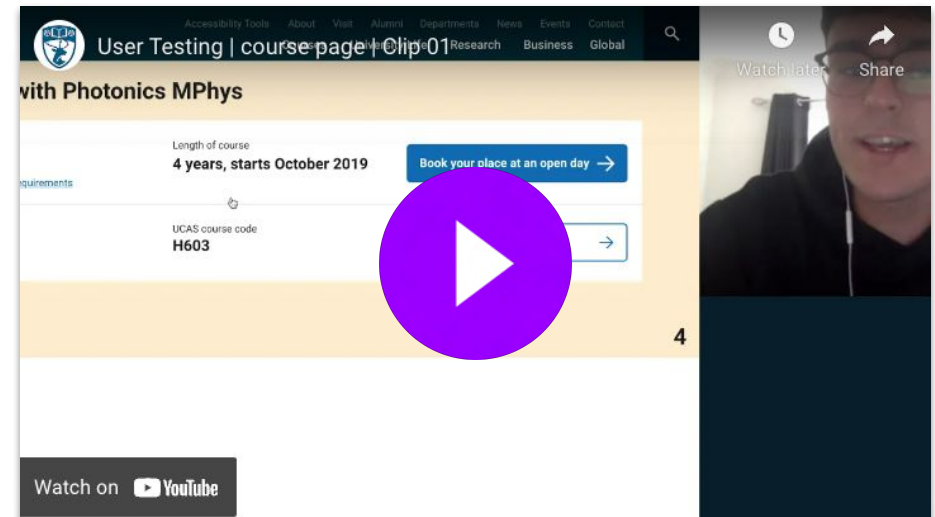
With our clients, we often find there are a number of personas based on courses of interest. However, try identifying commonalities between them to break them down into three to five student personas. There are six main areas you will need to gather information on. These are:

1. Education status: Are they a student or a parent? Are they an international or domestic student? Are they a new student or post-grad? Are they an early admission or a clearing student?
2. Goals: Why is this degree, course, or certification important to them? What doors will it open? How might they feel once they've achieved their goals?
3. Challenges: What are they finding difficult about making their university decision? Are they concerned about finances? Do they have a family to juggle? Do they struggle with making friends?
4. Resources: What does this person need to make an informed decision? What questions will they be asking?
5. Demographic background: How old are they? What's their family background? What's their race and gender? Where do they live?
6. Decision-making: How do they make decisions? How long is their decision-making process? Do they care about campus tours? Do their parents have a say?

Website user surveys.

Conducting a user survey of your website is a great way to identify the needs of your prospective students. It will also enable you to identify the website's strengths and any current content gaps or areas for improvement. Offer incentives for participation, such as gift cards. Your research should provide answers to the following questions:

- Does the user journey flow correctly?
- Do the visual elements appeal to them?
- Does it address any questions or concerns they may have?
- Ultimately, can they find everything they need, when they need it?



Commissioning research.

As well as conducting focus groups and user surveys, commissioning research to help understand demographic and psychographic data is also valuable.

“Start by commissioning your research. Then consolidate the responses and start to build on fictional profiles,” says Ellen Bushell, Head of Marketing, King Edward VI School in Southampton. “Personas should go beyond standard demographic data and look at anything from morals, emotional drivers, shopping habits, or lifestyle choices.”





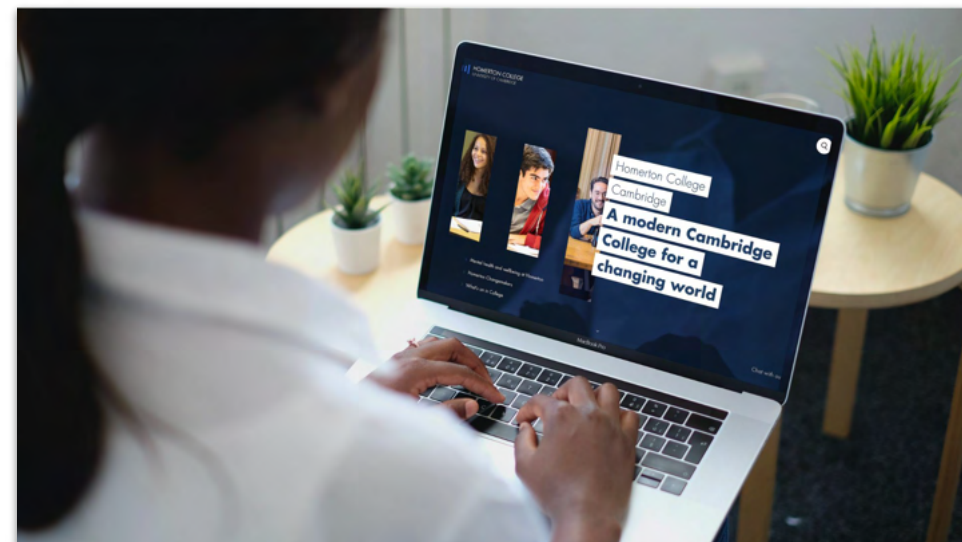
“Once you are able to map persona data against demographic data you have two influential data sets working in harmony that should inform marketing strategy.”



Ellen Bushell, Head of Marketing, King Edward VI School, Southampton

UI audit.

Conduct a UI (User Interface) audit of your website to get a clear understanding of the current design language. The goal is to understand what fonts, shapes, patterns, and colours are currently being used. This will help you when it comes to redesigning/optimising your website in stage six. Take screenshots of components and ask your design department for current brand guidelines (if there are any).





Content audit.

Carrying out a thorough audit of your content is essential. A good content strategy maximises both search engine success and reader engagement.

A content audit allows you to:

- step back from creating content for the sake of it and start thinking strategically again
- assess what you already have and how it links together in topic clusters (great for SEO)
- recycle old content rather than creating new content, saving time

Every three to six months you should take a holistic view of your content strategy and make sure it's working to achieve your goals.



What's involved in a content audit?

There are four distinct phases for a successful content audit.

1. Identify existing content.

First, list all the content you own. You shouldn't just list blog content, but everything that's used by each of your teams. This includes marketing, sales, customer success, etc. as well as website content.

To give you an idea of what you need to find at this stage:

Website: Website copy, blogs, videos, multimedia content

Marketing: Reports, testimonials, newsletters, infographics, internal comms

Sales: Brochures, proposals, quotes, price lists

2. Categorise the content.

Look at each piece of content and ask:

- how old is it?
- who's it for?
- is it up-to-date?
- who's actually using it?
- where does it fit in the buyer's journey?

You may find that certain pieces of content are being used far more than others. If this is the case, decide whether it's good gated material (that's sat behind a data capture form). You can also ask your colleagues from different teams what they use, how they use it, and what they share with people most often.

[illegible]

3. Identify how well it's performing.

Track the impact of your content and report on a monthly basis using analytics tools such as Google Analytics, HubSpot, or Kissmetrics. Look at insights from social media platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter. At Contra, we mark performance as either 'poor', 'okay', 'good', or 'excellent'. Alternatively, you can use a scale from one to five, or colours to represent a piece of content's performance.

	Performance scale	Poor		B
		Okay		
		Good		
		Excellent		
Downloadable content offers				
	Stage of buyer journey	Format	Owner	G
	Consideration	Template	Matt	G
	Consideration	Guide	Matt	G
	Consideration	Guide	Matt	G
	Consideration	Guide	Matt	G
	Consideration	Guide	Matt	G
	Consideration	Guide	Matt	G



4. Note ideas and recommendations for what to do next.

You can choose to update the information if it's a little old, repurpose successful ebooks into blog posts or infographics, or make videos. Only after you have analysed the content will you be able to come up with a reasonable set of actionable steps. Your focus should be on improving the prospective students' experience using content resources to help them with their research.

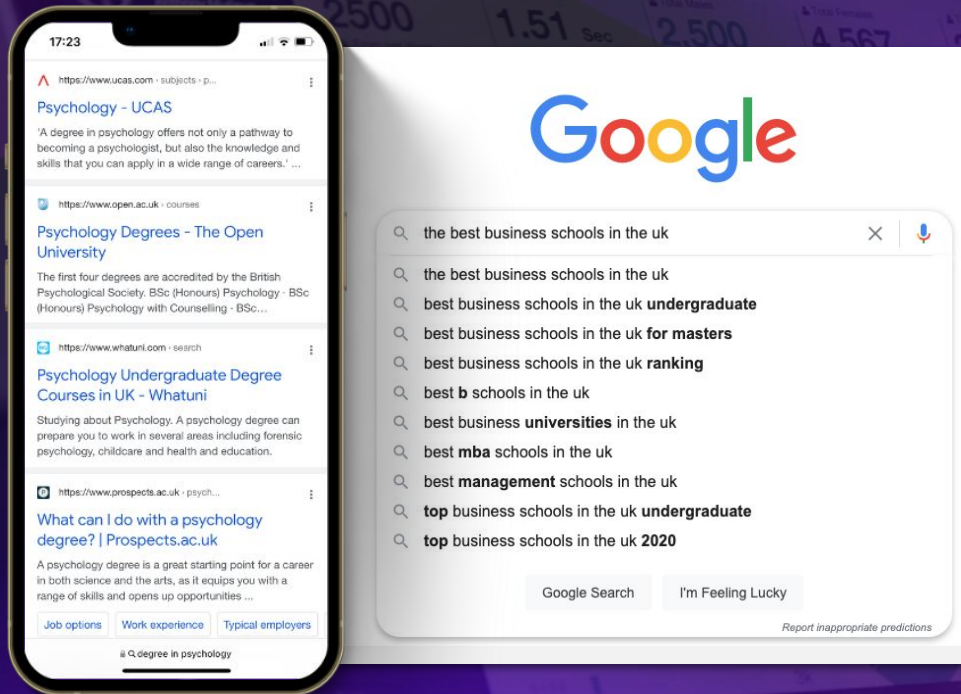
- Here are a few questions to think about:
- Can I combine two pieces of content?
- Could I create an FAQ page on my website based on the questions people ask most often?
- Have I shared this on social media yet?
- Have I worked it into an email?
- Does the piece need updating with the latest thinking or current research?
- Should I condense the content or could it be cut?
- What distribution channels aren't being utilised?
- Where in the buyer's journey does this belong?
- Have we got enough awareness/consideration/decision content?

SEO evaluation.

SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) is the process of improving both the quality and quantity of traffic to your website through search engines. SEO is a whole discipline in itself, and is more than just “installing Yoast”. Here is a great introduction to SEO we created. However, for this article, we can boil it down to a few fundamental questions:

- How friendly is your site for search engines to crawl?
- Is your site optimised with relevant keywords and useful content?
- How user-friendly is your website? (This affects your search engine rankings.)
- With our clients in Education, we start by running a comprehensive SEO report to identify areas of improvement.
- We then build out an SEO strategy, designed to increase rankings for relevant search terms on search engine results pages.

SEO isn't a quick fix and takes consistent effort from experts to keep you ahead of the pack. However, if you can rank at the top of Google for key search terms your prospective students are using, you can significantly increase traffic and admissions.

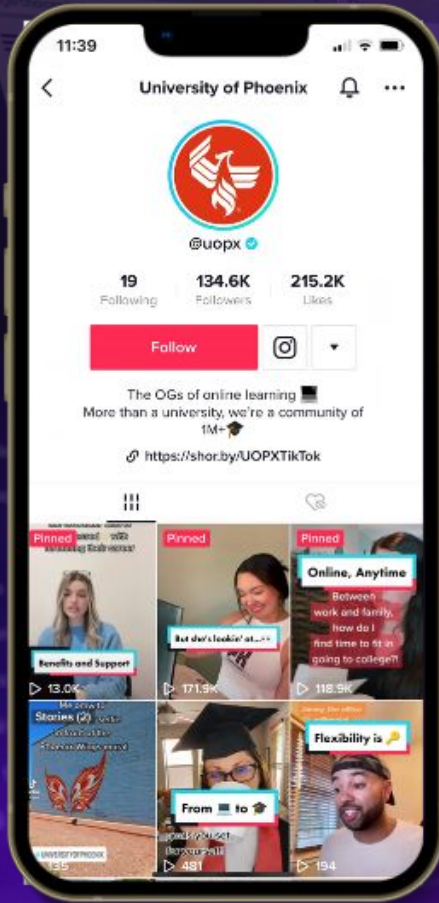


Social media audit.

Now it's time to analyse your social media channels. At this stage, don't get too bogged down with the messaging. Simply look at which social media channels are driving the most traffic to your website. You can do this using Google Analytics.

Now, look at which channels your prospective students, current students, and alumni are most engaged on. In each channel, filter and sort by your most popular posts to identify which drive the most engagement. You may find the 80/20 rule applies, also known as 'The Pareto Principle'. This is the notion that 20 percent of your social media efforts drive 80 percent of the results. The goal here is to find out what's working and double down on it.

Of course, this needs to be balanced out with the internal resources available to produce social media content. Also, is there an opportunity to produce more user-generated content? Do you have student ambassadors who can help out with vlogging? Do you have current students who want to showcase their work? List all the potential stakeholders who could help produce content for social media.



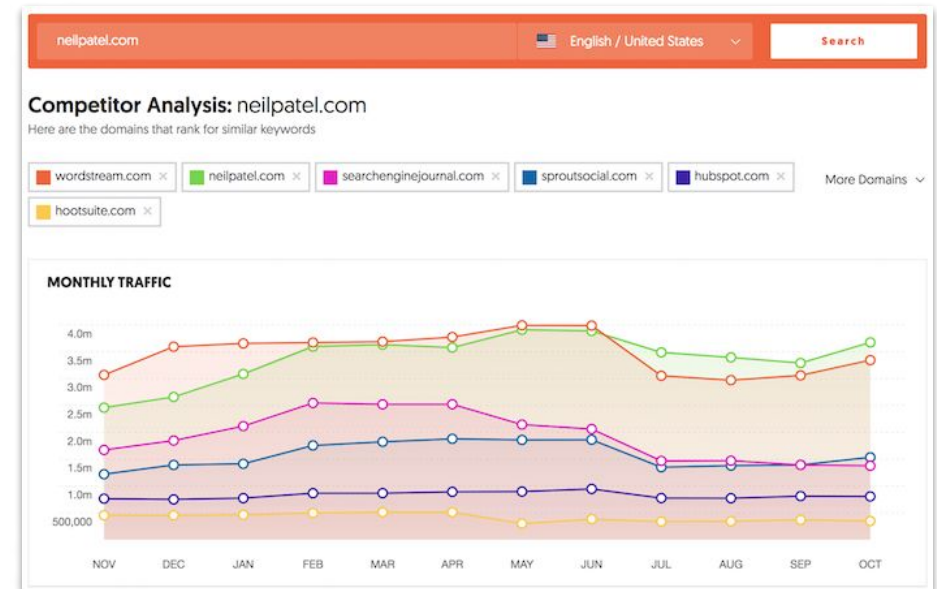
Competitor analysis.

Conducting a competitor analysis will help you identify your institution's strengths and weaknesses. Start by identifying your closest competitors. Some examples could be:

- other institutions in your area
- institutions offering similar courses
- learning platforms that offer similar courses

Use an SEO tool such as Ubersuggest to compare website traffic. Conduct a SWOT analysis to identify competitors' strengths and weaknesses, as well as areas of opportunity and threats. Yup, it's a cliché but it works.

Are there any USPs that set your school, college or university apart from competitors? What are your greatest strengths? Use your findings to inform both your branding and messaging, as well as your marketing strategy.





Stage 2:

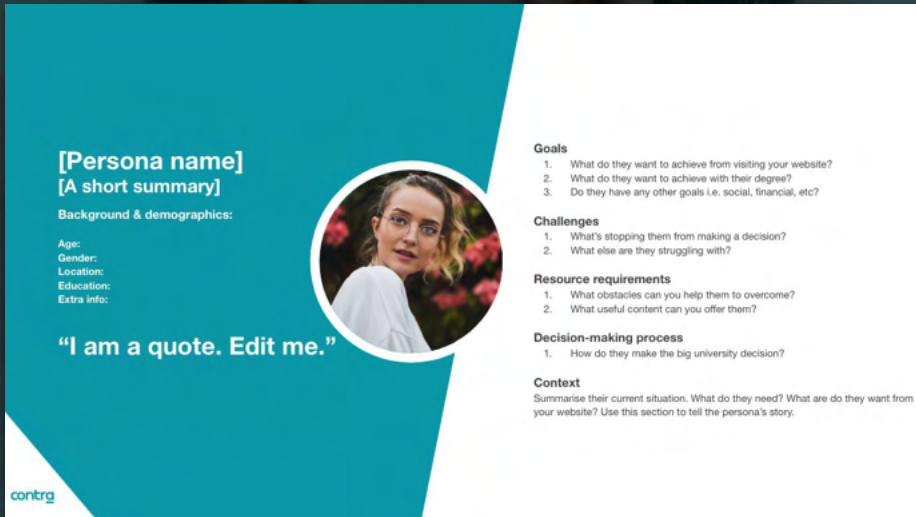
Create student personas.

Know your audience.

During the research phase, you'll have built up a strong picture of your prospective students. Now it's time to create student personas. Student personas are semi-fictional representations of your ideal students based on your data, interviews, and some educated guesses. They'll inform your entire marketing strategy as these best represent the very people you're trying to recruit.

Treat them as if they were real people. Give them a memorable name. For example, if you're a fashion university targeting creative students, they may be called 'Fashion Styling Sophia'. Break the student persona down into 10 key areas:

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Location
4. Education
5. Background
6. Goals
7. Challenges
8. Resource requirements
9. Decision-making process
10. Channel (online/in-person/blend of both)



[Persona name]
[A short summary]

Background & demographics:

Age:
Gender:
Location:
Education:
Extra info:

"I am a quote. Edit me."

Goals

1. What do they want to achieve from visiting your website?
2. What do they want to achieve with their degree?
3. Do they have any other goals i.e. social, financial, etc?

Challenges

1. What's stopping them from making a decision?
2. What else are they struggling with?

Resource requirements


1. What obstacles can you help them to overcome?
2. What useful content can you offer them?

Decision-making process

1. How do they make the big university decision?


Context
Summarise their current situation. What do they need? What are they looking for? What do they want from your website? Use this section to tell the persona's story.

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A photograph of three men in a modern office environment. They are seated on a blue sofa, each working on a laptop. The man on the left is wearing a blue shirt, the middle man is wearing a light-colored button-down shirt, and the man on the right is wearing a white long-sleeved shirt and holding a white mug. The background features a brick wall, a large window with a view of a city, and a modern floor lamp. The image has a warm, slightly desaturated color palette.

Stage 3:

Identify SMART goals and KPIs.



**Specific.
Measurable.
Attainable.
Relevant.
Timebound.**

Aim higher.

SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timebound. The purpose of SMART goals is to avoid any ambiguity in what you're trying to achieve. SMART goals also enable you to measure and optimise your marketing activities.

Let's take your primary goal, to increase student admissions. Now, we need to apply the SMART goal method as this is currently too vague. Rather than "increase student admissions", it would become:

"Increase student admissions by 25 percent (Specific, Measurable, Relevant) from September 2022-September 2023 (Time-bound)."

Measuring success.

Let's focus on two key elements of any SMART goal, 'measurable' and 'attainable'. This is where data comes into play. It's easy to measure whether you have increased admissions by 25%. All you have to do is look at last year's admissions and compare. But is this attainable? How do we know? How do we achieve this? To discern this, we must look at the student marketing funnel and analyse each stage. A typical student recruitment funnel will look something like this:

- **Prospects:** People who have interacted with content on your website but have not provided any contact information.
- **Leads/Inquiries:** Prospective students who have provided contact information. (This might be through downloading a course guide, or contacting the admissions team.
- **Applicants:** Prospective students who have applied to your university/college/school.
- **Admissions:** Prospective students who have met the admissions criteria and have been admitted.
- **Deposits:** Students who have sent a deposit to secure their place.
- **Enrolls:** Students who have successfully enrolled.



STUDENT RECRUITMENT FUNNEL



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Now, look at last year's data at each stage. For example, last year you had:

- 200 admissions
- 400 applicants
- 1000 leads
- 120,000 prospects (use Google Analytics to see how many unique visitors you've had to your site)

To increase admissions by 25 percent, you would need:

- 250 admissions
- 500 applicants
- 1250 leads
- 150,000 prospects

The beauty is, if you increase the number of prospects by 25 percent, this should increase admissions by 25 percent. If you optimise each stage of the marketing funnel, it will have a compound effect on all the other stages. Now we can start to set SMART goals and metrics for each of these stages.



Unique Website Visitors.
Content offer downloads.
Number of applicants.
Email open rate.
Marketing qualified leads.
Email enquiries.
Enquiries-to-applicants conversion rate.
Acceptance rate.
Social media engagement.

KPIs.

Prospects:

- Unique Website Visitors

Leads:

- Content Offer Downloads
- Email Inquiries

Applicants:

- Number of Applicants
- Enquiries-to-Applicants Conversion Rate

Admissions:

- Acceptance Rate
- Email Open Rate



Zara

Undergraduate
Optometry BSc



Want to find out more about student life? Chat with our student ambassadors and ask any questions you have.

CHAT WITH OUR STUDENTS

Now you must ask yourself how to improve the KPIs at each stage. This is how you begin to shape your school, college, or university marketing strategy.

Q: How can I increase annual website visitors from 120k-150k?

- SEO optimise my website.
- Write five blogs a month instead of four.
- Implement an authoritative pillar page to rank on Google on a key search term students are looking for.
- Invest in targeted advertising across Google and social media platforms.

Q: How can I increase leads from 1000 to 1250?

- Produce 25 percent more content offer downloads and include them in prominent areas of my website (e.g. course prospectuses).
- Redesign my website so it's more user-friendly and successfully sells the student experience.
- Implement chatbots to instantly respond to student inquiries and collect contact details, even at weekends.
- Ensure 'Contact Us' buttons are easy to find.
- Invest in ads to drive visitors to landing pages with content offers/course guides.



TALK TO A COURSE AMBASSADOR

Hi Callum,

I'm Jay, a **Course Ambassador** here at MDX.

Choosing to make a start on your journey to uni is great. You've taken a huge step towards creating your future, and don't worry, **MDX has your back!**



Any questions you've got about MDX or if you just want a chat, [send me or any](#)

Here's why MDX is the best choice for you:

Studying Banking, Accounting and Finance at Middlesex will allow you to use **industry standard accounting programmes**, including Sage and OneSource, while our **Financial Markets Lab** also give students access to finance software such as Bloomberg and Datastream.

You'll be studying at the **heart of the world's financial market** within London, and you will have access to **cutting-edge business resources** including Chartered Management Institutes' Management Direct Resource Hub.

Have great career prospects as previous graduates have been employed by ATT, Santander, DotDigital, Lloyds TSB, KS Goring and O2.

Q: How can I increase the number of applicants from 400 to 500?

- Send out a monthly newsletter showcasing student life.
- Automate email workflows based on course of interest, with content designed to guide prospects towards applying.
- Run virtual open days.
- Host live Q&A sessions with current students.

Stage 4:

Identify appropriate tools.

Choose the right marketing platform.

There's a multitude of marketing platforms available for education providers. The question is, are they fit for purpose and within budget? Here is a comprehensive list of marketing tools needed to manage your marketing activities and boost student leads.

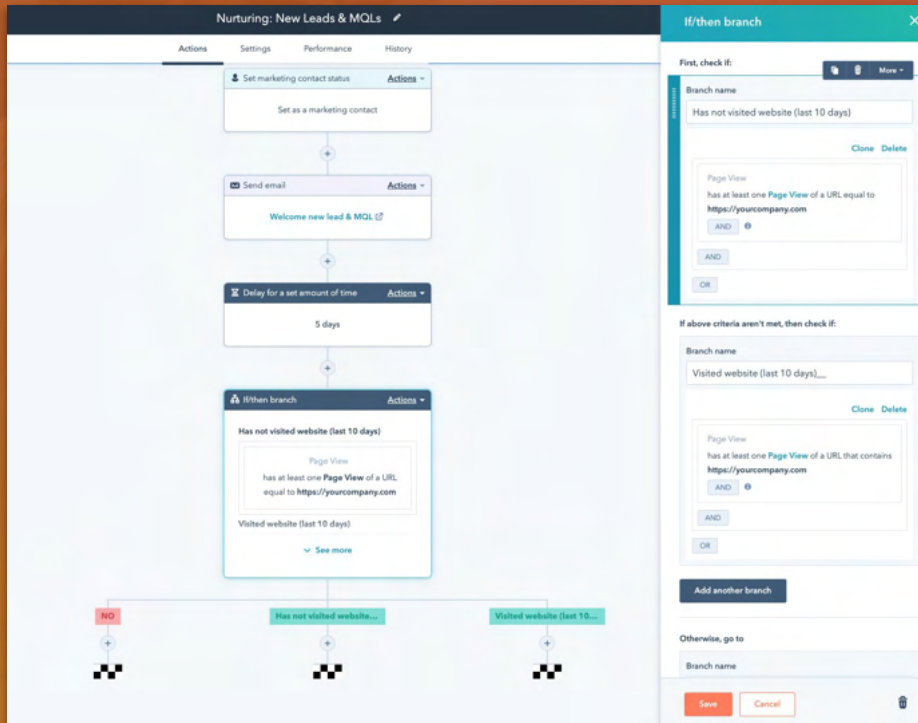
However, in our experience, investing in a great marketing automation platform pays dividends in the long run. This is because the amount of time and costs saved by automating marketing activities far outweighs the initial investment. Equally, having a single platform that can manage the bulk of marketing activities proves more cost-effective than having multiple platforms.

