



MARKETING TO SCHOOLS FOR UNIVERSITIES

# Tips to maximise your schools and college outreach



# Do you want to...

- *get more students attending your open days?*
- *build lasting relationships with schools and sixth forms?*
- *encourage more learners to choose your university?*

Whatever your department's goals, there are simple steps you can implement to get the most out of your university's marketing to education strategy.

Our education marketing specialists work with universities across the UK every year, helping them secure new connections with schools and sixth forms, deliver their message to prospective students, and support their schools' outreach programmes.



# Key challenges in university recruitment

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## Low open day attendance