As HubSpot Gold partners, we've worked with some of the most prestigious education institutions in the world to implement the world's leading marketing automation software.



Here are just some of the ways we've used HubSpot to help automate and boost student leads for education providers:

- Increase admissions with automated personalised emails that target prospective students based on multiple factors (e.g. course of interest, the content they've engaged with, pages viewed on site etc.).
- Save time by automating tasks and assigning them to the correct team members.
- Save time by planning and scheduling unlimited social posts.
- Save time by monitoring and engaging with social media from one single platform.
- Increase engagement and conversions by quickly creating segmented lists for more personalised one-to-one marketing communications.
- Generate and qualify student leads, respond quickly to enquiries, book meetings, provide support, and scale one-to-one conversations with chatbots.
- Increase admissions by focusing on the most engaged prospective students; with insights such as which contacts have opened emails, watched videos, clicked links, and more.
- Easily measure the ROI of every ad campaign within one tool.
- Tie marketing assets to specific campaigns so you can measure the success of each individual campaign.
- Create custom dashboards that monitor all your KPIs and send out automated monthly reports





Stage 5:

Build a marketing plan.



Plan for success.

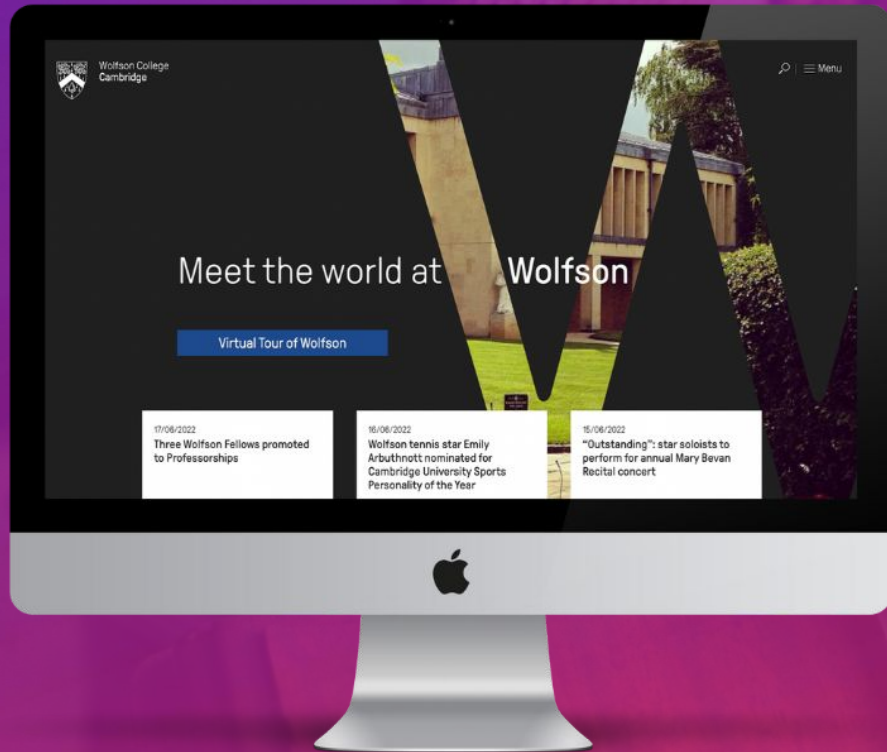
In the above stages, you will have done your research and collated all the information needed to develop a marketing plan. Now it's time to build your marketing plan. There are various ways you can build out your plan. However, your plan should include:

- a business summary
- your business initiatives
- your Student personas
- a competitor analysis
- a SWOT analysis
- your marketing strategy
- your Budget
- marketing channels
- financial projections



Stage 6:

Optimise your website.



Build the perfect website.

Your website is arguably the most powerful weapon in your student recruitment arsenal. You don't want to be firing shots with a rusty cannon. So read on to find out exactly how to boost student leads with your website.



Determine messaging and tone.

USP.

USP (Unique Selling Point) is the one element that makes your institution unique. You will have identified your USP during the research phase in stage one of this guide. Perhaps you offer specific degrees, top-ranked courses, or are a leader in a particular field. This is what you're going to shout about within your website messaging. For example, Texas Wesleyan University proudly declares it's a small university and has a strong student-to-teacher ratio.

What's your ONE THING?

If you don't necessarily have a strong USP, build one within your culture. Become known for *one thing* and do it well.

For example:

- Aston University = Employability
- The Open University = Flexibility
- Homerton College, Cambridge = Diversity

Optimise your site around your main area of focus and build out content that hammers it home. Think masterclasses, guides, and communities. How will your website communicate your one thing?

Brand pillars.

Brand pillars are three or four distinct elements that reflect your brand personality and values. Your brand pillars are what sets you apart from competitors. You will have already identified your brand pillars during stage one of this guide. However, here are some key areas to think about should you be starting out:

- Purpose
- Performance
- Diversity
- Heritage
- Location
- Facilities

Make your brand pillars instantly evident on the homepage of your website, or, at the very least, on your 'About' page.

Purpose.
Performance.
Diversity.
Heritage.
Location.
Facilities.

Your brand voice and tone is how you express yourselves in writing. It's what you say and how you say it. For example, the University of Manchester outlines its brand voice and tone as:

"Influential – Enterprising and intelligent, with the confidence and credibility to inspire. We exude authority and gravitas. We know what we're talking about.

"Straight-talking – Sincere and direct. We're open and honest about who we are and what we do. We have some fantastic stories to tell and we can easily substantiate them. We don't dumb down, nor do we over-complicate. We expect our audiences to be intelligent, but not expert – where we use specialist language, we always take the trouble to explain it.

"Approachable – Inclusive and friendly, with a strong social conscience. We want to engage with our many audiences and be involved with inspiring new activities and ideas. We have a lot to say, but we appreciate the value of listening too – the most productive dialogue is two-way, in partnership and collaboration.

"Dynamic – Positive and assured, focused and decisive. We are proud of our past achievements and we look to the future with ambition and positive energy. We don't just aim to do things, we make things happen."

Influential

Enterprising and intelligent, with the confidence and credibility to inspire.

We exude authority and gravitas. We know what we're talking about.

Straight-talking

Sincere and direct. We're open and honest about who we are and what we do.

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Inclusive and friendly, with a strong social conscience. We want to engage with our many audiences and be involved with inspiring new activities and ideas.

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Dynamic

Positive and assured, focused and decisive. We are proud of our past achievements and we look to the future with ambition and positive energy.

We don't just aim to do things, we make things happen.

When writing website copy, consistently question if it aligns with your brand voice and tone. Consistency is key to creating a brand experience that connects with prospective students on an emotional level. Speaking of copy, read on to find out the best copywriting hacks to breathe life into your website.

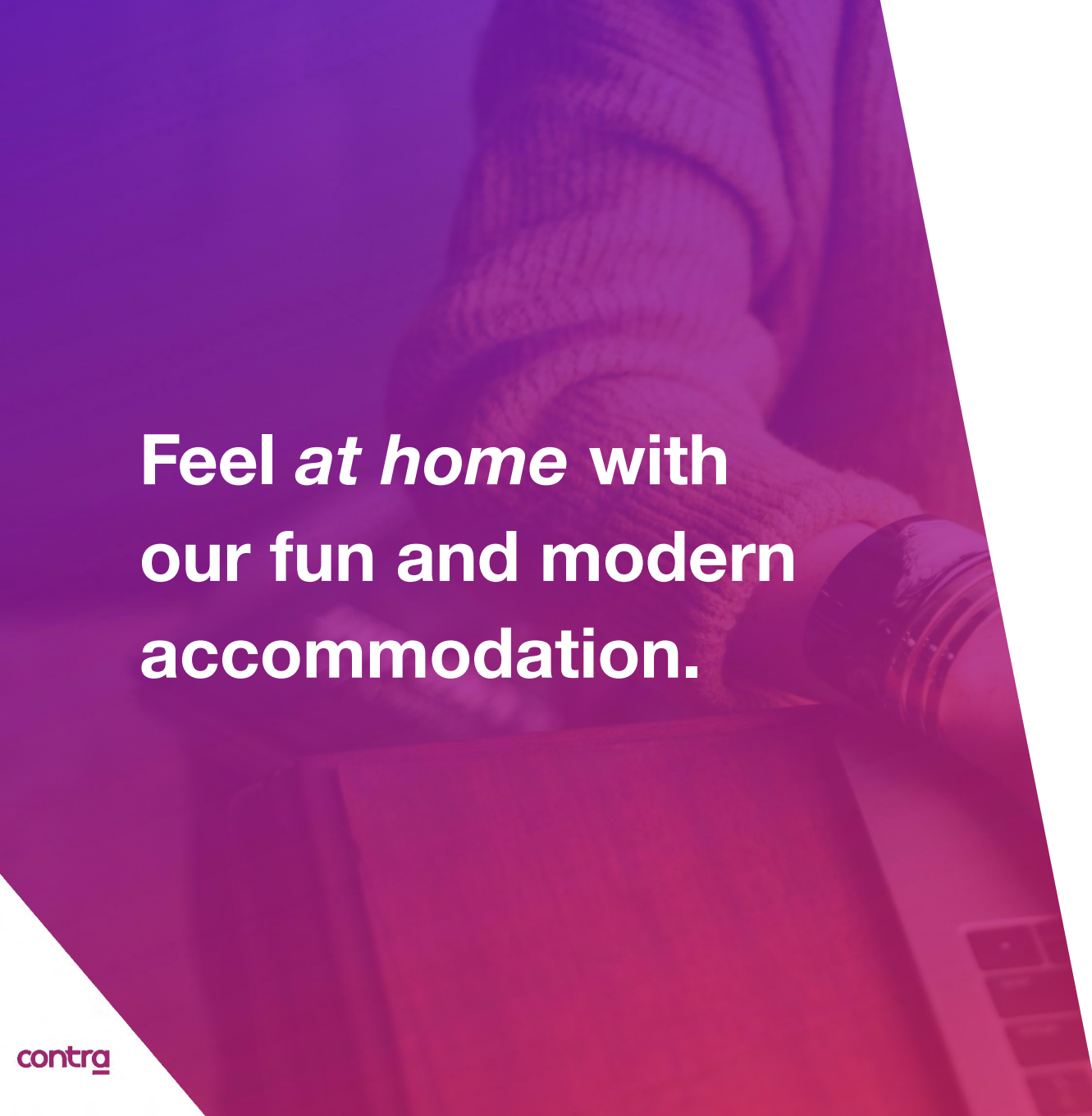




Essential elements of your website.

Engaging copy.

Your web copy must clearly state what's in it for the student. Be emotive. Sell the outcome, not just the service. Sell the dreams, not just the course. Here are some top tips on engaging prospective students with powerful copy.



**Feel *at home* with
our fun and modern
accommodation.**

Tell them how they'll feel.

It's scientifically proven that people choose with emotion and justify with logic. Paint a vivid picture of how students will feel when enrolling at your institution.

Like this:

"Feel part of a community with our friendly and fun social groups. With over 56 groups to choose from, there's certainly something to suit you."

"Feel at home with our fun and modern accommodation. You'll be part of a close-knit community with regular opportunities for trips and social events."

"Feel in control when balancing your education and family life with our flexible studying scheme."

Not this:

"Our university offers a range of flexible studying schemes for single parents."

Speak to prospective students, not at them.

If you're excessively using first-person pronouns ("We are...") or third-person pronouns ("Calton College is..."), chances are you're speaking at student prospects and not to them.

Instead, make it about them. Use 'you' and 'your'.

Like this:

"Where will your next course take you?"

"Choose the perfect course for your career aspirations."

Not this:

"We offer over 257 courses."

**Choose the perfect
course for your
career aspirations.**



Welcome home.

KISS (Keep it simple, stupid).

There's nothing more off-putting than pretentious BS copy.

Don't make your prospective students think too hard or overload them with information.

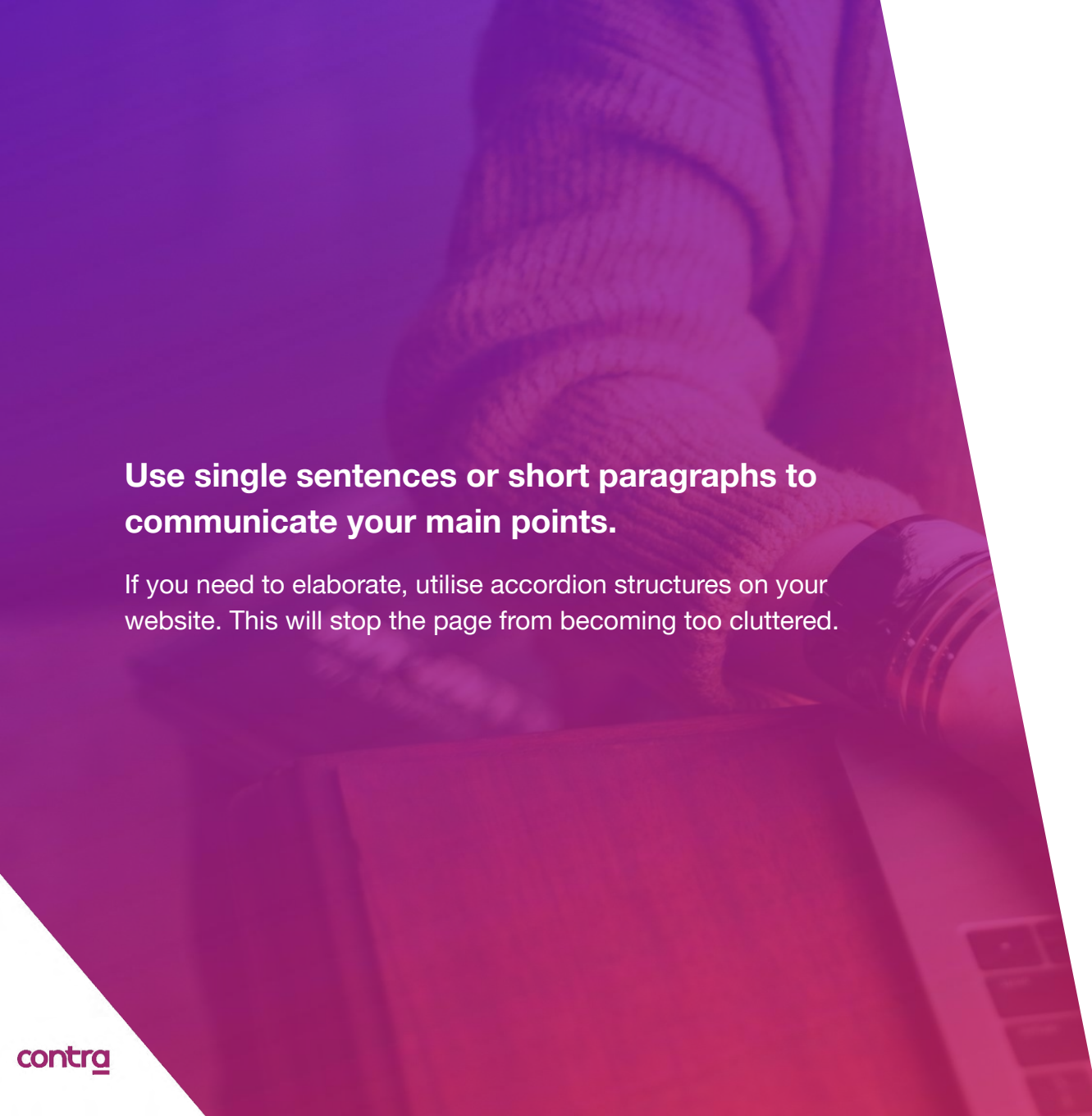
Remember, less is more.

Like this:

“Welcome home.”

Not this:

“We connect the cultural dots to form a cohesive and vibrant community.”



Use single sentences or short paragraphs to communicate your main points.

If you need to elaborate, utilise accordion structures on your website. This will stop the page from becoming too cluttered.

Keep it short.

A hand holding a film clapperboard, partially obscured by a purple overlay. The text is written in white on the purple background.

Your film career starts at Farringdon and ends in lights.

Show value.

Prospective students care about value. They're giving up time and money. Ultimately, you're giving them a stepping stone into their desired industry. This comes down to three key areas:

1. Career prospects
2. Industry experience
3. Cutting-edge facilities

Hammer home exactly how you provide value.

Like this:

"Your film career starts at Farringdon and ends in lights."

"You'll be right in the action, with real industry briefs and production projects."

"Picture perfect: Learn how to use state-of-the-art equipment in world-famous film studios."

Not this:

"We provide a range of equipment for filming."

Walk the walk, as well as talk the talk.

We need to back these statements up with social proof. This includes statistics, testimonials, and references to alumni success.

Like this:

“Stand by for lift-off: 72 percent of our graduates go on to work within NASA.”

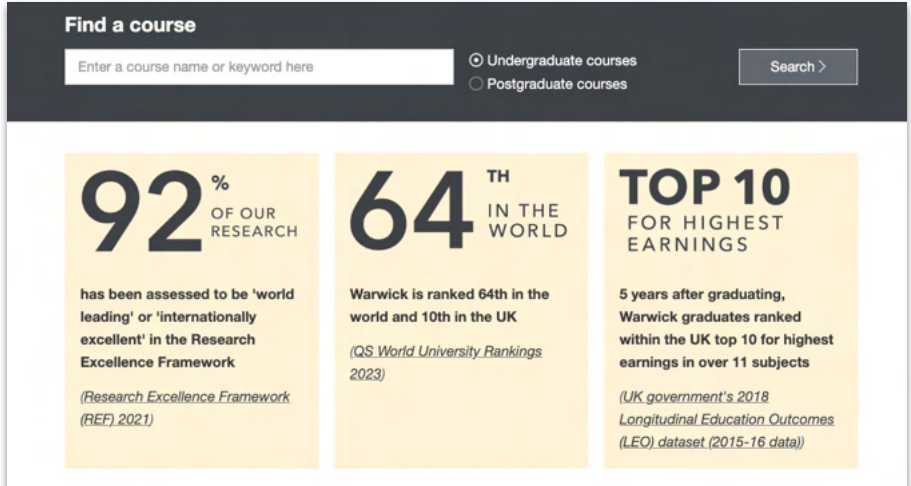
“I got my dream job with Tesla as an aerospace engineer straight after graduating. They were instantly impressed by the strong practical experience I gained while studying at Stratosphere College.”

“To infinity and beyond: For over 20 years, we’ve launched aerospace engineers’ careers.”

Not this:


“We are the most prestigious aerospace college in California.”

To infinity and beyond
For over 20 years, we’ve
launched aerospace
engineers’ careers.



The screenshot shows a university website interface. At the top is a dark grey search bar with the text "Find a course". Below it is a white input field with the placeholder "Enter a course name or keyword here". To the right of the input field are two radio buttons: "Undergraduate courses" (selected) and "Postgraduate courses". A "Search >" button is to the right of the radio buttons. Below the search bar are three yellow boxes with statistics:

- 92% OF OUR RESEARCH**
has been assessed to be 'world leading' or 'internationally excellent' in the Research Excellence Framework
(Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021)
- 64TH IN THE WORLD**
Warwick is ranked 64th in the world and 10th in the UK
(QS World University Rankings 2023)
- TOP 10 FOR HIGHEST EARNINGS**
5 years after graduating, Warwick graduates ranked within the UK top 10 for highest earnings in over 11 subjects
(UK government's 2018 Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset (2015-16 data))



**Unlimited webinars.
Unlimited learning.
Unlimited potential.**

Rule of three.

They say three is the magic number. It's true. Take Apple, for example. Currently standing as the world's strongest brand (at the time of writing) in Forbes' 'The World's Most Valuable Brands' list, Apple is known for its slick copywriting. Apple utilises the rule of three regularly within its copy. Three is the smallest number of pieces required to make a pattern.

In copywriting, we like concise sentences, and we try to create patterns in words because they're easier for a human brain to soak up.

Like this:

"The CQL Resource Library:

Unlimited webinars. Unlimited learning. Unlimited potential."

Couplets.

Apple uses couplets to create contrast and convey simple messages. These utilise the following:

- Adjective-Adverb combination (Incredible power. Incredibly simple.)
- Adverb-Adverb combination (Delightfully capable. Surprisingly affordable.)
- Adjective-Adjective antonym combination (Mega power. Mini sized.)

This can be applied to your website copy.

Like this:

“Small courses. Big prospects.”

“Accommodation at Carlton College:
Delightfully comfortable. Surprisingly affordable.”

**Delightfully comfortable.
Surprisingly affordable.**

Top. Boost. Enhance.
Embrace. **Master.**
Accelerate. Fulfill. Achieve.
Inspire. Maximise.
Focus. **Discover.**
Choose. **Grow.** Outperform.
Raise. Sharpen. Captivate.
Learn. Revitalise.
Surpass. Lead. **Influence.**
Instil. Energise.
Win. Motivate.
Engage. **Ignite.**

Start with power verbs.

Start sentences with empowering verbs to create an emotional connection with your audience.

Here's a list of some useful empowering verbs for Education:

Accelerate, Achieve, Choose, Grow, Master, Maximise, Outperform, Learn, Raise, Revitalise, Surpass, Top, Define, Challenge, Champion, Energise, Engage, Focus, Influence, Inspire, Instil, Lead, Motivate, Captivate, Boost, Discover, Secure, Fulfill, Sharpen, Embrace, Ignite, Unite, Win, Enhance

Like this:

“Excel with our expertise.”

“Grow your career.”



Idioms and puns.

Using idioms and puns adds a playful element to your copy. They're often used to introduce benefits.

Like this:

"Watch and learn:

Get unlimited access to over 1200 seminars."

"Easy does it:

All your course learning, on one simple platform."

Easy does it

**All your course learning,
on one simple platform.**



Student and alumni personas.

Once you understand your buyer personas' goals and challenges, you can optimise your site with content and copy that addresses these. It's always better to show rather than tell when addressing your student prospects. It creates more of an emotional impact. Here are some examples of how you can create content that engages your core audience.



MAT Film School

Now screening: Your future.

A single parent concerned about how they're going to juggle childcare and education:

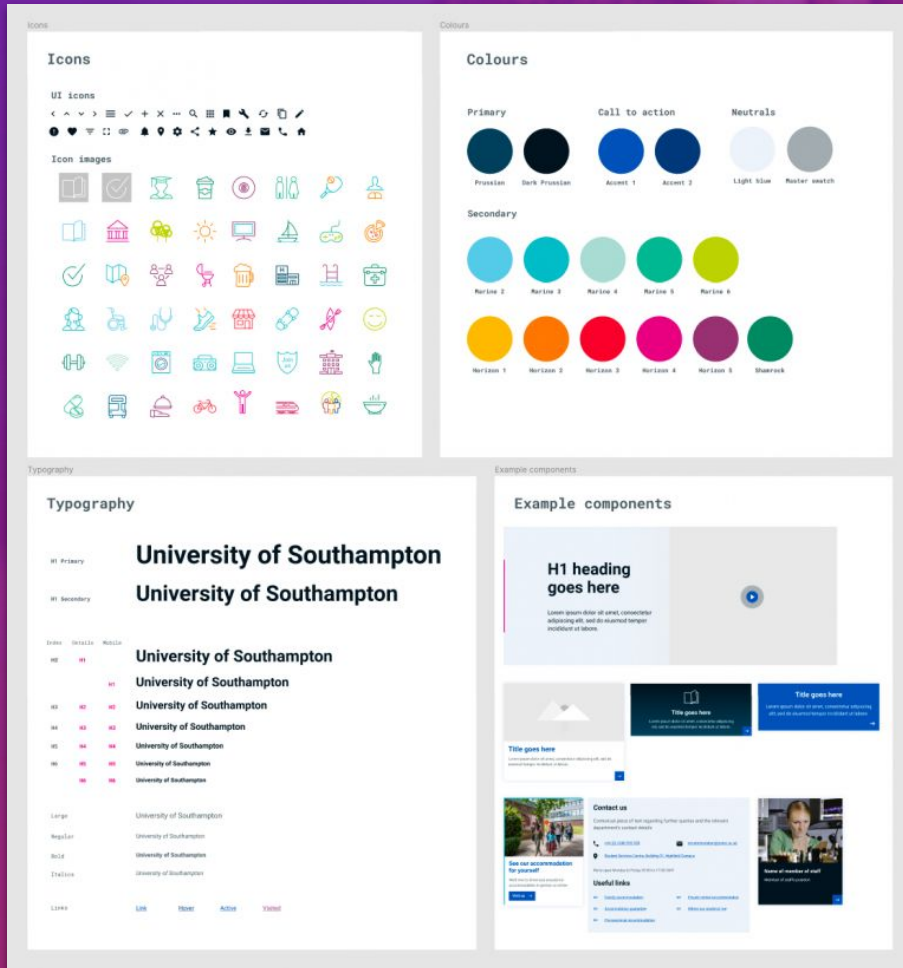
- Web copy that resonates with their emotional drivers. Remind them why they're doing it (To give you and your child a better life).
- An interview with a single parent on how easy it was to balance childcare and their studies. Show how supportive and flexible the university or college is.
- Show any communities you may have for single parents.
- A free eBook (e.g. 'The single parent's guide to balancing childcare and university').

An international student who is concerned about inclusion:

- Show the range of student groups that reflect the diverse student base.
- Images, videos, and communication need to be representative of all races, genders, and backgrounds.

An ambitious film student wanting to go all the way to Hollywood:

- Show success stories of alumni who've hit the big time.
- Instil emotion in your copy ("Write your own script", "Now screening: Your future").
- Show how they'll get real industry experience through videos of students on set.

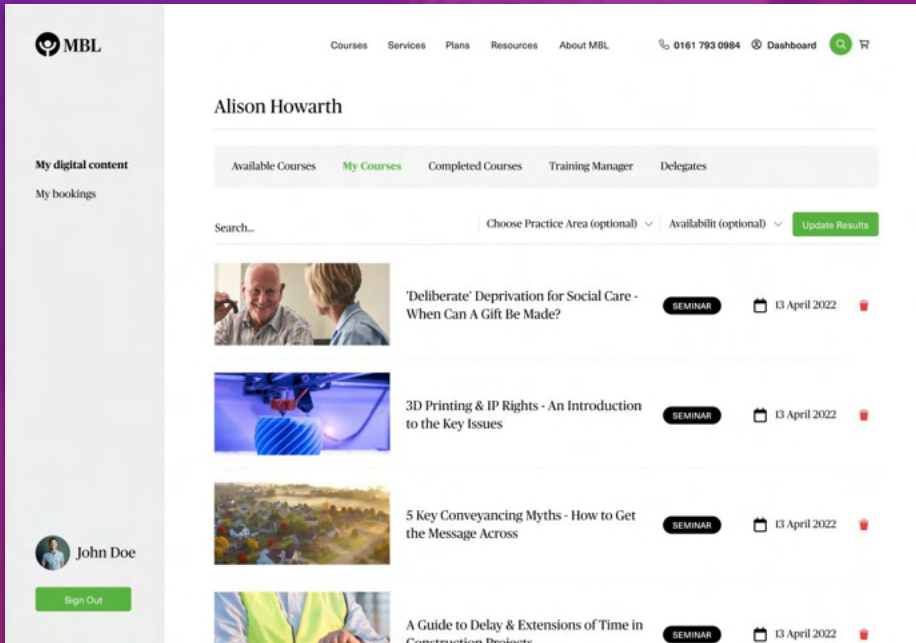


Design language and intuitive organisation.

Design language is the overall visual design of your product. Developing and defining your design language creates a consistent brand identity. It's also time- and cost-efficient as it enables you to use pre-designed components and quickly iterate on new website updates.

Your design language will include:

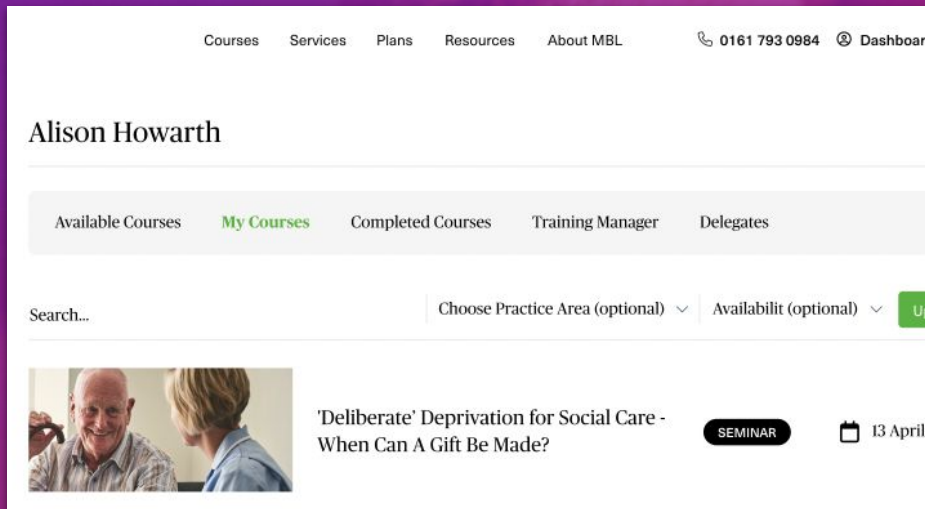
- the colour palette and use guidelines
- typography
- layout rules (white space, paddings, margins etc.)
- iconography
- components (call-to-action buttons, bios, pull-out quotes etc.)



Dynamic content.

Dynamic content is content that changes according to in-session user behaviour or user characteristics. Think Amazon's recommended products, Netflix's recommended movies, and Groupon providing coupons based on where you live. There are a number of ways you can utilise dynamic content for marketing in Education, including:

- personalised course/webinar/open day recommendations
- geo-targeting ads based on catchment area
- personalised offers based on customer lifecycle stage (e.g. new visitors vs. returning visitors)
- contextual pop-ups and chatbots (first-time visitors, Add to Carts, enrollment status etc.)
- automated email workflows based on the course of interest, student persona, and customer lifecycle stage



For example, MBL, one of the world's leading training providers, came to us needing a dynamic website. Their team required a method of promoting/upselling subscription packages on their website, based on the current package of the user.

Our solution was to encourage existing users to log in to their portal instantly upon visiting the website. The site would then be optimised with call-to-actions that were based on the current user's subscription level. The users would only see promotional elements and prices that were relevant to them.

We also recommended various webinars based on their current area of interest. Think about how you can make your user experience as personalised as possible.

One of the finest recent examples of using personalisation to engage students is Middlesex University's video prospectus tool. Prospective students can curate their own video content based on their choice of course and career preferences, as well as other priorities such as whether they are a local student, extra-curricular interests etc.

Strong images.

Every image on your website should have a purpose. For example, user journeys should be supported by imagery showing the diverse community of people actively engaged in college/university life. However, images should only be used when they meet user needs and add value.

Strong imagery helps prospective students get a feel for your institution. It shows them what they can do and what their lives might be like there. Try to keep your image file size to no more than 200KB so they don't impact your page load speed.

Remember, a slow loading speed increases your website's bounce rate, as well as decreasing your search engine rankings. Full-screen background images should be between 1,500 pixels and 3,840 pixels wide. Most other images can be a max width of 800 pixels.



Landing pages.

A landing page is a page a visitor lands on when taking one of the following actions:

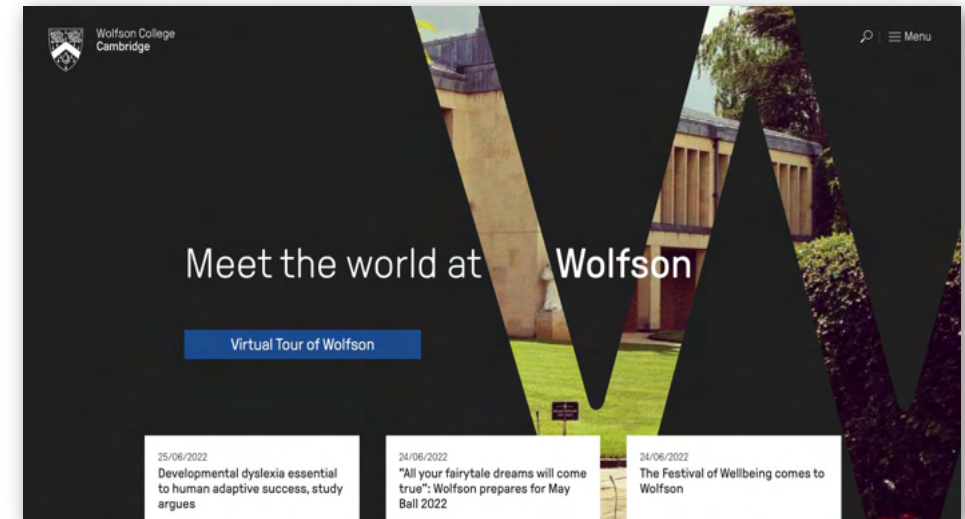
- Clicking on an ad.
- Click on a call-to-action button.
- Click on a result in a search engine.

Regardless of how prospective students arrive on a landing page, it has one key function... to convert them into a lead or a customer. Within the Education sector, a landing page's goal might be to get a prospect to:

- download a guide
- download a course prospectus
- apply for a course

There are two types of landing pages:

1. Lead-generation landing pages: These are used to capture personal information in exchange for a lead magnet (e.g. a guide or a webinar).
2. Click-through landing pages: These are used to attract the visitor to specific courses or facilities that you offer (further information that enhances the message that brought them to you).



Landing page best practices.

There is a science to creating a landing page that's optimised to convert visitors into leads/customers.

Here are the best practices.

Benefit-focused headline

You don't want your visitors to bounce because they don't instantly understand what you're offering. Ensure your headline clearly communicates the benefits your guide/course provides.

Imagery that illustrates the offer

Choose imagery that illustrates your offer. If it's a guide, show them an image of the guide. If it's a course, show imagery that relates to the course. Play on their aspirations. For example, if it's a course in maritime engineering, show someone working on a boat with an exciting backdrop.

Write compelling copy.

Keep it clear and concise. Use verbs at the beginning of sentences to drive action. For more on writing powerful copy, check out our 'Engaging Copy' section of this guide.

The screenshot shows the Grand Canyon University (GCU) landing page for engineering degrees. The header includes the GCU logo and the tagline 'FIND YOUR PURPOSE'. The main content area features a woman working on a project, with a headline 'Earn Your Engineering Degree From GCU' and a sub-headline 'State-of-the-Art Facilities | Apply for free'. Below the headline is a form titled 'Find Your Engineering Program and Get More Information'. The form includes a dropdown menu to 'Select an engineering degree that interests you', a radio button to 'Are you or your spouse affiliated with the U.S. military?', a radio button to 'Have you attended high school or college outside of the U.S.?', and a radio button to 'Are you a U.S. Citizen?'. A yellow arrow points to the headline. At the bottom right is a yellow 'Continue' button.

Include a lead form above the fold.

If you're trying to capture people's details, you want to make it as easy as possible. Include the lead form before the fold and then CTAs below the fold. If they click on the CTA, it should take them to the top of the page back to the lead form. If you require a lot of information on the lead form, reduce psychological friction by utilising a multi-step form.

Remember, only ask for what you need. The required information must correspond with the value of the offer. For example, if it's a simple course guide, you likely wouldn't need more info than their name, email, and potentially country of residence – asking for their phone number may put them off downloading it.

Clear call-to-action

If you're trying to drive action, use a clear CTA button that uses a verb. For example, 'SUBMIT', 'APPLY NOW', or 'DOWNLOAD'. Make the CTA a bright colour that stands out from the rest of the page.

GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

FIND YOUR PURPOSE™

State-of-the-Art Facilities | Apply for Free

Earn Your Engineering Degree From GCU

There is no better place to earn an engineering bachelor's degree than at GCU. From new classroom buildings to state-of-the-art facilities, GCU is the perfect place to call home while studying for one of the most dynamic and fastest-growing fields of our future.

Find Your Engineering Program and Get More Information

Select an engineering degree that interests you *

Select an engineering degree

Are you or your spouse affiliated with the U.S. military? *

☐ Yes ☒ No

Have you attended high school or college outside of the U.S.? *

☐ Yes ☒ No

Are you a U.S. Citizen? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

By submitting this form, you give Grand Canyon University your consent to use automated technology to call, text and e-mail you at the information above, including your wireless number, if needed, regarding educational services. Please keep that you are not required to provide this consent to

Continue →

Social proof.

Getting your visitor to give up their details isn't easy. The transaction must be relevant and the value must be justified. Justify the value by providing social proof. This could be testimonials, reviews, customer logos, a NET promoter score, or statistics – anything that gives your offer credibility.

Make your page responsive.

This one is simple. Ensure your visitors have a great viewing experience on all devices.

Optimise for search.

You want your landing page to be discoverable on search engines. For example, if it's a course page, optimise it with the keywords your prospective students are searching for.

At Homerton

At Homerton we usually admit between two and four new Chemical Engineering and Biotechnology students each year. All lectures and laboratories are organised by the department. Lectures are concentrated into the mornings, leaving the afternoons free for laboratory classes, project meetings, small group teaching, presentations and seminars. Students learning in the same College are likely to be in a supervision group together so they can work and prepare teaching sessions together.

Hear from our students

"I've had a fantastic experience studying chemical engineering at Homerton: in particular the strong sense of community in the college and the hard work that goes into making the college an enjoyable place to learn. The staff are so friendly and supportive and there are lots of events and opportunities to take part in outside of an academic environment. Despite Chemical Engineering being a smaller subject, I've found sharing my experiences with the students in other years invaluable, and have enjoyed studying at a higher level so much that next year I'll be pursuing a PhD. The course has been very varied and interesting and I've had the opportunity to do lots of high quality lab work." - Thomas Slater

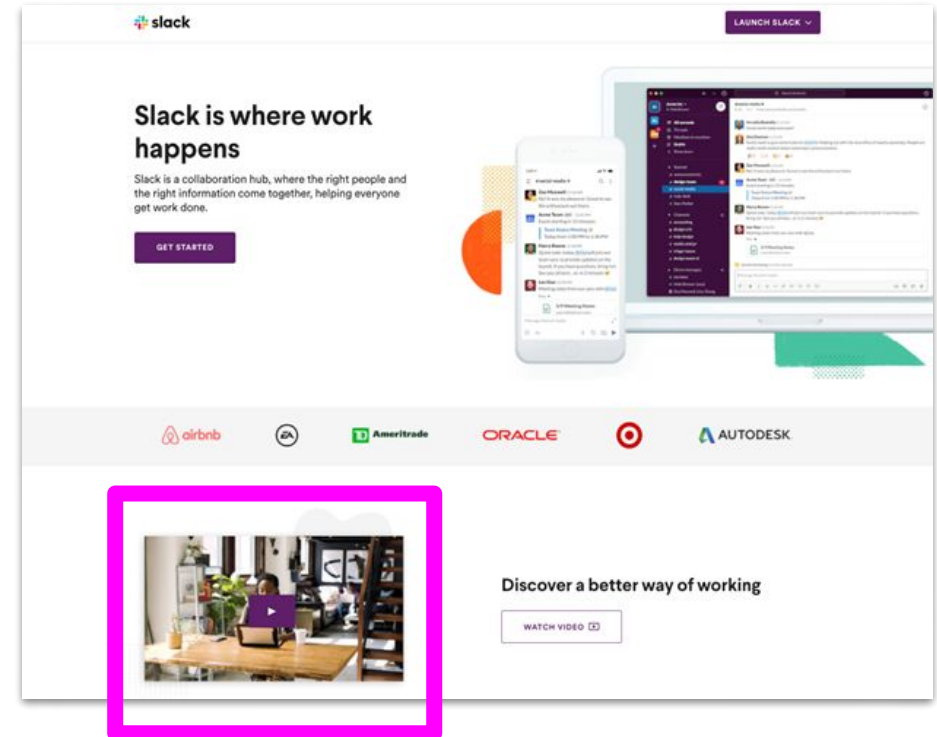
Quick Links

- > [Hear from our students](#)
- > [At Cambridge](#)
- > [What We Look For](#)
- > [How To Apply](#)
- > [Career](#)

Use video where necessary.

Video engagement rates are much higher than simple text. Include an engaging video that explains the benefits of your offer and answers potential objections. This will increase conversion rates. Equally, use video to provide social proof. Interview current students and alumni regarding the course/student experience. Break the interviews down into the following topics:

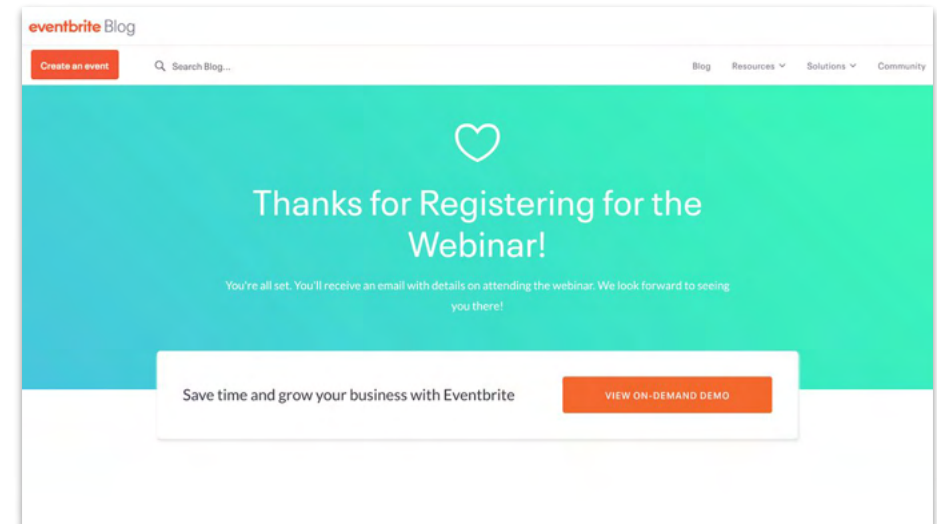
- Course content.
- How engaging the course is/was.
- What practical experience they received during the course.
- What doors have opened directly as a result of the course.
- What life is like at your institution.
- Would they recommend the course/institution?

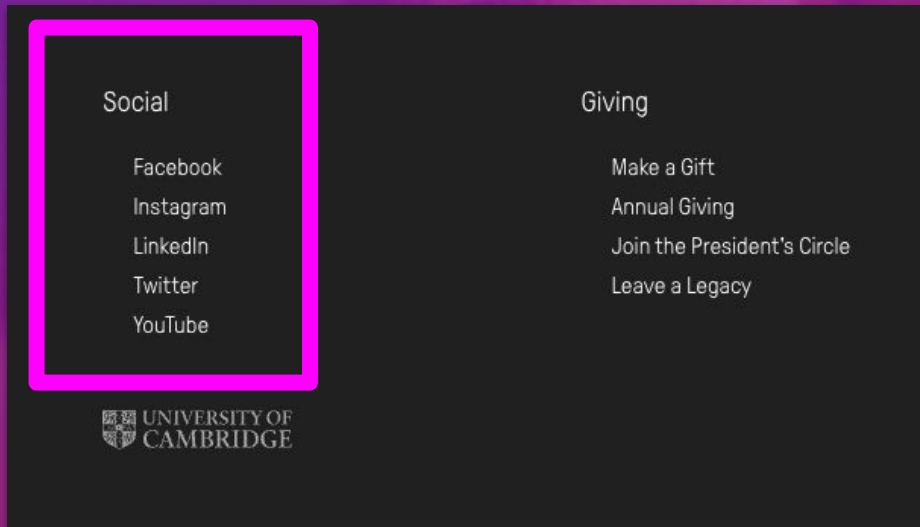


Thank you page.

Once the prospective student has submitted their details through a form, you must provide them with the offer they've requested. Simply displaying an inline message stating, "Thank you for submitting the form", is not enough. Send them to a thank you page where they can access the offer instantly. Include a 'thank you' message too. Follow up with an email linking to the thank you page.

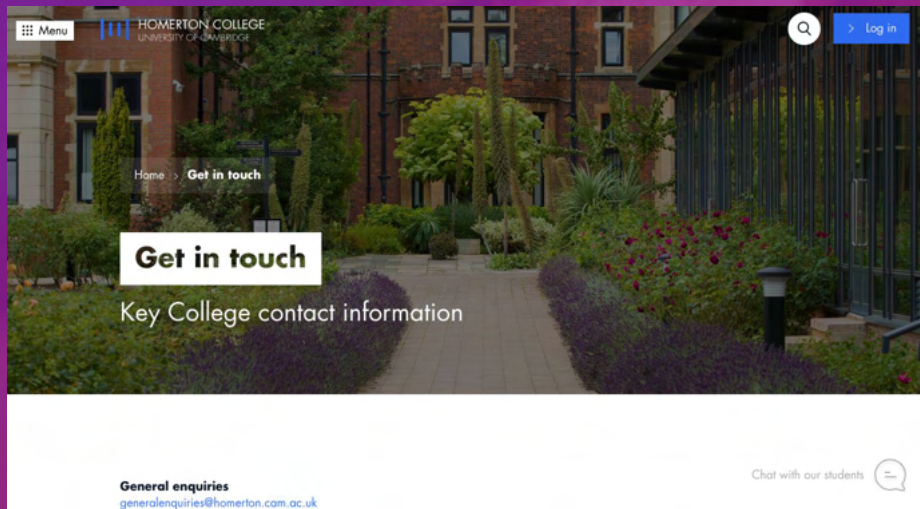
A thank you page has two added benefits over solely sending them a follow-up email. If you link to it in your follow-up email, it encourages site revisits at a later date when they want to access the content again. It has a menu nav so when they revisit the page to re-access the content, they can explore your site again. You can include further resources on a thank you page to push them towards enrolling, such as 'Chat to one of our students'.





Social media integration.

Ensure you include links to your social media icons in your website's footer. Also, include social sharing icons at the top and bottom of your blogs and pillar pages.



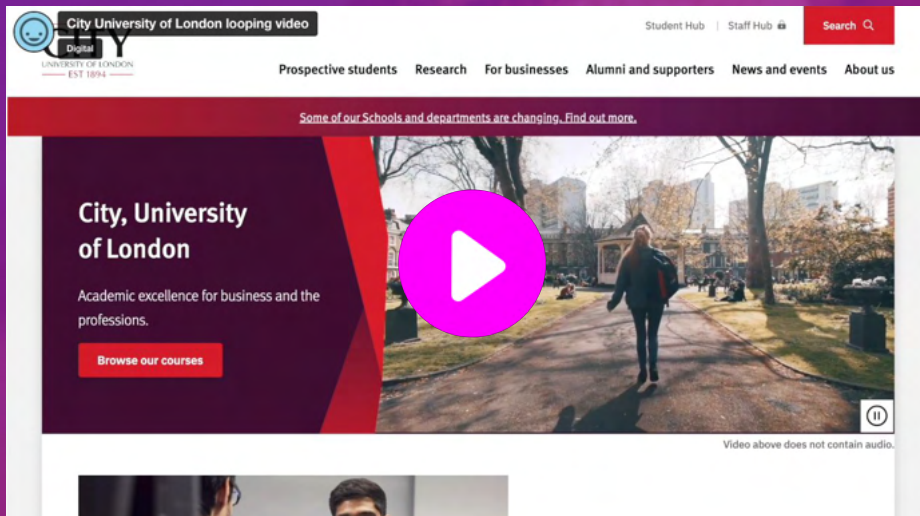
Contact Us.

Create a specific 'Contact Us' page with your general enquiries contact, address details, and press enquiry contact. For a better user experience, be sure to also include more specific contact addresses, such as 'admissions@xxx' or 'alumni@xxx'. Add further value and drive engagement by including a news feed within your Contact Us page.



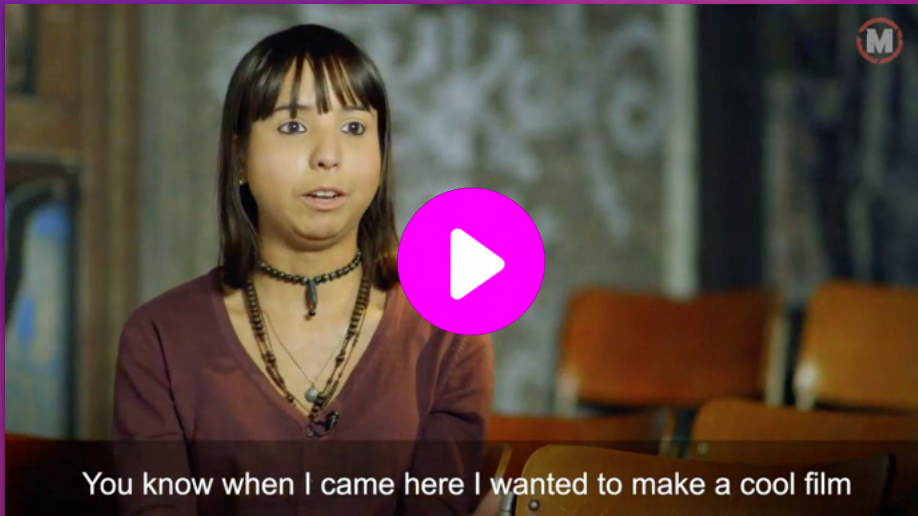
Video.

Video is an essential tool for marketing in Education and particularly Higher Education marketing. 87 percent of video marketers reported that video gives them a positive ROI. We've presented video ideas throughout this guide. However, for brevity, here is a succinct list of 16 video ideas to boost student leads.



1 |

Loop video backgrounds on your website to show the life and vibrancy of your institution.
H5



You know when I came here I wanted to make a cool film

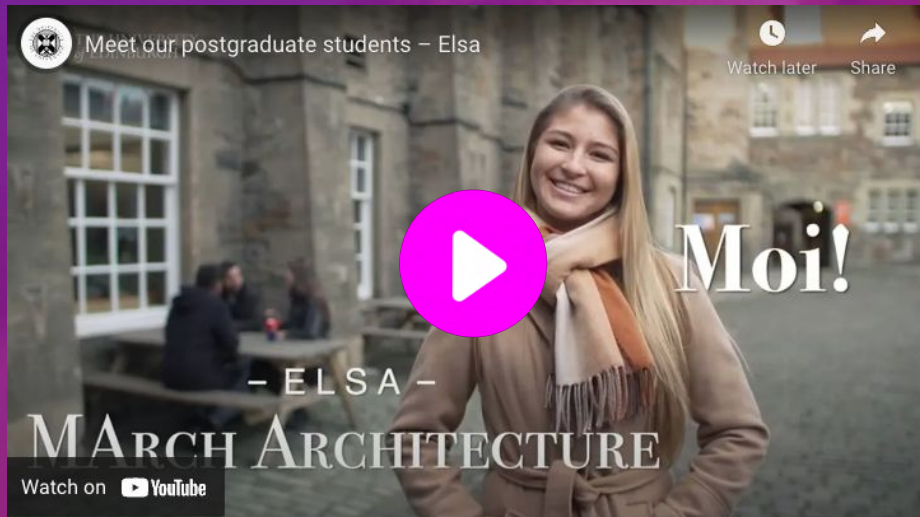
2 |

Feature behind-the-scenes footage of any practical experience students receive (e.g. shooting on a famous film set).



3 |

Use videos within landing pages to explain the benefits of an offer.



4 |

Video current students and alumni on life at your school, college, or university.



5 |

Video current students and alumni on their course experience and what doors it opened as a result.



6 |

Create student vlogs showcasing life at your institution.



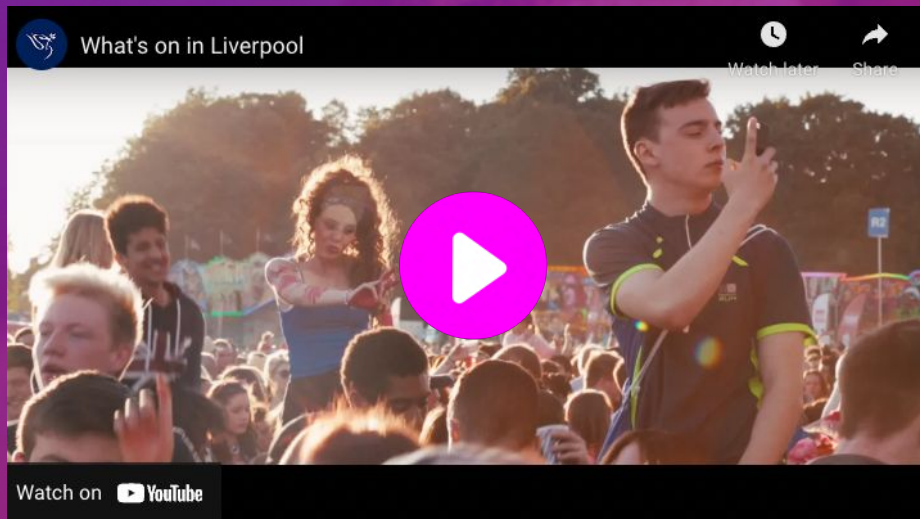
7 |

Use video to showcase your accommodation.



8 |

Video interview any famous alumni or partners.



9 |

Video social events to showcase the great social life your institution and city have to offer.



10 |

Create video competitions on social media and set up your own hashtag.



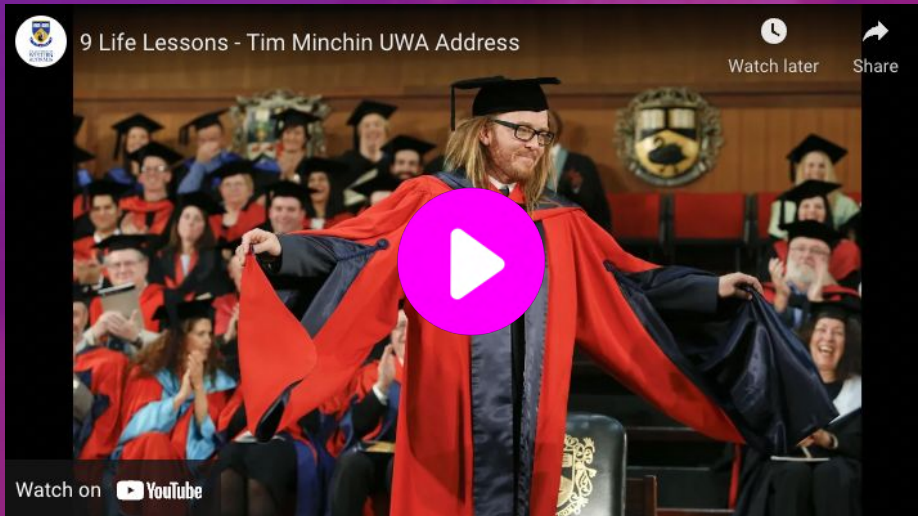
11 |

Introduce faculty members and ask them FAQs regarding a course. Also include tips about their own careers and goals.



12 |

Share student survival tips including budgeting, meal planning, getting involved with clubs etc. Living off Greggs sausage rolls for three months is not an option (true story).



13 |

Video any guest speakers and share on your website, newsletter, email automations, and social media.



14 |

Provide video tips on the dos and don'ts during the application process and interview.



15 |

Use your lecturers to do what they do best – bring education to life. Eric Laithwaite was a professor of heavy electrical engineering at Imperial College London in 1964. The video below has amassed over 6 million views on YouTube!



16 |

Provide study music, like the University of Leeds teaming up with the massively popular LofiGirl channel.

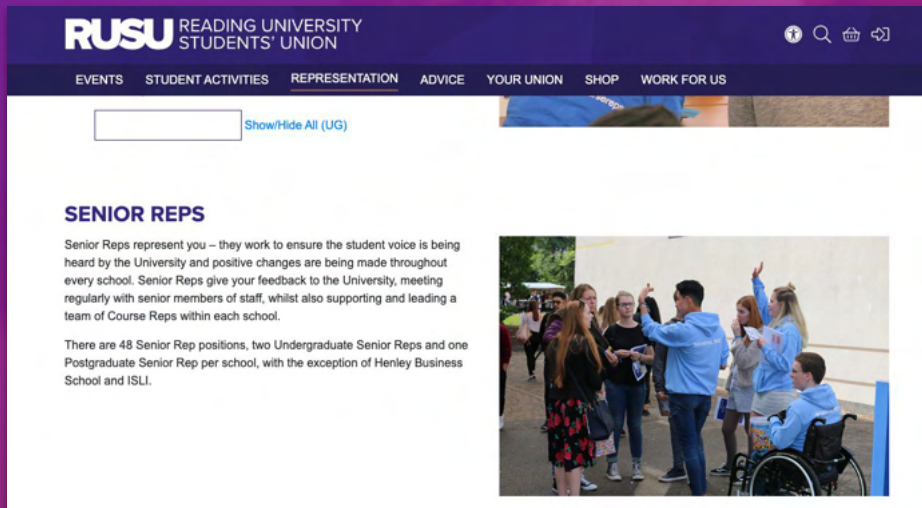
Feedback and social proof.

To reiterate, your current students are your most powerful marketing asset. Education.com conducted a robust student survey, completed by over 30,000 prospective and current students representing 192 nationalities. The report showed that students are now more likely to consider peer reviews than rankings when making a decision on where to study.

There are a number of ways you can provide social proof on your website and within your marketing channels. Here are some ideas:

- Conduct student interviews and gather reviews and testimonials.
- Showcase successful alumni stories (including famous alumni).
- Highlight any positive feedback on social media.





How to get student reviews for your university or education institution.

There are two types of reviews and testimonials you can gather: internal or external.

Internal reviews.

Academic reps.

An academic rep is an undergraduate or postgraduate who is elected by their peers to represent students in a specific department. Their aim is to gather feedback and improve the academic experience.

Customer loyalty survey

Back to customer feedback Publish

Delivery Customize Follow-up Thank you Recipients Options Preview Summary

Customize the appearance of your survey email

While the wording of the NPS question stays the same the world over, you can customize the look and feel of your survey to suit your brand and website.

Company name

Service Hub

19

Choose your colors

Or select a custom color

6a78d1

From: Service Hub

Subject: Please help us improve

Share your feedback on Service Hub

Your opinion matters.

Please take a moment to rate us from 0-10 below.

How likely is it that you would recommend Service Hub to a friend or colleague?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not at all likely Extremely likely

Annual student surveys

These are surveys designed to find out what students think you do well and what can be improved. We utilise marketing automation through HubSpot to help a range of education providers conduct automated feedback surveys at key moments. We also build in automated follow-up emails based on their responses. For example, if they score the education provider high on a particular area, we may trigger a follow-up email asking them for permission to use some of their quotes on the education provider's website as testimonials.

You can also use the HubSpot platform to embed surveys on key pages of your site as slide-in or dropdown boxes. We're HubSpot partners, so if you'd like to chat with us about how we can help you unlock the power of marketing automation in Education, get in touch now.



WHAT UNI?

Getting external reviews.

Encourage happy students to leave reviews on trusted sites such as WhatUni, StudentCrowd, and EDUopinions. You can also utilise social media to build reviews. Ensure your review tab is active on Facebook and be sure to kindly respond to any reviews.

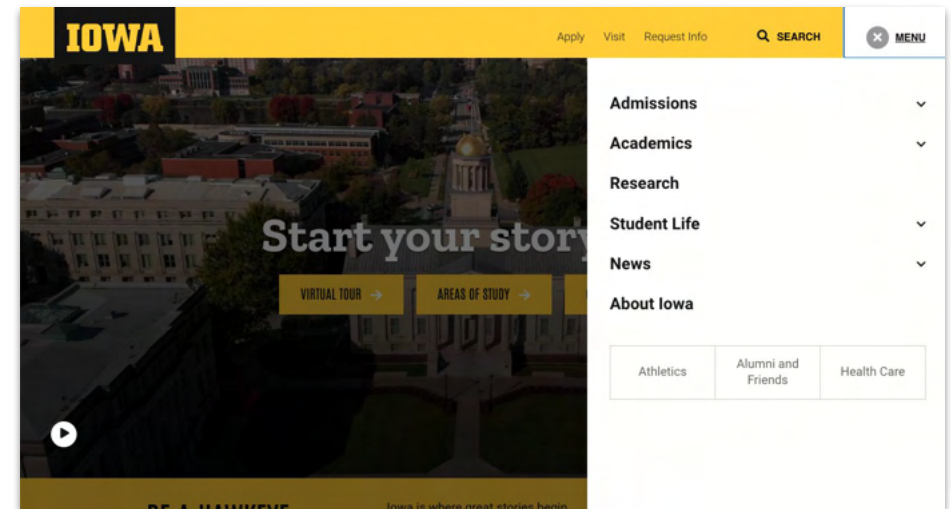
Use polls to collect feedback on Instagram and ask questions in Stories. Use social monitoring tools to find any mentions of your university too. Just be sure to contact the person who made the comment and ask for their approval to use the quote first.

Information architecture.

Put simply, how easy is it for prospective students to get the information they're looking for? We could talk all day about information architecture. But for the scope of this guide, here are the most important elements.

Cognitive load.

The amount of information a person can process at any given time. Are there multiple call-to-actions that leave them paralysed with indecision? Are there too many menu options which make it hard to navigate? Keep it simple.

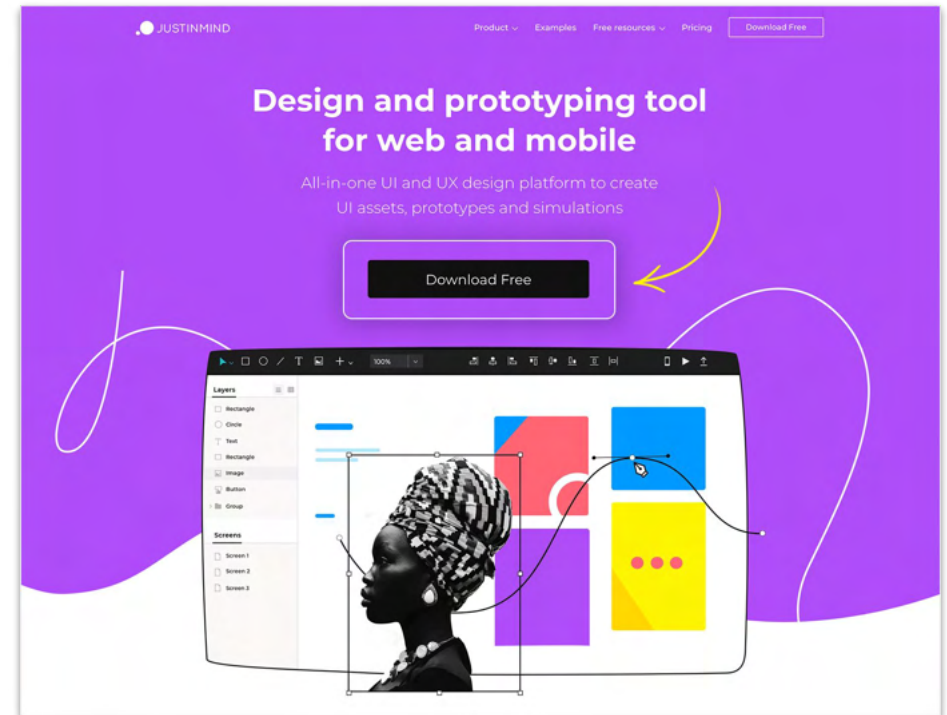


Mental models and navigational cues.

A great definition of a mental model comes from Jakob Nielsen at the Nielsen Norman Group. Put simply, it's “what the user believes about the system at hand”. Your prospective students will have their own expectations on how your website information will be presented to them. Going against this could cause confusion and frustration. Some examples are:

- buttons appearing in a coloured box
- hyperlinks underlined and in a different colour
- the logo located in the top left takes them back to the home page
- site navigation will appear at the top of the website

Use mental models to create a user experience that makes sense. This links closely to your design language mentioned earlier in this guide. Sure, you can experiment with your website layout and design. But don't try to be too creative at the expense of user experience.



Navigation and hierarchy.

Navigation and hierarchy is arguably the most important element of your website user experience. Failing to carefully consider the prospective student's needs and user journey will result in a poor experience. Depending on the complexity of the site, we usually aim to ensure users can find the information they need with a maximum of three clicks. Check out our example to the right with Homerton College, part of the University of Cambridge.



A poor experience will result in far less student leads. Get it right. Consider the following elements.

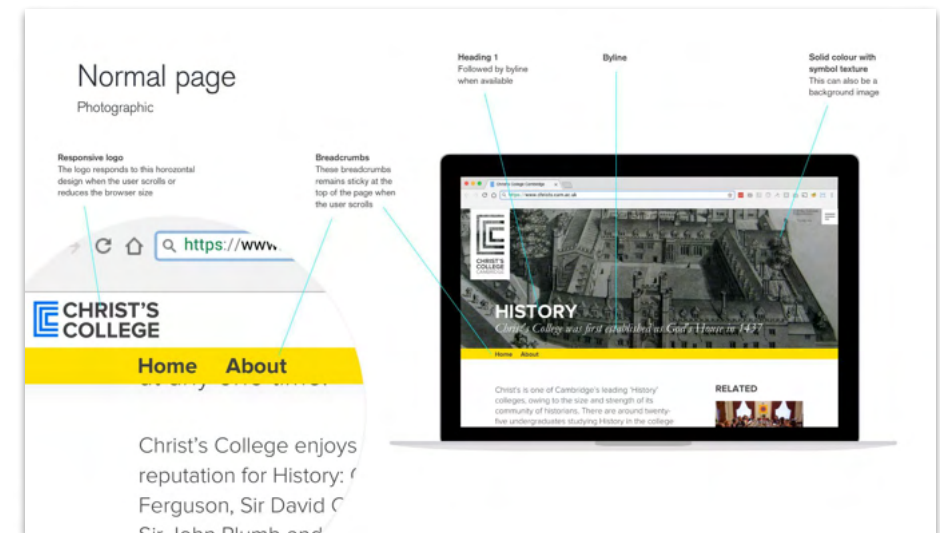
Breadcrumb menu.

A breadcrumb menu is a secondary navigation system. It's useful when the site has a number of subcategories. For example, you may offer a variety of courses in different sectors (e.g. 'Legal Services').

Within each sector is a practice area (e.g. 'Environmental Law'). Within each practice area is a number of courses (e.g. 'Contaminated Land - A Look at the Key Regulatory Regimes').

Your breadcrumb menu would look like this:

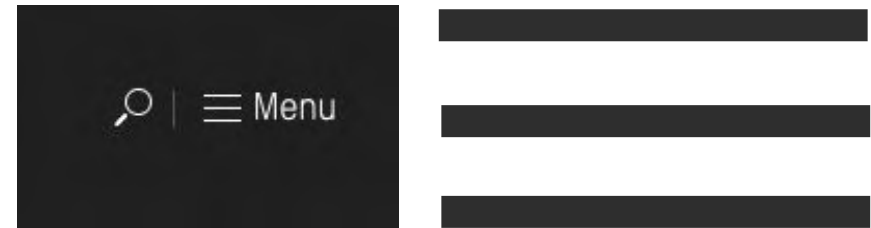
Courses > Legal Services > Environmental Law >
Contaminated Land - A Look at the Key Regulatory Regimes



Hamburger menu.

A hamburger menu isn't quite as tasty as it sounds. However, it can satisfy a user's navigational cravings. The hamburger menu symbol is found everywhere, from apps, websites, and videogames. It's particularly useful for mobile where screen space is limited. It makes pages look much cleaner. And it's great for secondary engagement. For example, you may want your user to take a single action on a page and don't want to distract them with a large list of menu items.

However, there are cons to a hamburger menu. It adds an extra step for your users to get to their desired action. Equally, it makes pages less visible, effectively 'burying' your pages.



Navigation cues.

Navigation cues are used to guide your website users in a particular direction or to take a particular action. There's a range of clever navigational cues you can employ on your website. Here are just a few examples:

- Use of colour to split course category pages.
- CTAs in a bright, contrasting colour encouraging users to click them.
- Arrows pointing towards forms.
- Use of background imagery that frames a particular area you want the user to take an action (e.g. someone looking towards a form or a CTA).
- Mouse icon at bottom of the page to prompt scrolling down.
- Showing 'Top Courses' slightly above the fold to encourage users to scroll down.

A good web design team will utilise a range of navigational cues to optimise your user experience and boost leads.

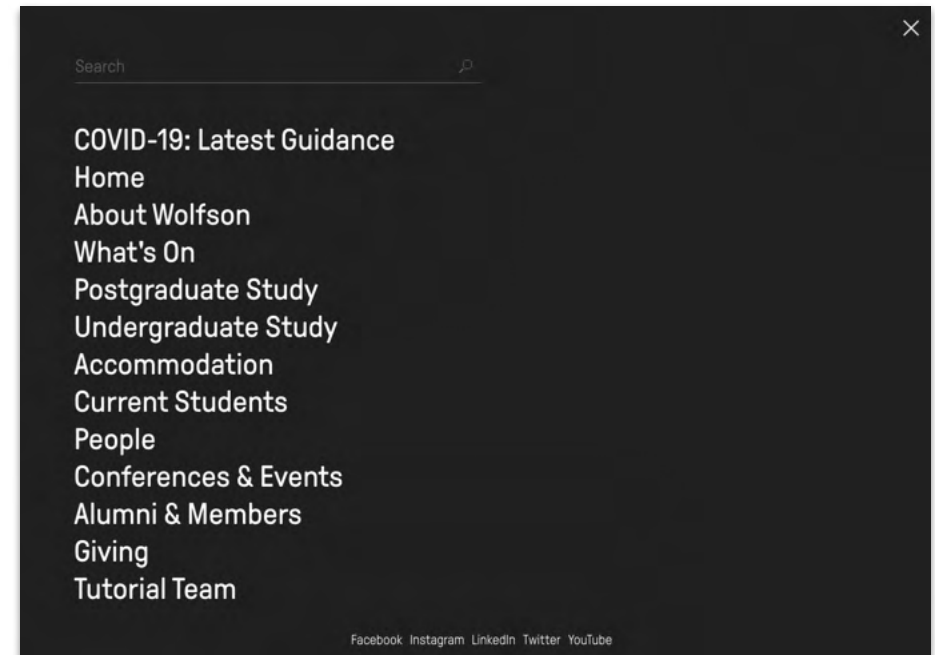


Taxonomies.

This is basically how you group information together. In website terms, this often means categories and tags. Categories are a bit like movie genres — you have main genres like comedy, horror, sci-fi, thriller, drama and romance. However, some films fit into multiple genres, like rom-com or horror-comedy.

The same thing applies to content. For example, let's say you have a blog post called, "How to break into the film industry". This would be of interest to multiple courses as there are many different roles in the film industry. In this case, there would be a category called "subject area" that both courses and blog posts have. The CMS would be able to automatically display the blog post on course pages with the "Film & TV" subject area category.

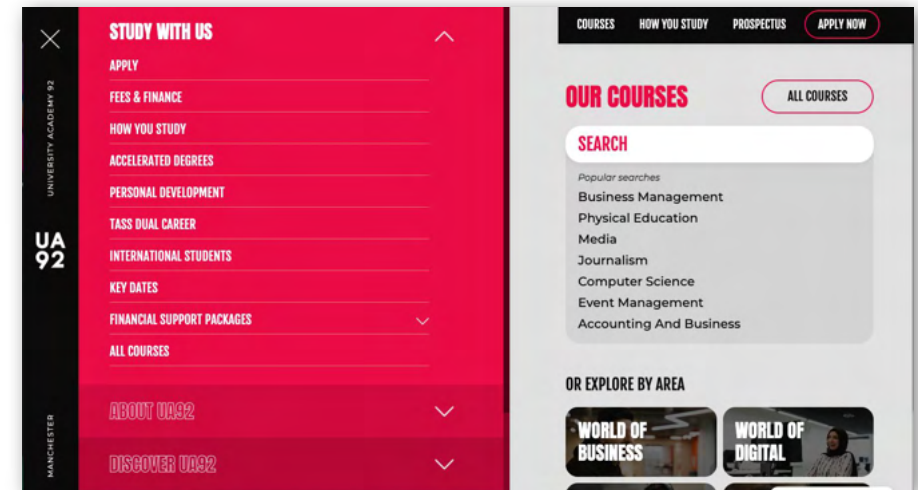
Tags are more freeform — back to our movie analogy, tags could be used to apply descriptions like "witty" or "irreverent". In our educational website example, you may apply job roles to courses as tags or the more traditional use of tags on blog posts.



What makes good website navigation and hierarchy?

Ultimately, good navigation design is about maintaining clarity. For example, a navigation bar will usually link to designated landing pages which are labelled with text that makes the most sense to the user. And if you have a 'Courses' landing page in your menu navigation, you would name it so. You wouldn't call it 'Expand your knowledge', as users may not understand that if they click on that section it would take them to courses.

Navigation design should also align with user goals. Think about the various entry points on your site and where the user might be in their journey. When we work with clients, we usually conduct deep research into the various user journeys. This starts with internal and external interviews. We then create interactive wireframes and test the user journey internally to identify any friction points. Then, it's time to test it with the people that matter – prospective students. Read on to discover how to truly take your website experience to the next level with user-centred design.



User-centred design.

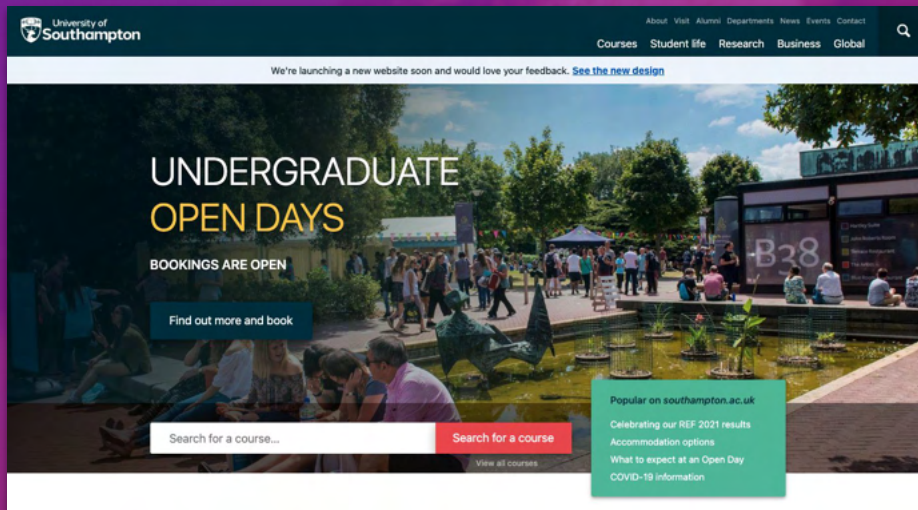
Buyer personas should influence your website design and functionality. However, it shouldn't stop there.

“Whilst personas have some value in providing very general views of potential users, there is also a risk in creating content or systems for these very generic ‘named individuals’,” says Ayala Gordon, Associate Director of Digital User Experience at the University of Southampton.

Gordon spearheaded the OneWeb project at the university, a multi-year digital transformation programme focused on user-centred design (UCD).

“The OneWeb approach took a user-centred design view, an iterative design process that focuses on the users and their needs in each phase of the design process,” says Gordon. “Essentially, it allows us to create solutions that meet a variety of needs rather than using an ‘umbrella’ persona.”

UCD enables design teams to involve users throughout the design process via a variety of research and design techniques.

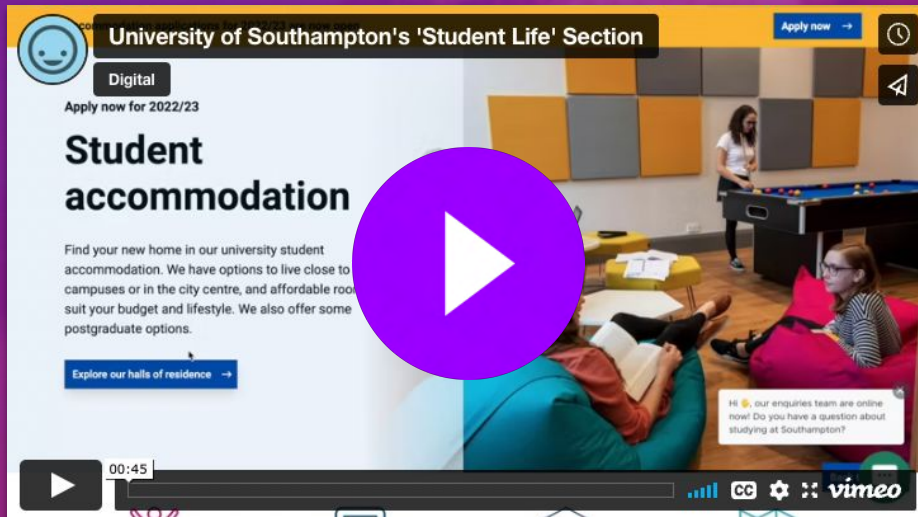


“

Involve your real-life website users in the development process so they can test the site and provide feedback. Iterate during each stage of the design process.



*Ayala Gordon, Associate Director of Digital User Experience,
University of Southampton*



UCD delivers a highly usable and intuitive website for your users. If you break down each interaction and goal (rather than general goals outlined in buyer personas), the main elements you will need to understand are:

- who your users are
- what they're trying to do
- how they're trying to do it now
- how their life or work influences what they do and how
- how they use and experience existing services

A key component of UCD is user testing. A robust user-testing process can yield incredible results.

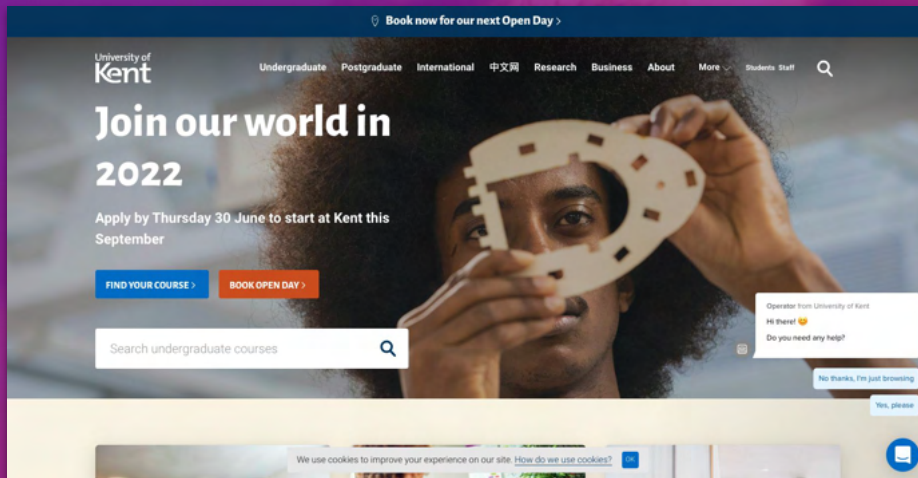
“A great outcome from our user testing is our ‘Student life’ section of the site,” says Gordon. “It has been redesigned for simplified journeys with more direct routes to completing key user goals. For example, applying for accommodation now follows patterns users are familiar with on commercial sites, allowing them to select rooms and locations which meet their individual needs. Users can now easily compare and save the key details of their accommodation options before applying.”


Website branding.

Firstly, what's a brand? It isn't just your visual identity. Your visual identity consists of your logo, typography, media, colours, and creative design. Your brand is your mission/purpose/vision, positioning and target audiences, offering/USP, values, personality, culture, voice and visual identity.

Your brand is how your audience feels about the way you use your visual identity and other elements to communicate who you are and what you stand for. Start by defining your “target brand”. How do you want to your audience to feel? Then, you must understand how your audience feels about you to get your “perceived brand”. The starting point is to simply ask them.

We recently conducted some research ahead of a web redesign for a top-five-ranked university. We asked a group of A-level students their thoughts on various university website designs and messaging. This enabled us to understand the “perceived brand”. One student exclaimed, “It just feels like they're flirting with you [laughs].” That's the power of great branding in Education. It creates an emotional connection.





What emotions do you want your website visitors to experience?

Once you have your target brand and perceived brand, it's time to set KPIs to shift the perception to meet the target brand. So how do you shift these perceptions? Community comes from people, not buildings. Students are looking for a home which means somewhere they relate to.

A good starting point when defining your brand is to consider the emotions you want your prospective students to feel. Are you trying to be their best buddy and want them to feel at home? Are you trying to make them feel inspired to become anything they want to be? Perhaps you're trying to make them feel in awe of your impressive heritage and excellent results? Write the emotions down. Now, consider both visual elements and messaging that convey this.

For example, if you want to make them feel at home, go for a friendly and informal greeting on your home page, such as "Welcome home.", or "Come and say hello.". If you have a vibrant international community, then you could combine this by saying "Hello" in different languages:

"Well, hello! Bonjour. Salut. Hola. Guten tag. Salve. Nǐn hǎo. Olá. Asalaam alaikum. Konnichiwa. Anyoung haseyo. Zdravstvuyte!"

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF COLOUR

contra

RED

Positive	Negative
Power	Anger
Passion	Danger
Energy	Warning
Strength	Defiance
Excitement	Aggression

ORANGE

Positive	Negative
Courage	Deprivation
Confidence	Frustration
Warmth	Frivolity
Energy	Immaturity
Friendliness	Ignorance

YELLOW

Positive	Negative
Optimism	Caution
Warmth	Irrationality
Happiness	Fear
Creativity	Anxiety
Extraversion	Frustration

GREEN

Positive	Negative
Health	Boredom
Hope	Stagnation
Freshness	Envy
Nature	Blandness
Prosperity	Sickness

BLUE

Positive	Negative
Trust	Coldness
Loyalty	Aloofness
Logic	Emotionless
Serenity	Unfriendliness
Security	Uncaring

PURPLE

Positive	Negative
Wisdom	Introversion
Luxury	Decadence
Wealth	Suppression
Spirituality	Extravagance
Sophistication	Moodiness

BLACK

Positive	Negative
sophistication	Oppression
Security	Coldness
Power	Menace
Elegance	Heaviness
Authority	Sadness

WHITE

Positive	Negative
Freshness	Sterility
Clarity	Coldness
Purity	Unfriendliness
Simplicity	Elitism
Sophistication	Emptiness

If you want them to feel inspired, include a range of success stories from your students in video format. If you want them to feel in awe of your impressive results, hit them straight away with a power stat.

The use of colour can also create an emotional reaction. Consider your visual elements. For example, blue is often associated with trust, peace, loyalty, and competence. Orange is associated with confidence, success, and sociability. Naturally, if you're an education provider for the arts, you may want to use a very creative and colourful palette.

Again, do your research. We often did deeper than just asking prospective students what they think of a particular education provider's brand. We ask department heads and current students, as well as conducting surveys to find out what the brand means to them. Showcase these perceptions through video.

In summary, ask your students and staff what the university, college, or school means to them. Use annual incentivised surveys to make sure you're on target. Don't get stuck behind with outdated perceptions of your institution. Perceptions can change as the world evolves. So should your brand.



Thank you Contra. The core landing pages and subject pages are easy to navigate and contain lots of easily accessible info. The key thing is there's a huge amount of information to include from different parts of the college, which have got very different aims. It's really impressive how all those different audiences can land on the home page and easily navigate to find the information you need. Excellent.



Dr Paul Elliott, Director of Studies in Biology and Scientific Admissions Tutor, Homerton College, University of Cambridge

A man wearing a dark cap and a light-colored t-shirt is looking down. The image is overlaid with a purple and blue gradient and scattered confetti. The text "Stage 7:" is positioned to the left of the man.

Stage 7:

Create a content strategy.



Inbound strategy.

Traditionally, marketing and sales have taken more of an outbound approach. The outbound approach pushes messages out to would-be students and tries to connect with them through an outreach strategy. Over time, consumers (including prospective students) have become a little weary of this type of media (and perhaps a little desensitised to it too). This is where inbound marketing has taken over.

Inbound vs Outbound.

Outbound marketing refers to the more traditional methods of marketing your product or service. We refer to them as “push tactics” because you’re essentially taking your product or service and pushing it in front of your audience. Specifically, this includes ads (digital, social media, print, TV, radio), email blasts, cold calling, direct mail, and anything else that targets a large audience. Customers are sought out and communication is one-way.

For example, the University of Cambridge asked us to create a cinema advert as part of its #BeCambridge campaign. This was used to challenge the preconception that the university only accepted applications from students from a wealthy and privileged demographic. It purposefully chose to feature students who weren’t traditionally from these backgrounds and built inclusivity into its brand messaging. In contrast, inbound marketing is a marketing strategy which focuses on ‘pulling’ high-quality leads to your business. It’s more subtle and looks to align with audiences through an understanding of their personas.



At its core, inbound marketing is about creating value for your target audience by understanding their challenges and creating resources that help them overcome their obstacles. This builds trust and authority by demonstrating expertise in a non-invasive, human way. Inbound marketing is largely centred around quality content, how you market that content, and how it helps you rank in search engines.

Typical inbound marketing channels include SEO, blogging, social media marketing, and influencer marketing. We'll go into more detail within stage eight of this guide. For now, it's important to understand the methodology and map out the user journey. We can then start considering what content prospective students need at each stage.



Attract.

The four stages of inbound marketing.

Attract [Awareness]

Your prospective students may have been referred to your website via search engines, digital ads, social media, OOH (Out of Home) advertising, or outreach activities. At this stage, they'll know little of your institution. They'll want to learn more and assess your credibility.

Calls-to-action:

- [Subscribe To Newsletter](#)
- [Read Student Stories](#)
- [Read Alumni Success Stories](#)
- [Read Life About School](#)
- [Download Guide](#)

Engage.

Engage [Consideration].

Your prospective students now have a good level of knowledge about your institution and will be considering applying. Now they must weigh up their options. They'll need to understand how their decision will impact them financially, socially, and from an educational perspective.

Calls-to-action:

- Take A Virtual Campus Tour
- View Courses
- Fill Out Enquiry Form
- Contact Us
- Calculate Costs
- View Pricing

This stage is about helping them overcome any challenges they may be experiencing and building trust. For example, Birmingham University has its own 'Get Ready For Uni Hub' that provides useful resources for students.

This includes:

- Budget planners and finance guides (made fun)
- Study, productivity and wellness tips
- Vlogs from real students

Close.

Close [Decision].

In the decision stage, student prospects are looking to finalise their decision. This is where they require one-to-one communication so they feel they're making the right choice applying to your institution. They may speak to current students and alumni, visit the campus, or become highly engaged with your social media content.

Calls-To-Action:

- Speak To Students
- Speak To Staff
- Speak To Alumni
- Book A Visit

Delight.

Delight.

Your current students and alumni are your marketing team. We keep hammering home this point with good reason... because marketing is like a flywheel. Create incredible student experiences and your current students will promote your institution to prospective students. Then, the cycle continues.

After deciding to attend your school, college, or university, this stage is about turning them into evangelists. This would include social events, networking opportunities, careers services and student profiles. The more you make them feel like they're part of a community, the more they'll feel like they're making an impact.

Calls-to-action:

- Register
- Refer
- Donate
- Attend

Read on to find out how to build successful student marketing campaigns utilising these four stages.

Stage 8:

Plan your campaigns.



A plan for the future.


Spending time planning your campaigns will increase success. In stage seven of this guide, you considered all the essential elements of the inbound marketing approach. You now have a good understanding of the different stages a prospective student will take before applying to your institution. These are Attract [Awareness], Engage [Consideration], Close [Decision], and Delight.

If you can draw your audience through each of these stages, you're more likely to convert them from casual visitors to student evangelists. Now it's time to plan your campaigns. Let's examine what you can do to engage students at each stage.




Attract.

Attraction is the first stage of your campaign. It's where your prospective student will first encounter you and thirst for more. This stage is about pulling them onto your website, educating them about your institution, and building up credibility. A few key channels that you can use during this stage are digital ads, out of home advertising, blogging, social media, content, and SEO. Let's drill down into each of these.

 **The University of Manchester**
Sponsored

There's still time to apply to our online, part-time International Fashion Marketing MSc. Sign up to register your interest & receive personalised support & consultation with our dedicated course advisor.



[MSc International Fashion Marketing - September 2022](#)
[Study online from wherever you are based](#)

Sign Up

Digital ads.

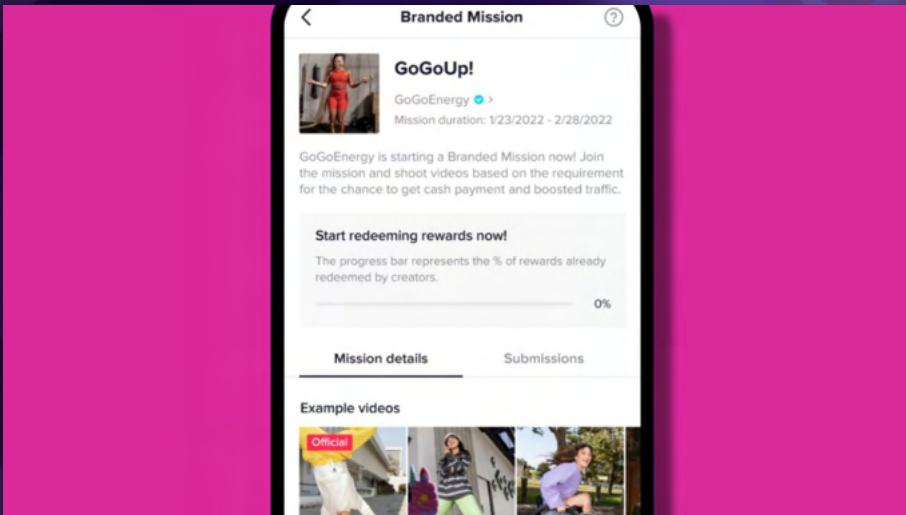
Digital ads are paid-for spots on social media sites, affiliate sites, or any space across the web where your message and call-to-action can be served. It's important to think about ad placement and which channels will be the most effective for you. There are a few options, so it's good to know the pros and cons of each.

Social media ads.

These are ads shown to users of social media platforms, usually within their message feed. They're also shown in other areas of the user journey. For example, Instagram Reels shows display ads and YouTube shows ads either before or during videos. The great advantage of social media ads is that they're heavily targeted. Facebook, for example, knows a great deal about its users (sex, age, geography, likes, time they're using the platform/app etc.). This makes for a truly targeted and therefore relevant attraction experience (increasing the likelihood of a click-through).

And don't underestimate the power of TikTok for capturing Gen Z's attention. Tik Tok released 'branded missions' in 2022. This harnesses the power of User Generated Content (UGC) to attract your audience. In three simple steps, you can gain access to some of the most influential content creators on TikTok that already have a captive student audience.

1. You set your "Branded Mission" (the kind of content you want people to create) and the app briefs creators that are a fit with your university.
2. Creators submit their videos.
3. The highest performing videos are boosted as sponsored ads.



The advertisement is a white rectangular box with a thin grey border. At the top left is the University of London crest logo. To its right, the text 'University of London' is in bold, with 'Sponsored' below it. The main text reads: 'Study an internationally recognised MSc in Management online from anywhere in the world.' Below this is a large red rectangular area. Inside the red area, on the left, is the University of London crest and the text 'UNIVERSITY OF LONDON'. On the right is the Birkbeck crest and the text 'Birkbeck UNIVERSITY OF LONDON'. In the center of the red area is the text 'UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL' in white, with a white play button icon over the word 'YOUR'. Below the red area is a black box with the white text 'london.ac.uk/msc-management'. At the bottom left of the white box, the text reads: 'LONDON.AC.UK/MSC-MANAGEMENT', 'Online MSc Management Bursary', and 'Save 15% On Tuition Fees'. At the bottom right is a grey button with the text 'Learn More'.

University of London
Sponsored

Study an internationally recognised MSc in Management online from anywhere in the world.

UNLOCK YOUR POTENTIAL

london.ac.uk/msc-management

LONDON.AC.UK/MSC-MANAGEMENT
Online MSc Management Bursary
Save 15% On Tuition Fees

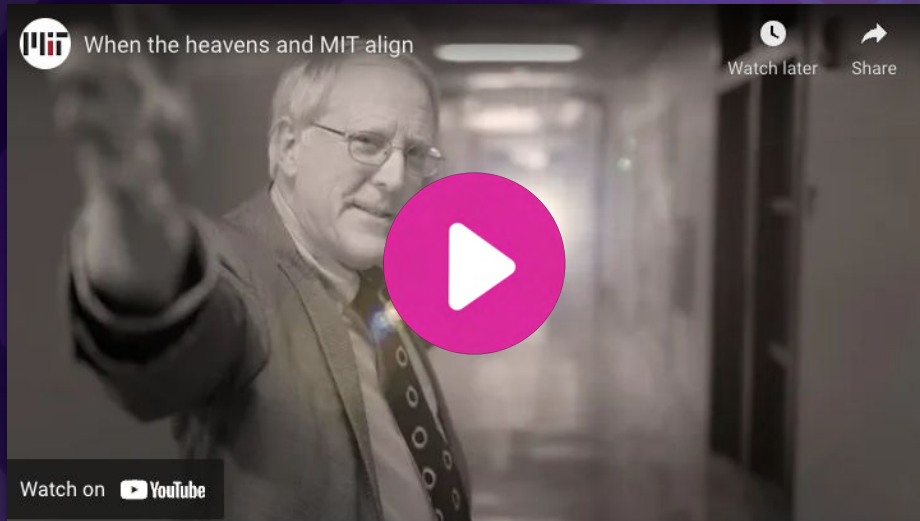
[Learn More](#)

Video ads.

Video ads are, by their nature, far more engaging than their static or even animated counterparts. They provide a great opportunity to identify with and talk ‘directly’ to your target audience. Video ads can also be targeted at particular social media platforms and so earn the advantages already mentioned. YouTube is the number one brand for Gen A and a platform you certainly shouldn’t ignore.

Video ads are a great way to show social proof and boost student leads. These could include the following:

- Behind the scenes footage: If your course provides a lot of practical experience in real-world settings then show the students in action.
- Student profiles: Introduce current students. Get them to talk about why they chose your school, college, or university. Film them sharing details on why they enjoy the course and social life.
- Day in the life: Utilise a vlog format and get students to create content for you. UGC (user-generated content) is highly authentic. This works especially well if it’s a creative course, showcasing a vibrant atmosphere.



When planning your video ads, start with your student personas. What are their desires and concerns? Your video ad should address these. The students within your ads should be similar to the people you're targeting. This will ensure they can relate.

Don't be afraid to think outside the box. High-performing content for higher education providers doesn't have to directly relate to tuition. For example, MIT has a biannual event that draws hundreds of students and thousands of eyes on social media, known as 'Sunset at the infinite corridor'. In January and November, the setting sun aligns perfectly with MIT's 825-foot-long Infinite Corridor. Planetary scientist, Richard Binzel, describes MIThenge as "a major cultural moment on campus... when the heavens and MIT seem to align." The university films it and publishes it on YouTube every year.

The results?

- 3.9K likes
- Over 80,000 views
- Hundred of comments bigging up MIT

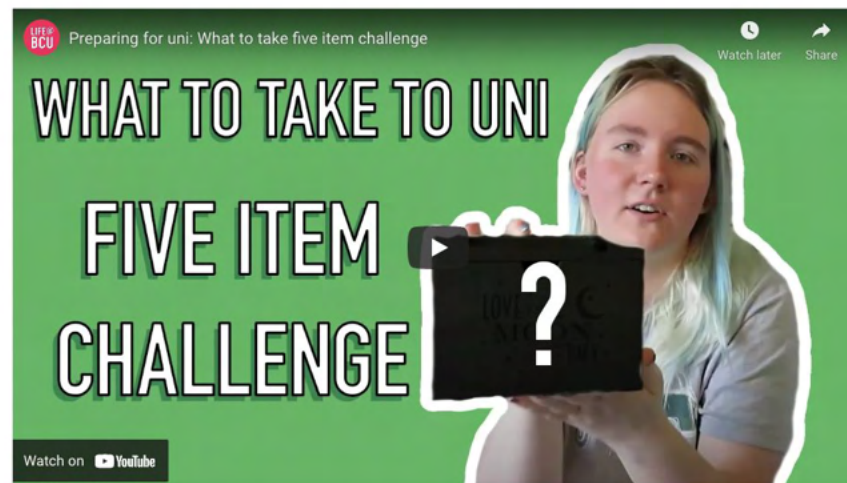
Blogging and SEO.

Blogging is an essential element of your attraction armoury. It's a fantastic opportunity to show your expertise and describe what school, college or uni life might be like. You can also preempt questions an applicant might have and use blogs to address these.

Most importantly, consistent blogging will help you rank better in Google searches. Blogging is a must-have for any successful student marketing strategy. The potential benefits to your search rankings are huge... but there is a science behind the art. Read on to discover the secret sauce to ranking well on Google.

WHAT TO TAKE TO UNIVERSITY: YOUR PACKING CHECKLIST

Heading to uni this September? Wondering what to pack? Don't worry, we've got you covered with our ultimate uni essentials list. Here's our top tips on what to take and what you can leave at home - plus download your own university checklist!



Five item challenge

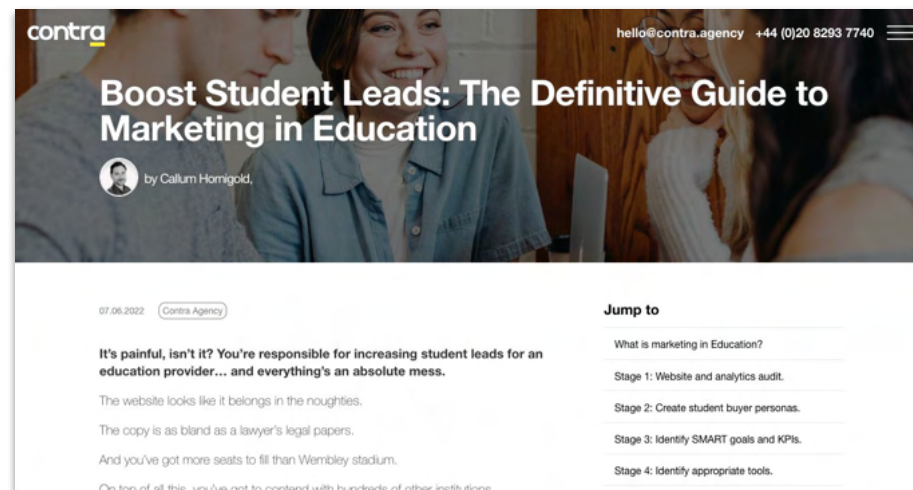
We challenged some of our current students to pick just five items on their uni essentials list that they absolutely wouldn't be without while at uni. Watch the video above to see what they said...

What not to take to uni - four things to leave at home

Ok let's start with what you don't need to take! More often than not, in all the excitement, you're packing for uni and trying to fit absolutely everything you can into a suitcase or your parents' or mate's car, and turn up with far too much stuff. So what can you leave at home?

For content to rank well it should be carefully structured. As we've mentioned in our content marketing guide, organising your content by the pillar-cluster model will increase its ranking in SERPs. In this model, the pillar page hosts the umbrella topic and cluster pages support the topic. If, for example, you're a fashion school, you might write a pillar page focusing on the topic 'colour analysis'. You would write a comprehensive page on the topic (e.g. 'The Definitive Guide To Colour Analysis for Creatives').

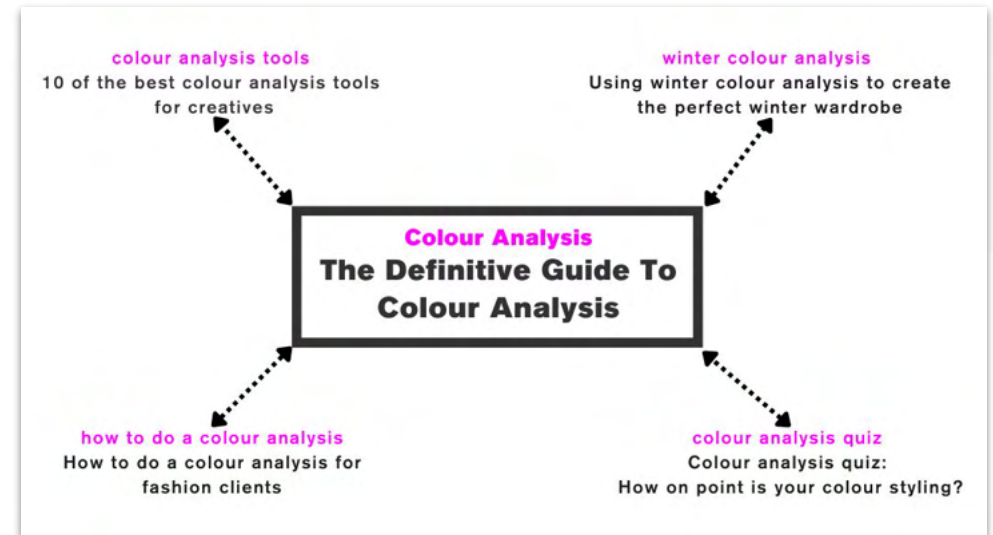
You would then write a series of subtopic blog posts, based around the topic. When working with Education clients, we use tools such as Ubersuggest to discover real search terms their customers are using. Another useful tool to identify search terms and questions is AnswerThePublic.



In the 'colour analysis' example, we could write blogs on the following topics:

- colour analysis tools (10 of the best colour analysis tools for creatives)
- winter colour analysis (Using winter colour analysis to create the perfect winter wardrobe)
- how to do a colour analysis (How to do a colour analysis for fashion clients)
- colour analysis quiz (Colour analysis quiz: How on point is your colour styling?)
- Etc.

You would then link the blogs to the pillar page. This will signify to Google that the pillar page is a highly authoritative piece of content, therefore pushing the page up the search rankings. Now, let's break down a great blog into distinctive elements.





Strong headline.

Grab prospective students' attention with a powerful headline.

SEO tip: Be sure to include your focus keyword in the headline.

Compelling hook.

Your first paragraph should hook the reader in. Show empathy, highlight a problem, then introduce the solution.

SEO tip: Include your focus keyword in your first paragraph too.

Use subheadings.

Readers scan content before committing to reading paragraphs. Use relevant subheadings to section your blog.

SEO tip: Use your focus keyword in one of your subheadings.

Video.

Video is an essential tool for marketing in Education and particularly Higher Education marketing.

87 percent of video marketers reported that video gives them a positive ROI.

We've presented video ideas throughout this guide.

However, for brevity, here is a **succinct list of 15 video ideas** to boost student leads:

Informative and engaging body.

This seems obvious, but the most important point of your blog is that it provides unique and engaging insights. Every sentence should be a win for the reader. When writing a paragraph, always ask yourself the question, “So what?” If you can’t answer that question, you probably need to think about changing or removing it.

Include appropriate keywords.

As discussed, do your keyword research before you get going. Make sure you understand what sort of words and phrases your audience is searching for and then write relevant content that solves for those terms.

Appealing images and graphics.

Images are powerful. They can tell a story so much more succinctly and engagingly than the written word. And they help your content breathe too.

Student Personas: The Free Template

Create your student personas and get more student leads. This resource includes:

- List a description of benefit 1 [here](#)
- List a description of benefit 2 [here](#)
- List a description of benefit 3 [here](#)



Work email*

First name*

Download

Contra agency needs the contact information you provide to us to contact you about our products and services. you may unsubscribe from these communications at any time. for information on how to unsubscribe, as well as our privacy practices and commitment to protecting your privacy, please review our [privacy policy](#).

Powerful call-to-action.

This is an absolute must. Ask yourself why you're writing the blog, what's its purpose, what do you want the reader to do? Once you understand that, you can ensure you include a powerful call-to-action. This could be signing up for a newsletter, downloading a prospectus, or even starting their online application. Never leave a reader thinking, "Well that was nice, now what?"

Relevant internal link.

Linking between pages within your topic clusters not only helps them to understand how your content fits together, but it also helps search engines understand this too.

SEO tip: Remember to link your blog to the relevant pillar page to help boost its rankings.

“Involve your real-life website users in the development process so they can test the site and provide feedback. Iterate during each stage of the design process.”

Ayala Gordon, Associate Director of Digital User Experience, University of Southampton

Quote external sources.

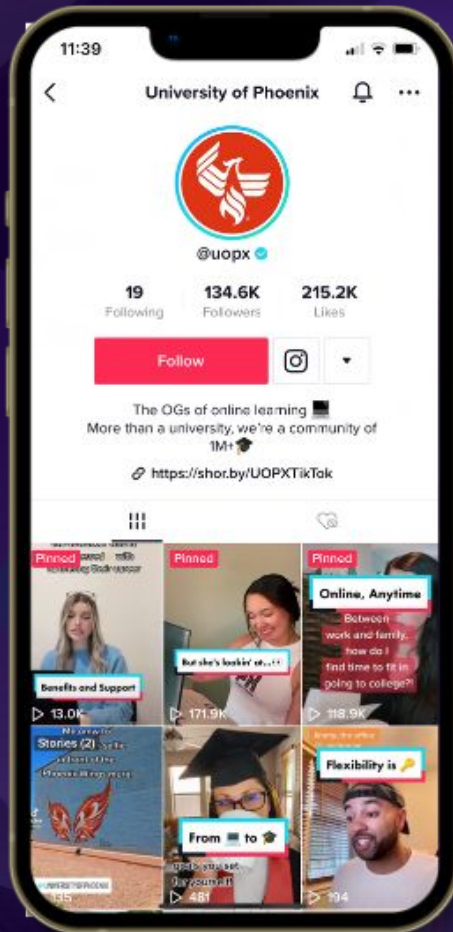
If you have the opportunity to point to some authoritative data that will help you make your point, do it! Search engines thrive on this sort of referencing. If you're in luck, the content owners who you're referencing may even link back to you. Authoritative backlinks are the holy grail for SEO effectiveness.

SEO tip: Interview experts and quote them in your blogs. They'll be driven to share your blogs and link back to you, boosting your domain authority and search engine rankings.

Good meta description.

This is a short paragraph that explains succinctly what the content is about. It's what the search engine will display when it serves up your article in search engine results pages. Make it compelling.

SEO tip: Include your focus keyword and make sure your meta description isn't too long. It's best to keep meta descriptions long enough that they're sufficiently descriptive, but not so long that they get curtailed. Between 50 and 155 characters is best.



Social media.

Your prospective students are on social media. According to research by McKinsey, Gen Zs are most influenced by social media when making purchase decisions. This significantly outweighed other influences such as ‘online reviews, blogs & websites’, ‘traditional media’, friends and family’, and ‘traditional media’.

The power of social media to influence prospective students is clearly evident. The challenge is coming up with innovative ways to tell them your story in a helpful manner. What makes your institution or business unique? Here are some things to consider.

#HigherEducationMarketing.

How universities can own it on Tik Tok.

contra



Choose the right content for the right channel.

Before sharing content on social media, it's essential to consider which channel to use and its purpose. Ensure you tailor the content according to the social channel you use. If you're targeting Gen Z, focus on TikTok and Instagram. (Simply sharing your blog posts on Facebook is soooo 2015.)

"Different channels can be effective for different audiences and objectives," says Julia Weston, Head of Marketing and Communications at UCL Faculty of Life Sciences.

“

“Our researchers have strong voices and active communities on Twitter. We target job opportunities on LinkedIn. And all our audiences, including our alumni, get to see life on campus through the seasons by following Instagram along with over 140k followers.”



***Julia Weston, Head of Marketing and Communications at UCL
Faculty of Life Sciences***

#HigherEducationMarketing.

20 university social media ideas.

contra



20 social media content ideas for education providers.

There are many creative content ideas you can do on social media. You will have identified what works best for your institution during the social media audit phase mentioned earlier in stage one of this guide. However, if you're stuck for inspiration, here are 20 social media content ideas to set you on your way.



1 | News, achievements and milestones

How are your staff and students making a positive impact on the world? Have you won any awards recently?



My favourite part of the course at the moment is that **I can tailor it to my interests**, and research beyond the curriculum, finding case studies that I am particularly interested in and applying them to the theories I am learning.

Alistair
(3rd Year HSPS)

2 | Current student and alumni reviews

Collect them through student surveys and academic reps.



3 | Video testimonials

Go one further and film the students and alumni talking about their positive experiences.



4 | Virtual tours

Get your students to showcase the university or campus grounds. Run the tour live with an opportunity for prospective students to ask questions.



5 | Use hashtags

Encourage current students to showcase life at your college or university via Instagram, using a specific hashtag.





7 | Student vlogs

Encourage students to vlog their academic and social life. This especially works for creative courses with a buzzing atmosphere as students will want to showcase their work. Of course, ensure the content is checked by your in-house team before publishing.



8 | Introduce faculty members

Prospective students will be keen to see who their potential lecturers will be and what experience they have. Short intro videos are a great way of showcasing your faculty dream team.



9 | Share student survival tips

For many prospective students, it will be their first time living away from home. Share tips on surviving Freshers Week, cooking, studying, or anything else they may be curious about.



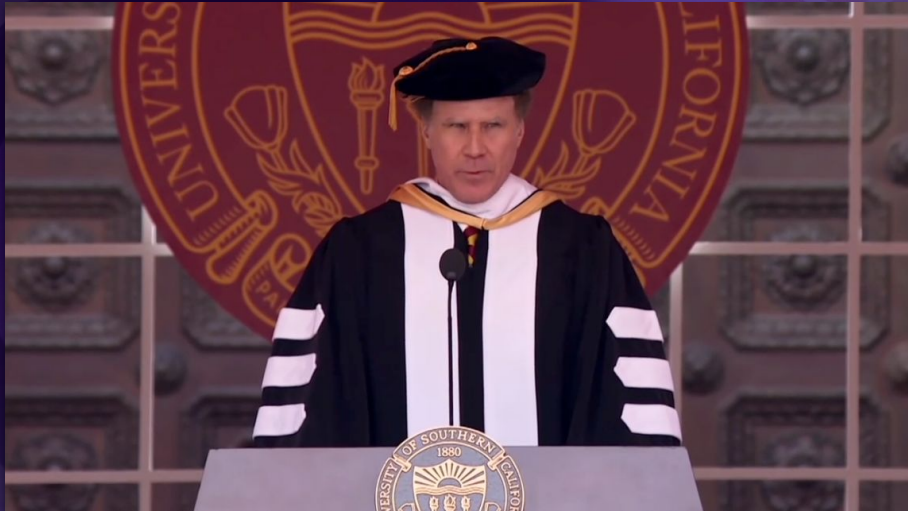
10 | Alumni success stories

Share industry success stories of former students. Bonus points for any celebrity alumni!



11 | Events vlogs

If you regularly run social events for your students, be sure one of them is armed with a camera to film the fun.



12 | Guest speakers

If you have any interesting guest speakers, don't miss out on the opportunity of sharing the highlights from their speeches on social media.



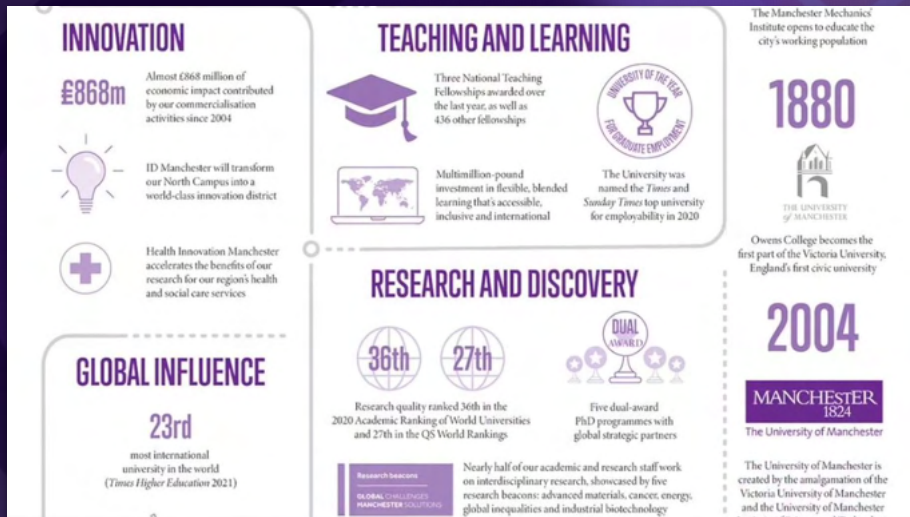
13 | Tours of accommodation

Do a 'Through the keyhole' style video showcasing student accommodation. Students can even provide tips on making it as homely as possible.



14 | Behind the scenes

Practical experience is important for prospective students. If your students are engaging in practical activities (filming in a famous film studio, for example) then encourage them to film some behind-the-scenes footage.



15 | Infographics

Showcase some of your university data such as student-to-lecturer ratio, percentage of graduates who get jobs, and other statistics that may set you above competitors.



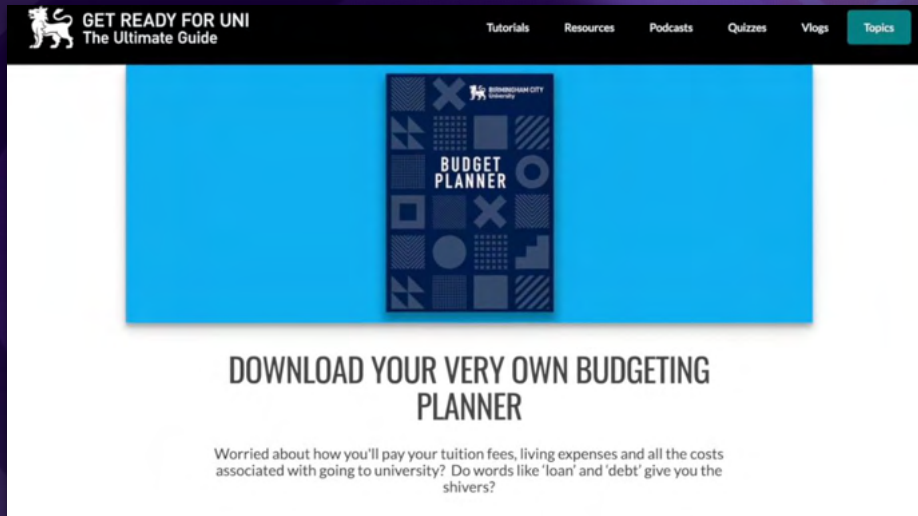
16 | Campus beauty shots

As the saying goes, “If you’ve got it, flaunt it.” Show off your campus buildings. Show off the architecture and design.



17 | Results from student surveys

Ask students the top three reasons they love your college or university. Turn these into animated graphics.



18 | Blog posts

Sharing your blog posts is a great way to promote your content and drive traffic to your site. However, be warned, exposure will be limited as many social channels don't want users leaving their platform via outbound links. Do not make this your main source of social media posts.



19 | Answers to common FAQs

Answer the most common questions you get asked by prospective students.



20 | Polls

Find out what matters to prospective students. Not only will this increase engagement but will also inform your marketing strategy.



Bonus Tip: Educational content

Universities should use content to educate. With a whole wealth of research on multiple topics (that your prospective students are already interested in), sharing it with the nation will build a solid list of followers and increase exposure. Check out The School of Life – it has perfected educational content and has over 7.49m subscribers on YouTube.

Remember, your students are your marketing team.

Use your existing students to make posts and build a following. They're your best advocates and give a genuine human voice to your brand. A nervous prospect is far more likely to engage with your message if it comes from a genuine peer; someone who has been where they're and faced the same decisions.

There are some great examples of student-led campaigns out there. The University of Salford #Salfie campaign is a shining example of using social media to generate exposure. Polaroid-style frames were hung around the university campus. Heart templates were included in welcome packs and students were encouraged to take a selfie with the frames and post it on social media with the hashtag #Salfie. This was incentivised with a competition for the best photo.

Other ways you could get your students involved on social media is by appointing them to do guided tours of your campuses, or running competitions for the best Instagram shot of student life at your university.



A word of caution:

Yes, the student is the new marketer. Yes, having student ambassadors in your marketing is essential. However, ensure you have strong content creators to deliver on-brand content that's vetted and checked.

Remember Pure Gym's infamous 'slavery workout' social blunder? This could have been avoided if the company had a stronger hold on content creation and vetted its franchise owner's content before posting. Years of brand reputation can be undone in an instant and bad news travels like wildfire.

Keep it under control.

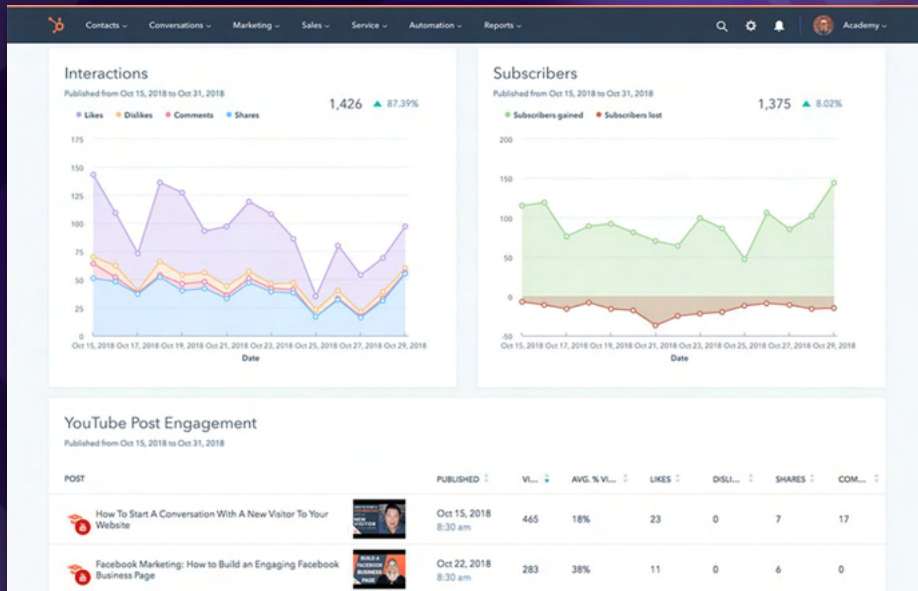
CAUTION

Social listening platforms.

Social media marketing in Education is as much about listening to your audience as it's talking to them. There are many tools out there that will help you figure out what's important to your different student personas. Social listening apps like Critical Mention or SEMrush can help you evaluate how your earned media is performing.

CRM tools like HubSpot allow you to link popular marketing tech tools together to give a richer understanding of the motivations and views of your prospective and existing students. Even without these tools, it isn't too difficult to find out what conversations are trending on Twitter, TikTok, Medium, or Facebook.

Simply type "University Name" or "#CollegeName" into one of these platforms and you'll see hundreds, if not thousands, of conversations you or your student ambassadors can contribute to. Again, look for ways that you can truly add value – address needs with genuine solutions.

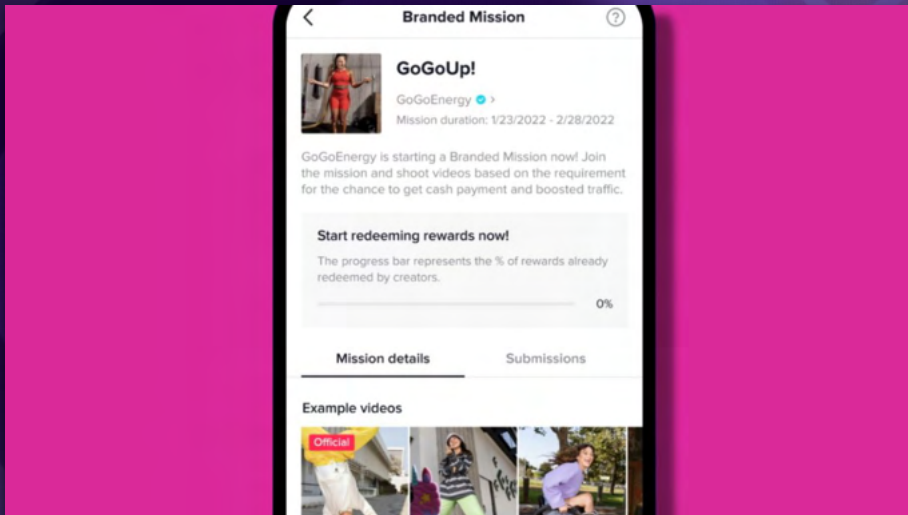


Social media influencers.

Getting mentioned by an influencer with a massive following can generate serious exposure for your institution. There are two approaches you can take with influencers. Firstly, micro-influencers are normal people that usually have 500-10,000 followers. They're hard to reach but are more likely to promote lesser-known brands. Look through your alumni, and see if any of them has made a particular impact on the world (e.g. through research, the arts, media etc.). Equally, check out TikTok's 'Branded Missions' to source content from influencers that already have a captive audience.

Secondly, celebrity alumni can be fantastic advocates and broadcasters of your message. Comic actor and University of Southern California alumni, Will Ferrell, gave a speech at the university's graduation ceremony. This was picked up by notable publications such as TIME magazine.

The musician, Example, attended Royal Holloway University. Upon graduating, he regularly went back to play at their Summer Ball and other gigs. He actively pushed this news and related content out through his social channels. This focused thousands of young eyes on the gorgeous campus buildings and incredible Summer Ball scenes. And who said Higher Education marketing was dry. That's a rap.

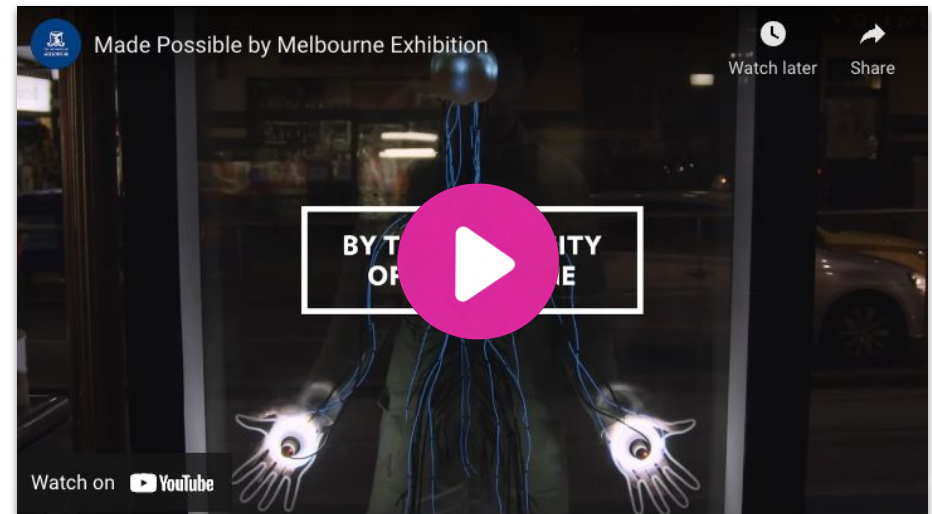


Creating memorable (and shareable) experiences.

Experiential marketing is a great way to capture the hearts and minds of prospective students. The University of Melbourne's 'Made Possible by Melbourne' is a prime example of successful experiential marketing. They turned a large portion of the city into a giant exhibition to demonstrate the impact of its world-changing research. The campaign featured 14 exhibitions dotted throughout the city, each telling different stories, including:

- research that'll improve half of the world's diet
- a way to turn any water into drinking water
- the creation of robotic arms with a human touch
- breakthroughs in prenatal care that will save thousands of unborn lives

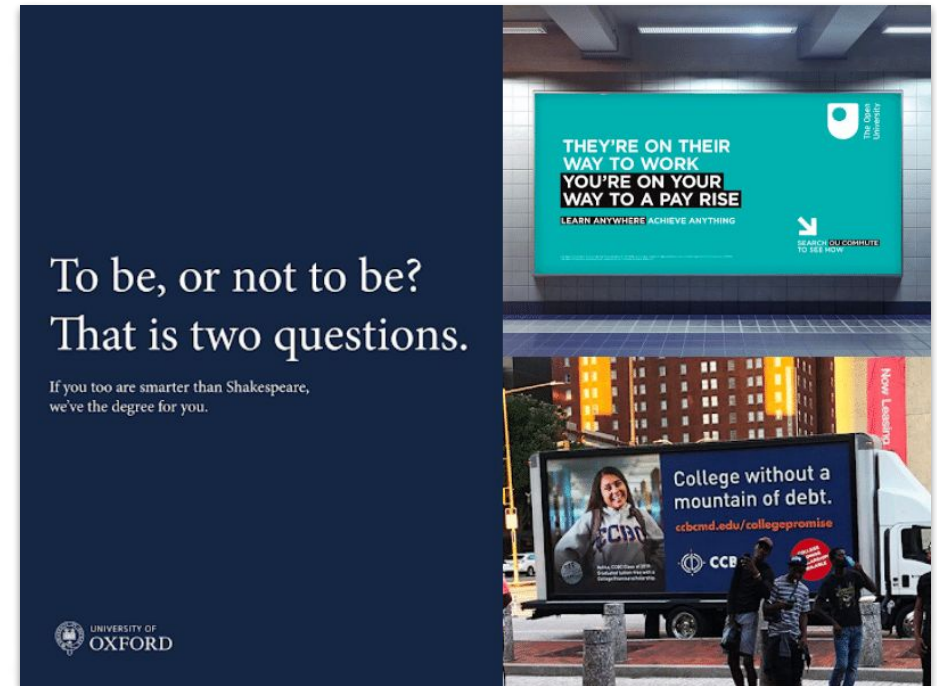
The university developed a digital app, static and digital ads, and tram and train media as part of the campaign. The campaign attracted 3.2 million visitors to the exhibition and had a 44 million global reach.



OOH Advertising.

Out-of-home (OOH) advertising is a form of advertising that can be found anywhere outside a prospective student's home. Think billboards, posters, digital signage on bus stops, and messaging on the side of buses.

The beauty of OOH advertising is you can get highly creative. Just be sure to involve a strong copywriter who has the skills to write powerful copy – copy that will engage your audience in a matter of seconds. Here are some examples of great OOH advertising used by universities.





Outreach.

University outreach programs involve instructional and professional activities by faculty and staff with individuals and organisations who aren't enrolled in the institution. These can be split into three categories:

1. Ad-hoc events – Why your university? Student finance and budgeting. Personal statements.
2. Programmes – Summer residential. Mentoring.
3. Subject-specific – Masterclasses. Big quizzes. On-site visits.

For successful outreach, using a combination of all three categories proves most effective.

“Outreach goes beyond functional work in supporting decision-making, personal statements, and interview workshops. It raises aspirations and drives applications,” says Claire Matthews, Associate Director UK Student Recruitment at the University of Greenwich. The university recently launched its new allied health programme in ‘Operating Department Practitioner’. Workshops were set up in schools and colleges to raise awareness and support options in healthcare careers.

“

Our sustained outreach work to support skills development and attainment of level 3 qualifications is providing further support and confidence in achieving grades required to secure a place. This outreach work directly generated applications. Standalone press releases and UCAS listings are not enough and will not truly engage prospective students.



***Claire Matthews, Associate Director UK Student Recruitment
at the University of Greenwich***



Peter Riley, Head of Student Recruitment at Manchester Metropolitan University, also advocates empowering prospective students with the skills they need to succeed. Riley has witnessed the Education sector transform considerably since COVID-19.

“In a ‘hybrid’ world, institutions need to consider the most effective channels to provide information and support to schools and colleges to ensure they are of maximum benefit for learners.”

For Riley, this includes partnerships between school/college teachers and universities. “It’s likely that the time will be limited for any extra-curricular engagement. Therefore, institutions should design outreach that links directly to the curriculum,” he says. “Such resources, especially if available on-demand, are more likely to be of use to teachers who can then embed them at an appropriate point in their teaching, rather than promoting on-campus events which require learners to come out from school/college.

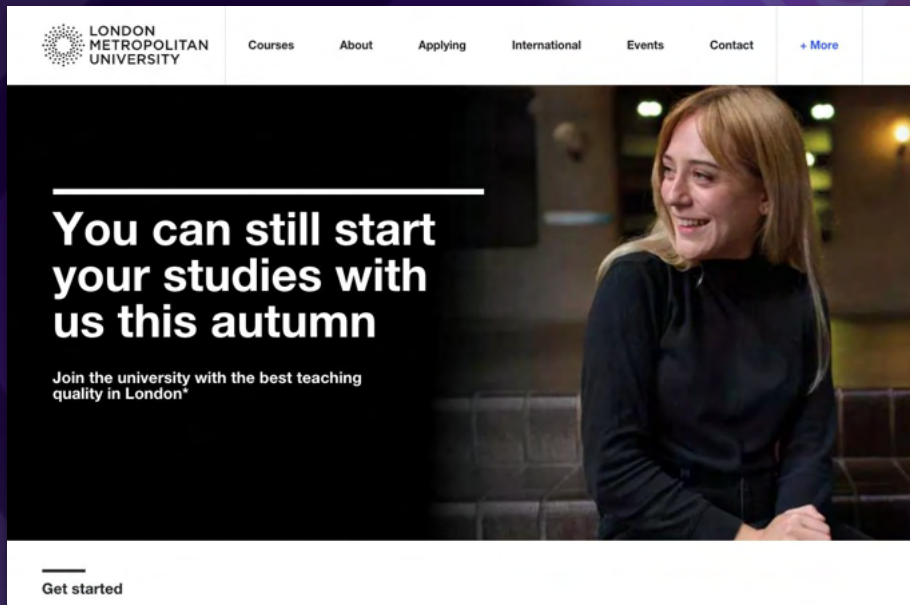
“This would also build stronger links between the university and school/college subject leaders. Subject teachers are key influencers on applicants. So being a university that is trusted by teachers, understands the prior learners of pupils, and demonstrates it can adapt to the needs of students, could give such institutions a competitive advantage.”

“

Going beyond self-promotion and, instead, focusing on how you can help students is the fastest track to outreach success.



Peter Riley, Head of Student Recruitment, Manchester Metropolitan University



Engage.

So you've got prospective students' attention.

Now what?

During the engagement phase, it's time to turn interest into action and commitment.

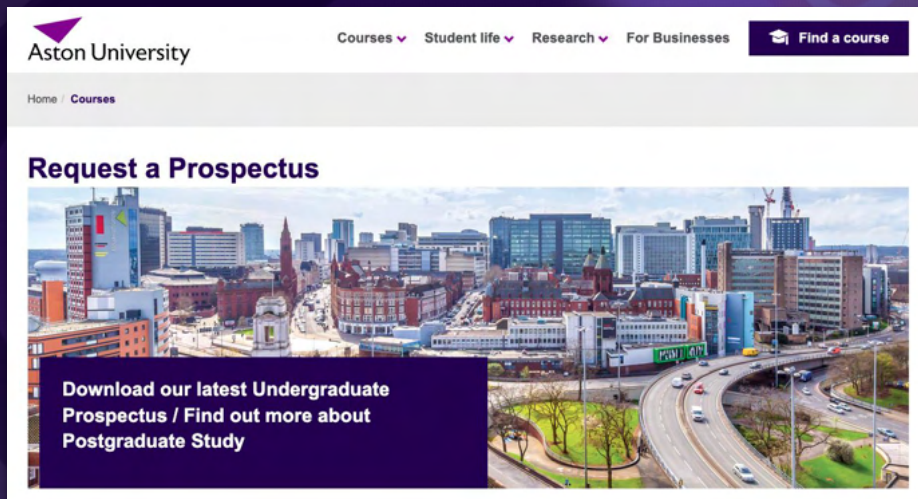


Virtual tours.

Virtual tours give prospective students the opportunity to visit your institution without leaving the comfort of their own home. The beauty is, they don't require as much commitment as an on-site visit. They're also available to your prospective students on a 24/7 basis.

Use virtual tour providers such as CampusTours to showcase your campus, your halls of residence, or any other location you want to promote. For example, if you're a college or university that has excellent sports facilities, show your students your grounds and pitches.

Here's an awesome example of an incredible panoramic virtual tour from the University of Bristol, showcasing a huge section of the city! If you need even more inspiration, here's a definitive list of college and university virtual tours from UCAS.



Lead flows.

Lead nurturing is a system that funnels your prospects through a “pipeline” to becoming an enrolled student. These can be broken down into the following:

Lead capture.

This is the transactional stage of your engagement with prospective students. Provide them with lead magnets. These are pieces of content that entice the student to provide their contact information. This could be prospectuses, eBooks, white papers, webinar sessions, live-video sessions, free content series downloads etc. Don’t simply turn a blog post into a guide and gate it behind a form. The lead magnet has to hold enough value for a prospective student to give their details. People are wary of lead capture forms so they need to see the real value in handing over their personal information.



UNDERGRADUATE

Our Undergraduate Prospectus provides details of over 150 undergraduate courses. It also provides a wide range of information about Birmingham City University, including:

- Our focus on producing employable graduates
- Our excellent student support
- Our student successes
- Accommodation and student life in Birmingham
- 10 reasons to study with us
- Our fantastic facilities

[Download 2022/23 Prospectus](#)



PROSPECTUS 2022/23

[Download 2023/24 Prospectus](#)



PROSPECTUS 2023/24

[Order a printed copy of the 2023/24 prospectus](#)

Only the 2023/24 edition of the prospectus is available to order, due to the impact of Covid-19, we ended up having lots of physical copies of our 2021/22 prospectus left over, we decided rather than printing a new one and recycling the old, we'd reuse!

Alternative formats are available on request. Please contact creative.services@bcu.ac.uk.

Landing page conversions.

Landing pages are crucial in converting visitors into warm leads. Landing pages help funnel users from each of your channels to appropriate content or calls-to-action. The goal is to promote your lead magnet on the landing page and encourage them to submit their details via a form. For landing page best practices, see the 'Landing Pages' section in stage six of this guide.

Edit property

Positive Attributes ? Add new set

+ 10 Set Cancel Actions

Filter type

- ☐ Contact properties
- ☐ Company properties
- ☐ Deal properties
- ☐ Activity properties
- ☐ Line item properties
- ☐ List memberships
- ☐ Form submissions
- ☒ Marketing emails

Negative Attributes ? Add new set

- 10 Set Cancel Actions

Filter type

- ☐ Contact properties
- ☐ Company properties
- ☐ Deal properties
- ☐ Activity properties
- ☐ Line item properties
- ☐ List memberships
- ☐ Form submissions
- ☒ Marketing emails

Lead scoring.

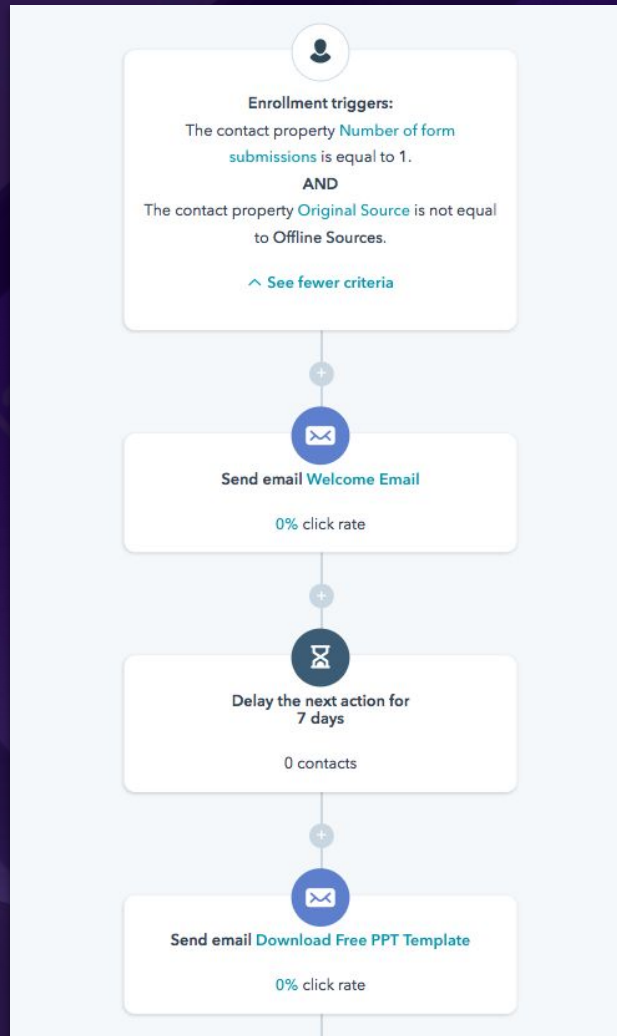
CRM and marketing automation software such as HubSpot allows you to score your leads on how likely they're to convert based on their behaviour. For example:

- Clicked on an ad (+5 points)
- Opened an email (+1 point)
- Clicked on a link in an email (+5 points)
- Downloaded a course guide (+10 points)
- Filled in a request for information form (+10 points)
- Unsubscribed from a list (-7 points)

In the example above, their total journey now has a value of 24 points. You could then decide to prioritise prospects with scores over 15, for example. Lead scoring enables you to prioritise the warmest and most engaged leads.

Note:

Lead scoring can be quite rigid and doesn't always tell a true story. Use it as an extra tool in prioritising leads but don't make it your main yardstick.



Lead nurturing.

A prospective student may have downloaded a course guide. However, they aren't necessarily in a position to apply. This is where lead nurturing comes in. Using marketing automation platforms such as HubSpot, you can create an automated email series.

The automation is triggered when the prospective student fills out the form to download the course guide. It will automatically send them a series of emails that include content that will help them in their consideration stage.

Email marketing.

There are some who view email marketing as somewhat passe these days. In some cases, it's overlooked as a viable means of engaging prospective students. However, a study by eMarketer shows the median email marketing ROI is 122 percent – four times higher than any other digital marketing channel. So it definitely shouldn't be ignored.

As with other channels and techniques already discussed, there is a science behind the art of email. Here are a few tips to ensure you're getting the best from this medium.



Hi Callum,

Choosing the right university isn't always straight forward, so we're here to help you make the right decision for your future and **help you achieve your goals.**

At Middlesex we'll provide you with quality education and surround you with the right opportunities and career support to get you where you want to go. Here's a few more reasons we think you'll love it here:



Quality teaching in our top facilities plus flexible online learning.



Get work placements and network with top London employers.



Our north London campus is 30 minutes from central London.



Award-winning career support during uni and after you graduate.

Whether you're starting to think about uni – or you're ready to apply, **we're here to help you succeed.**

Undergraduate Open Day

Understand your audience.

If you've done your research outlined in stage one of this guide, you'll understand your audience and have some clear student personas. To recap:

Survey existing students to find out what made them apply to your institution (and what makes them stay). This will inform your comms when it comes to writing out your nurturing emails.

Conduct focus groups with existing and prospective students to understand their buyer journey. What information do they need to ensure your institution is right for them (above all others)?



Set clear goals.

Sending emails with no clear goal in mind is a fruitless operation. At the outset, it's important to plan what you want your recipients to do. They're engaged (which is how they're on your distribution list), so what steps do you want them to take? If they've downloaded a course guide, you want the student to submit an application to the course. However, you can't rely on a simple course guide PDF to push them over the line. There may be a series of questions that need answering before they're confident in applying. For example:

- What's life like on campus?
- Who are the course lecturers and what are their credentials?
- How well will this equip me in getting the career I want?
- What do current students and alumni think of the course?
- How has the course equipped alumni for success?
- What's the application process look like?
- What's the student accommodation like?
- What about the city's social life, is it right for me?

Run an email series designed to answer these questions and guide your prospective student towards applying. Remember, each email should have one, clear call-to-action. If you ask a reader to do too much, they likely won't do anything.

When you choose **Middlesex** for your degree, you also become part of a community of diverse and dynamic people creating the future together! [Take a closer look at what #TeamMDX means to our student community.](#)



[**Join us at our Undergraduate Open Event**](#)

The importance of careful segmentation.

Segmentation is of utmost importance when it comes to a successful emailing campaign. Not all your list members will want or need the same things. Some will be further in their journey with you than others. Clearly defined segments linked to personas will ensure that your emails resonate and serve the prospect's needs.

For example, you might have a segment of prospects looking at postgraduate distance learning courses. In this case, you might send them information on how to fund their studies while still working. This would be completely different from prospects for undergraduate courses that may have already attended an open day. They'd be more interested in hearing about student life and receiving tips on the application or interview process.

Having a CRM that's linked with your Email Service Provider (ESP) will make the process any easier. A decent ESP-CRM combination will also allow you to use personalisation tokens in your emails, ensuring that they feel more human and targeted.



Look for opportunities for genuine connection. As mentioned previously, your existing students are your best marketers. If emails come from them, it can help frame subject lines. For example:

“How I prepared for my interview” or, “How I managed my finances as a fresher”.

These sorts of emails are more likely to resonate with your recipients and improve the chances of meaningful engagement.

How I managed my finances as a fresher.

Subject lines.

Email subject lines should be such an important focus while you craft your campaigns. They're the difference between a user clicking 'open' or it ending up in a junk folder. You have a few options for the types of email subject lines you send. These can be grouped as follows:

- The "How to..." subject line – e.g. "How I survived Freshers Week" or, "One simple hack to effectively managing your finances"
- The social proof subject line – e.g. "John now works for [insert reputable company here] thanks to our [insert course name here] course. Here's how" or, "Freshers was the best week of my life"
- The intrigue-creating subject line – e.g. "Clare, this is perfect for you" or, "See what's inside our University walls"

See what's inside our university walls...

Test and adapt.

Always build time into your campaigns to allow for testing and adaptation. Any good email service provider will provide A/B testing as a feature of their product.

This is where you can send out two close variations of the same email, with slight differences (e.g. different subject lines, variations in the first paragraph etc.). You can then monitor which email is more successful (by open rate or click-through rate, for example) and then send the remainder of the emails in the winning version format.

Test. Test. Test.

HubSpot CRM

HubSpot

Software Pricing Resources Partners About

There's a better way to grow.

Marketing, sales, and service software that helps your business grow without compromise. Because "good for the business" should also mean "good for the customer."

Get HubSpot free

Our services cost \$500 each, and are available on a 14-day trial.



CRM and marketing automation.

Marketing automation means utilising marketing software to manage multiple marketing channels from one platform, as well as automating repetitive tasks. CRM stands for “Customer Relationship Management”. Your CRM is focused on collecting knowledge and data on existing accounts and managing new pipelines.

Many education providers have separate marketing and sales platforms. However, this creates a misalignment between the marketing and sales teams. For education providers who are serious about boosting student leads and recruitment, they should adopt a platform that incorporates both.

For our Education clients, we implement HubSpot as it has both CRM and marketing automation within one platform. This enables the marketing and sales teams to work together, identifying what makes a great sales qualified lead. It also enables both teams to make full use of its automation features, such as lead scoring, Sales Qualified Lead list generation and automating hand-off from Marketing to Sales.

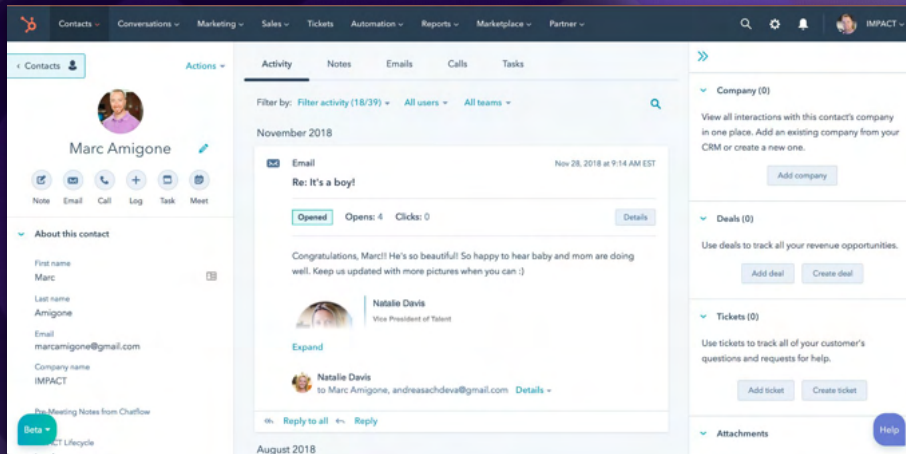
Whichever CRM or marketing automation platform you choose, it's essential that it addresses the various needs of both your internal stakeholders and students.

“By nature, large institutions are often fragmented and complex. Needs vary based on faculty, academic departments, innovation and enterprise, alumni, and so on,” says Julia Weston, Head of Marketing and Communications at UCL Faculty of Life Sciences.

For Weston, a CRM is more than a segmentation tool for email communication. Rather, it encompasses communication via all relevant channels. “The best approach involves the range of channels our audiences use worldwide, including different social media platforms.”

Keeping up to date with modern trends is also top of her agenda. “How often do we stop and review the products we use and check that we have adapted to the ever-changing channels and trends? Having a steering group, which brings together all the areas of a university, who regularly review the approach as well as the product, keeps the user journeys relevant and engaging,” she says.

“If we don’t adapt, we risk the dreaded ‘unsubscribe’ from one set of emails while another part of the university continues with its own set of communications. This is not only annoying for the recipient, but we may also risk falling foul of GDPR.”

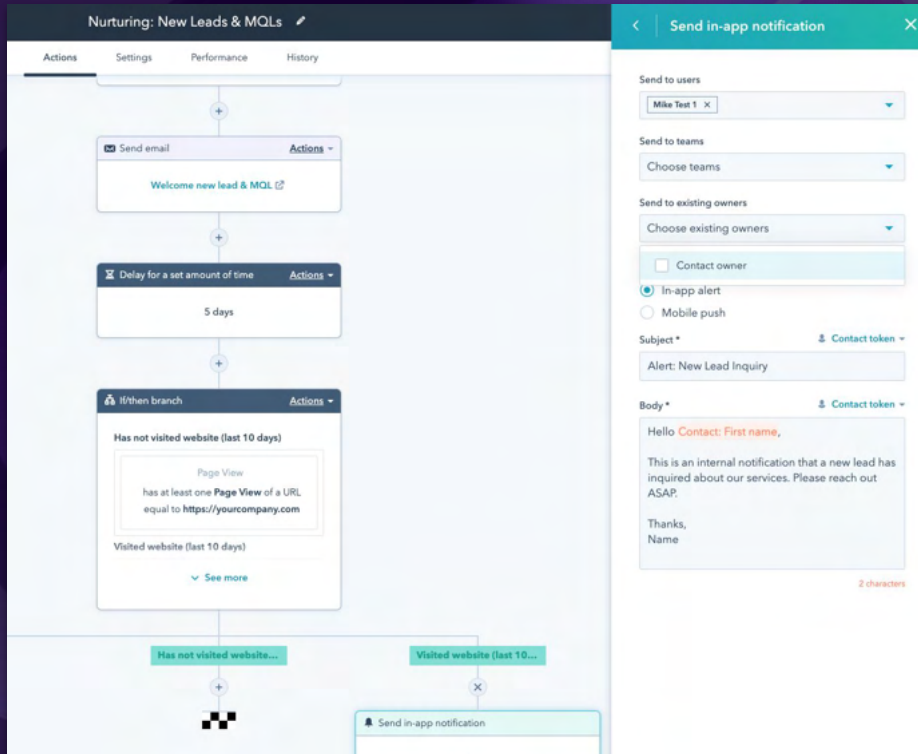


“

The best CRM approach encompasses these many different needs. It isn't a question of bringing in a 'quick fix' to manage the student journey in isolation. It's about showing the customer we understand their needs and have acted on their preferences. This is the approach we are taking at UCL as we implement our new CRM.



***Julia Weston, Head of Marketing and Communications at UCL
Faculty of Life Sciences***



Email automation.

Email automation is normally triggered by either time or action. Time-based emails are sent automatically at different stages of a prospective student's journey with you. For example:

- before an open day
- after an open day
- before application deadlines
- during clearing
- etc.

Action-based automated emails are triggered by user behaviour. For example, they may download a course guide, or view a certain page on your website.

We work with our Education clients to automate lead nurturing using the power of HubSpot. If a prospective student downloads a course guide, we set up email workflows that deliver a series of personalised emails. This takes the manual effort out of the process, saving both time and money. The email workflow sends the prospective student various emails containing useful content. Read on for some typical examples of automated email workflows we produce for our Education clients using integration with their systems and database.



Course guide download.

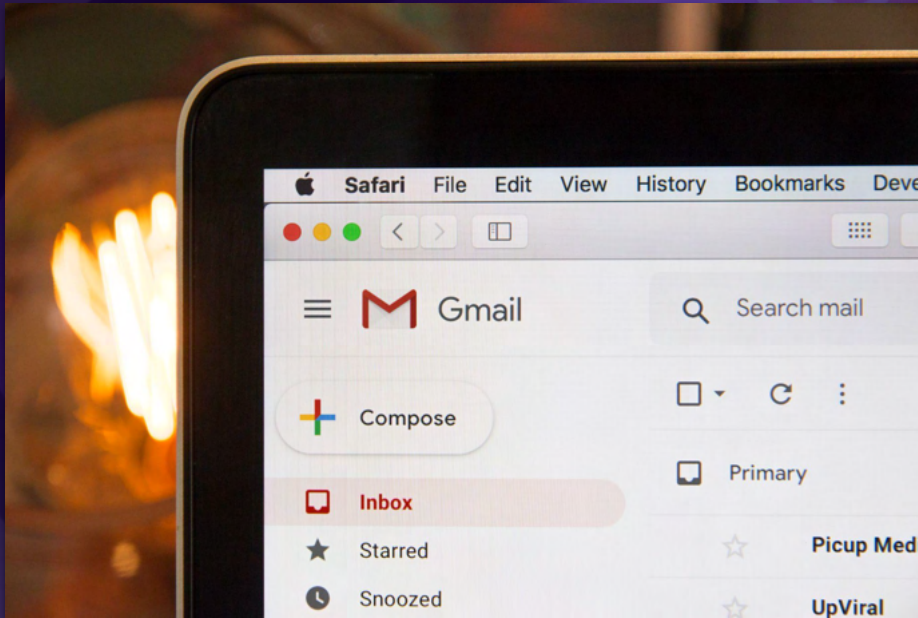
- Day 1: Thank you for downloading our course guide (invitation to open day)
- Day 3: Course intro video (presented by faculty staff)
- Day 7: Learn about life on our campus
- Day 9: Hear from our alumni (videos and testimonials)
- Day 11: What's life like in [city name]?
- Day 14: Speak to an admissions advisor
- Day 18: Speak to current students
- Day 21: Submit an application
- Day 21: Thanks for submitting your application

IF the application is approved:

- Schedule an interview
- Day 28+: Monthly newsletter

ONCE interview is scheduled:

- Some tips for your interview



Completed enquiry form.

- Day 1: Thank you for your enquiry
- Day 3: Check out our courses
- Day 7: Learn about life on our campus
- Day 9: Hear from our alumni (videos and testimonials)
- Day 11: What's life like in [city name]
- Day 14: Speak to an admissions advisor
- Day 21: Submit application
- Day 21: Thanks for submitting your application

IF application is approved:

- Schedule an interview
- Day 28+: Monthly newsletter

ONCE interview is scheduled:

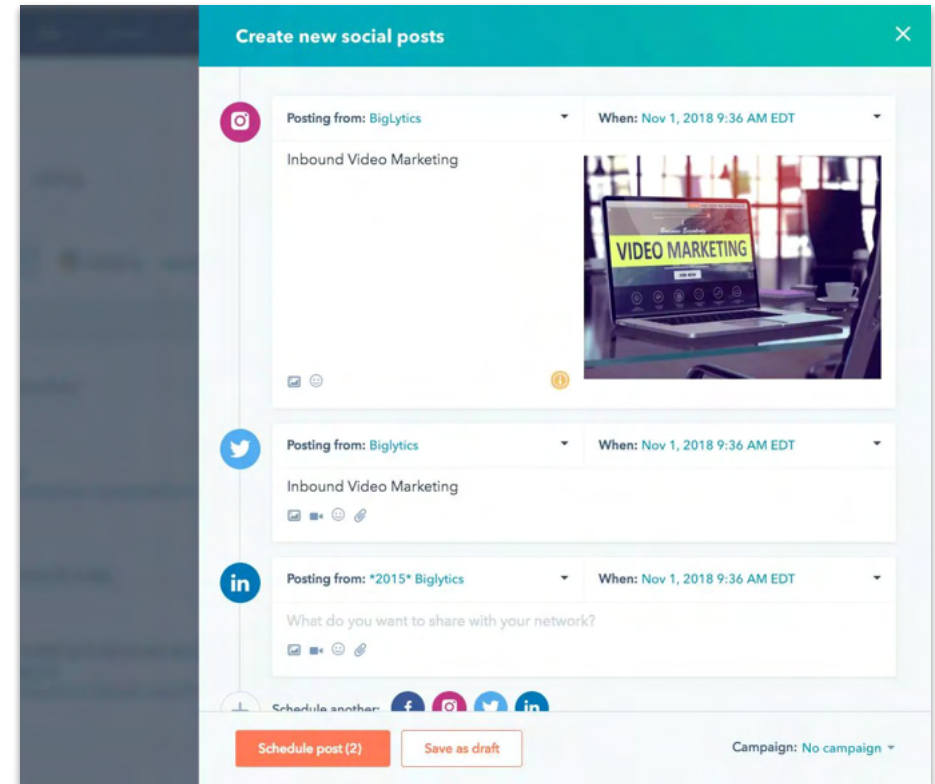
- Some tips for your interview

Remember, email automation is only limited by the amount of content you can provide and your imagination. Don't be scared to experiment with content, messaging, and timings. Test, test, test!

Social media automation.

Social media automation tools allow you to create, store, and publish a bank of social posts over a period of time. They'll also allow you to make posts across a range of platforms without any manual intervention. This minimises the time needed for manual tailoring and posting.

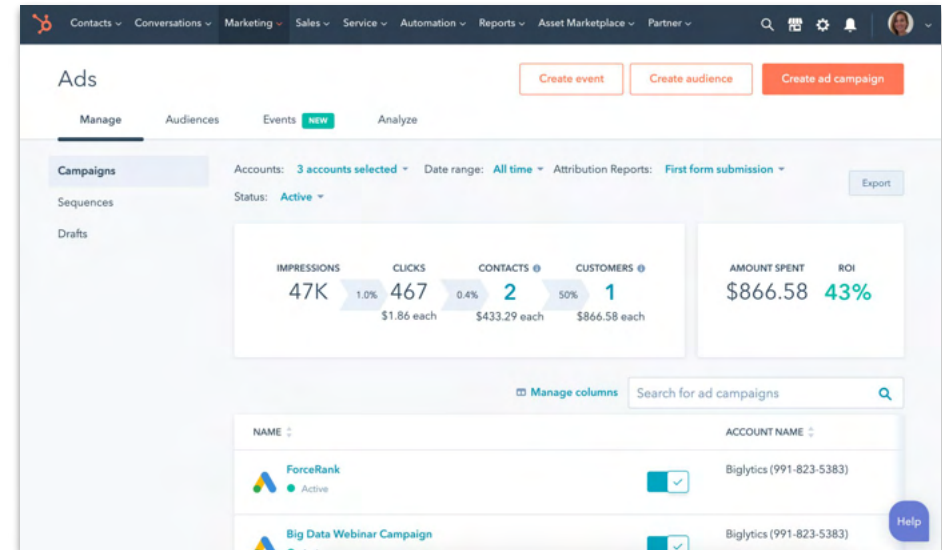
Good social media tools will also allow you to listen to social media conversations. This is great for picking up positive comments about your institution or responding to questions. Marketers can also reply, comment on, or interact with people who engage with your posts via a conversation hub. You can also set up competitor analysis to monitor social conversations between students and other institutions.



Advertising automation.

Retargeting re-engages users who have interacted with your ads but haven't followed through on a call-to-action. For example, a prospective student visits a landing page but fails to download your prospectus. You would retarget the potential student with another ad at a later date.

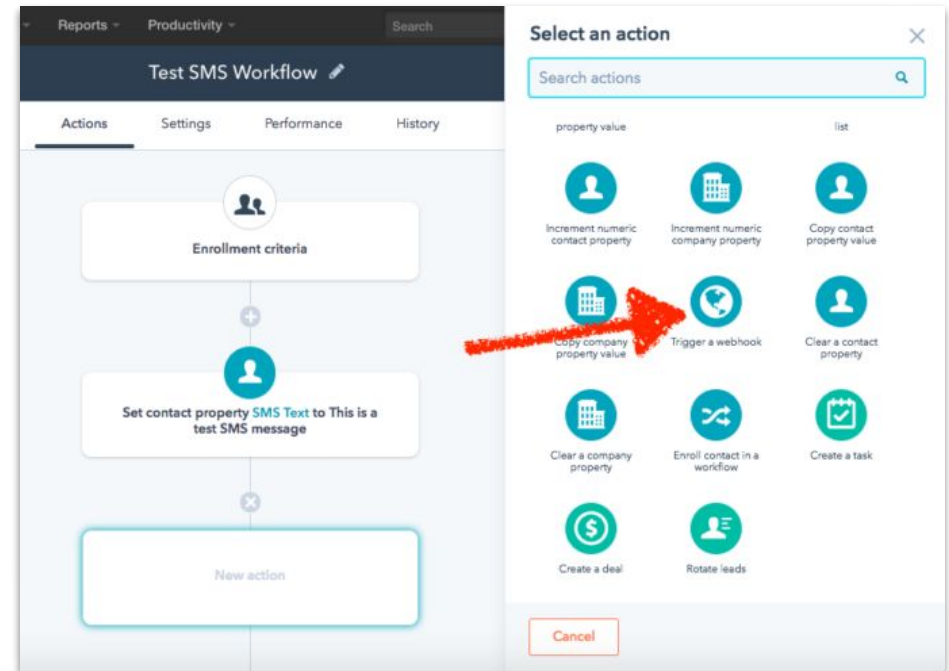
Marketers in the Education sector can use ad platforms such as Google Ads to serve retargeting ads. Retargeted ads “follow” the user around the web until the user lands on a website that's part of Google's Display Network (such as YouTube). Marketers can also run retargeting ad campaigns on social media networking sites such as Facebook or LinkedIn. Retargeting drives action and helps visitors remember your brand in a saturated marketplace.



Mobile marketing automation.

SMS marketing has become an increasingly popular method for creating more engaging experiences. Text messages are triggered by either time or action. For example, sending a student a reminder for an interview or open day. Ensure they have opted-in to receive these communications before sending.

The average open rate sits between 28 percent and 33 percent, according to data from HubSpot. The average open rate of a text message sits at about 99 percent, with 97 percent of messages being read within 15 minutes of delivery. The results don't lie. However, use them sparingly as they're far more intrusive.



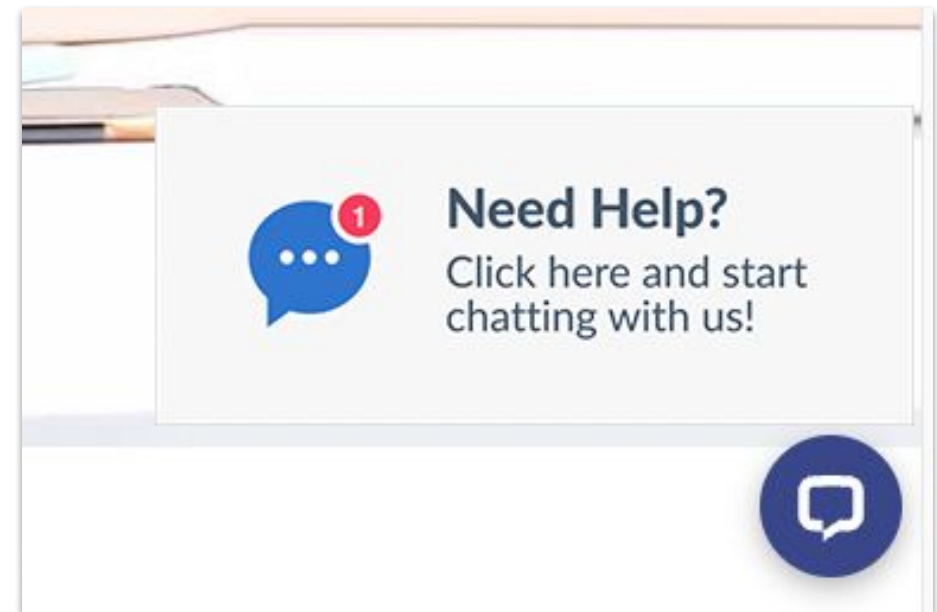
Chatbots.

Students expect quick response times to information requests. Even with the most efficient admissions team, this is a difficult expectation to meet. Chatbots allow education providers to answer questions without the need for human interaction.

Marketers can create chat flows for different types of enquiries. Chatflows funnel users through a series of questions before directing them to an appropriate answer/action. Some examples of chatflows within Education include:

- providing course details
- connecting students with faculty staff
- passing on custom enquiries to be responded to via email

Chatbots enable you to quickly respond to prospective students' questions and provide a 24/7 concierge for when staff aren't available.





Close.

Your prospective students now understand your brand. They understand the value you provide over other institutions. Now it's about turning prospects into admissions. At the 'Close' stage, they're looking to make their decision. Here, it's about speaking to people. Read on to discover how to push your prospective students over the line.



Open days.

Open days are the perfect opportunity for prospective students to experience your institution. They can dive deeper into courses and speak with faculty staff, alumni, and current students. Here are several elements to consider when organising successful open days. This section focuses on Higher Education open days. However, many of the strategies cross over into Secondary Education so it's certainly worth a read.



Pick effective dates.

The UCAS application deadline 2022 is the end of January – some can be as early as October. This means you need to schedule them between July and October. Get the word out. Some great places to promote your open days are:

- the UCAS website
- What Uni
- Open Days
- your newsletter

If you have good partnerships with secondary schools, then send out leaflets and posters. These can be displayed in reception and social areas.



Dive deeper into the subject.

Your prospective students will be coming to the open day wanting to evaluate what your course offers over competitors'. Highlight what each module will entail and the types of examination. Also, a great way to extol the benefits of your case is a “This course is perfect for you if...” slot. For example:

This course is perfect for you if:

- You want to become a [insert role here]
- You have a passion for [insert interest here]
- You want to gain practical experience in [insert practice area here]
- You are [insert quality here]
- Etc.

Pack a power punch by inviting alumni to come and speak. There's no greater social proof than an alumni success story straight from the horse's mouth. Remember to reserve some time for a Q&A session at the end of the presentation.



Campus tours.

Show your prospective students around campus. This is an opportunity for them to see the academic lives of current students face-to face. It's also a chance for them to see the facilities and architecture. Get existing students to show them around. This will put them at ease when asking questions and provides further social proof. Highlight the fun stuff. Let's face it, it's not just the studying that gets students excited.

One word:

P.A.R.T.Y

Highlight the great moments and activities they'll experience. This includes, but isn't limited to:

- Freshers Week
- social events
- the Student Union
- local bars, clubs, restaurants etc.



Produce info packs.

Provide an info pack they can refer to with all the important details. Hand them out in tote bags and include branded stationery items. Everyone loves a freebie, but ensure it's something they'll actually need/use. For example, pens, mugs, planners, and sports bottles always go down well.


VIRTUAL OXFORD OPEN DAYS 2020


Virtual open days.

Virtual open days are great for giving your prospective students a flavour of your institution. They're particularly beneficial for international students who may not be able to travel to visit. Use a virtual event provider such as vFAIRS or Hopin to create incredible experiences. These platforms provide virtual lobbies, exhibit halls, in-event webinars, and auditoriums for presentations. They also provide networking hubs, should your students want to chat with faculty staff, alumni, or current students. Examples of the desired itinerary may include:

- an introduction from the headteacher
- a tour of the campus
- a tour of the buildings/accommodation
- a feature video on life at your institution
- course presentations
- a 'meet & greet' with current students
- testimonials from former students
- a Q/A session with members of the faculty
- taster sessions of classes

Last online an hour ago

Student  Second year



Zeeshan
Kashmir

LLB Law

I am Zeeshan and I am studying LLB Law. I am a student ambassador, mental health ambassador, peer mentor, and student rep. Also, I am president of the Public Speaking Society. I was born in Kashmir and now live in the UK. I play cricket. I was captain of the college cricket team and now I am vice-captain of the UoB Cricket team. I am a reliable, hardworking and friendly person who is always willing to learn and help others. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

INTERESTS AND CLUBS/SOCIETIES

Politics · Law · Cricket

Chat to me

Last online 3 hours ago

Student  First year



Hamza
Lahore

MSc Electronic and Electrical Engineering

Hi everyone, my name is Hamza Aman, and I am a Masters student of Engineering at the University of Bolton. In my free time, I like to work on myself, play some sports, and even sleep (Don't we all lol 😊). Being away from home has helped me look at things in a positive way, which definitely has changed my perspective of life. You do get the experiences you need for your personal development. Feel free to get in touch and I will try my best to be of some help 😊

INTERESTS AND CLUBS/SOCIETIES

Army Enthusiast · Sports · Ufc · Engineering/AI & Robotics

Chat to me

Speak to students and staff.

Don't just rely on your prospective students to attend an open day to speak to students and staff. Embed this functionality on your website.

Build a 'Chat to students' function on your website like the University of Bradford. The University of Bolton has an excellent 'Chat to Staff' feature. Prospective students can filter by 'Teams', 'Subject Area', and even 'Topic'. There's also a great FAQ section. This answers commonly asked questions but also provides insight into the student journey to inform their buyer personas.



Delight.

Consider how you're going to provide an incredible experience after your students enrol. Why? So they recommend your institution to others. Your goal here is to turn students into evangelists who market for you. Let's dive in.



Events.

Events are a great way to create experiences your students will want to share on social media. Here are some college and university event ideas guaranteed to capture the imagination of your students.

Customisable Escape Rooms.

Create customisable Escape Rooms based on your subject/course. Challenge students with course-based questions and puzzles. Customisable Escape Rooms are also a fun way to revise for exams.

Selfie booths.

Is your institution “Instagrammable”? Set up fun selfie booths and props around the uni. This not only creates a fun experience but also encourages students to share on social media. Encourage students to use a campaign hashtag too.

TEDx talks.

TEDx started as a campus event at the University of Southern California in the U.S. in 2009. Now, the talks have spread across the globe. Start a campus TEDx talk where both professors and students can present and share their ideas. Invite students, faculty, staff, friends, family, and alumni to join the educational party.

Pub/bar crawls.

Come on, it's college/university after all. Just make sure you get student reps/ambassadors to run them... you don't want any of your faculty staff incriminating themselves with embarrassing drunken antics. Mind you, who are we to judge.





Live music performances.

Music unites. Music is memorable. Music lights a fire in us. So perhaps there's nothing better to engage students than a live music performance. Back in 2002, Eminem played a surprise show at the University of Michigan. The rapper sang for the moment to 1,700 lucky students. Most colleges and universities have a (ahem) 'slim' chance of attracting such a bankable star. But that doesn't mean they can't host live music events on a more modest budget. Get creative.

Adulting classes.

When you're proud of the fact you've just boiled pasta, you might need to level up your adulting skills. Many students attend university lacking the basic life skills they need upon graduating and entering "the real world". Run events that teach students how to do a range of useful tasks, such as:

- cooking
- budgeting
- paying taxes
- creating a CV/resume
- participating in a job interview
- maintaining a home

De-stressing activities.

Students can get pretty stressed when it comes to exams. Run meditation or yoga workshops on campus. Other ways to destress could be through campus sporting events.

Gaming tournaments.

According to Forbes, gaming appeals to 87 percent of GenZ, more than any other generation. Run gaming tournaments on campus for a grand prize. Fortnite, anyone?

Networking opportunities.

As the old adage goes, “It’s not what you know, it’s who you know.” While having a solid education puts you one step ahead in the job market, having the right contacts puts you 10 steps ahead. Consider a ‘Networking’ web page like Imperial College London. This updates students on key networking opportunities, such as employer events and careers fairs. If students are able to get a great job straight out of HE, then they’re more likely to promote your institution.





Careers services.

Careers services in Education are designed to help students build their ideal careers. The University of Oxford has a great careers services web page, tailored to where the student is in their journey. This spans from simply 'exploring ideas' right up to 'having a plan'.

The university provides a range of careers services, including helping students to build skills, generating career ideas, careers fairs, careers advisors, career connect platforms, internships and more.

Student profiles.

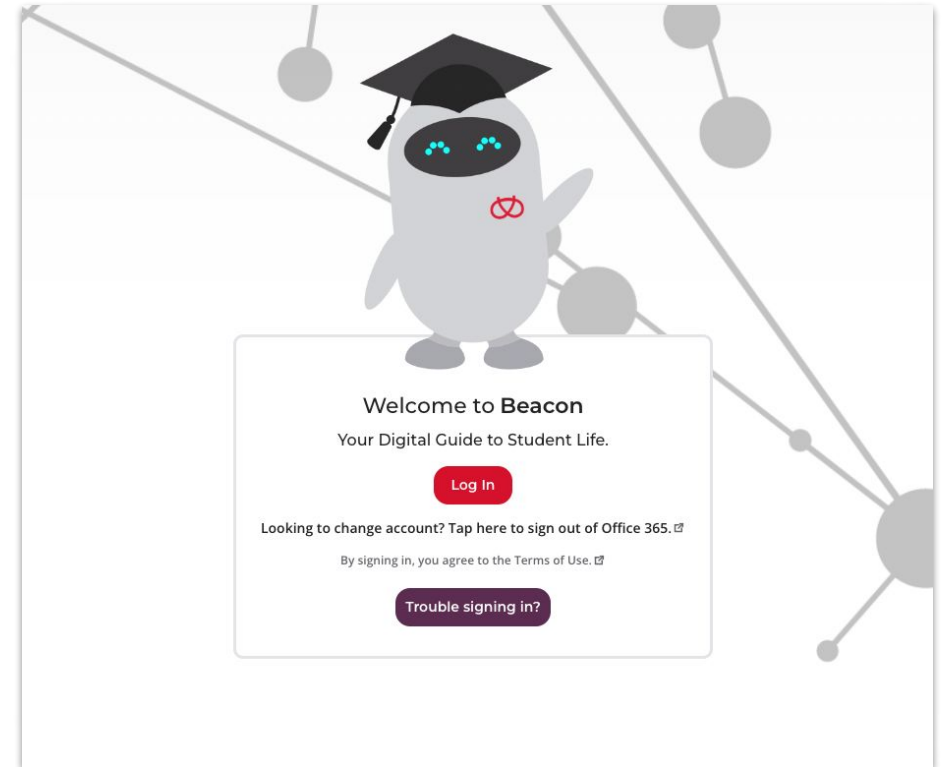
Want your students to feel special? Make them the star of the show. Feature student profiles on your website. Ask students questions such as how they're finding the course, their lecturers, and social life. This not only stops you from looking like a faceless institution but also creates loyalty.

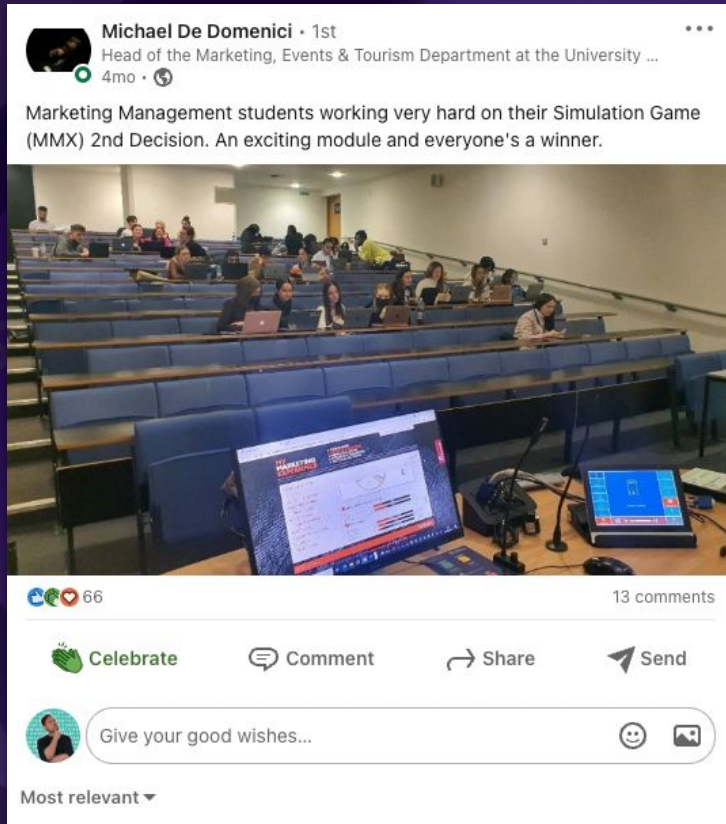
Student profiles show you care about the students and want to show how great they're. They also show prospective students what life's like at your institution. Remember to include a filter on your student profiles web page which includes 'subjects', 'students', and 'alumni'.

Campus chatbots and mobile apps.

There have been some great examples of the use of this technology in recent years. Staffordshire University released “Beacon” in 2019. It claims to be the first university in the UK to deploy an AI coach.

This mobile-native app enables contact with personal tutors and provides answers to 400 frequently asked questions. These cover campus facilities, support services, and more. Use campus chatbots and mobile apps to create a fun, frictionless experience for your students. For example, during Freshers’ Week, use your apps and chatbots to help answer common questions such as, “Where’s lecture hall 18?” or, “What time is my Freshers Orientation?”





Gamification.

If you were born before the nineties you'll remember good ol' chalk and blackboards. Fortunately, technology in Education has come a long way since then. Interactive apps now make learning much more fun and engaging. Use gamification to capture students' attention and create an unforgettable learning experience.

"I'm currently using two simulation games with different levels of complexity, which are relative to their degree, undergraduate or postgraduate, says Michael De Domenici, Head of the Marketing, Events & Tourism Department at the University of Greenwich.

"Students play against each other in teams, rather than against the computer, which offers many benefits – for example teamwork and implementing practical skills such as marketing strategies and tactics they have learnt on their academic journey. Overall a win-win situation."

Be sure to showcase some of the fine technology you use in our marketing collateral. Gen Z are digitally native, so it's essential. Facebook has partnered with unis to teach on its Metaverse VR platform. Learning in VR will likely be commonplace with Gen A. Watch this space.

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As educators, we need to consider a variety of learning experiences. Simulation games offer a great opportunity to create a near real-life marketing experience.



Michael De Domenici, Head of the Marketing, Events & Tourism Department, University of Greenwich

A night sky with a bright comet streaking across it, and a city skyline visible on the horizon.

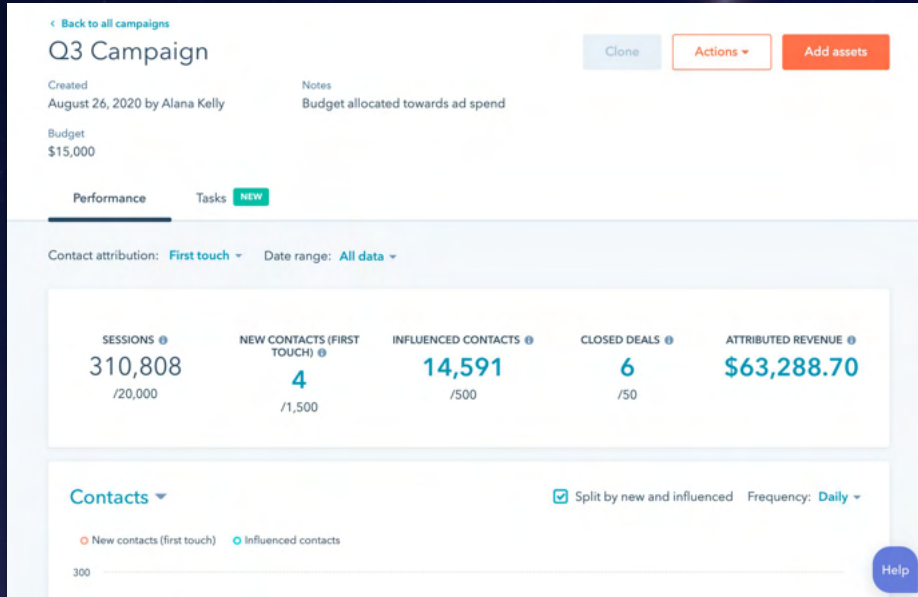
Stage 9:

Bring it all to fruition.



Blast off.

Get ready for the launch. So far, you've painstakingly planned your strategy for boosting student leads. Now it's time to put those plans into action. To set out your marketing roadmap, you'll need some good project management software. For example, we use Productive to map out our marketing campaigns using a Board layout. Whether it's a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), Gantt Chart, or Matrix – use what best suits your needs.



Set timelines, teams, roles, and tasks. And remember, what gets measured gets managed. Reporting is crucial in marketing and student recruitment. Find a tool that utilises marketing automation to tie together reporting with individual campaigns. We use HubSpot's Campaigns tool to manage campaigns all in one place. This enables us to associate every piece of digital marketing material we produce with a particular campaign, including:

- emails
- ads
- blog posts
- call-to-actions
- landing pages
- social posts
- lists
- website pages
- workflows

This gives us a great view of how many student leads we've created and where they came from. It also provides insight into what's working so we can double down on success. Let us show you how we transform education providers using the power of HubSpot and the inbound marketing methodology.

A young man with dreadlocks and a denim jacket is smiling, looking slightly to the side. He is wearing a backpack. In the background, a crowd of people is walking on a street, suggesting a festival or a busy urban area. The image has a greenish tint.

Stage 10:

Watch the student leads roll in.



Need help?

We'd love to say you can sit back and relax now you've put in the groundwork. But as you know, a marketing or student recruitment professional's job never ends. There will always be the next round of students searching for their perfect institution. Constantly engaging students and keeping the wheels spinning is a challenge. This is compounded by a lack of staff and resources to truly execute your vision of a well-oiled student recruitment machine.

That's why we exist.

We help education providers streamline their efforts to do more with less. Through the power of marketing automation, website optimisation and content creation, we've helped the world's leading education providers rapidly boost student leads. Let us show you how we can do the same for your institution with a free website and marketing review (yup, completely free). We'll show you how to optimise your website to generate more student leads.

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We found the Contra team experts within web development and marketing in the education sector, always on top of industry trends. The team have been really supportive as a working partner and are highly creative.



***Sarah Hainsworth, Website & Internal Comms Manager,
Homerton College, University of Cambridge***



Thanks...

for reading, let us know if you have any questions or if you'd like to find out how we can help you with your marketing strategy :)

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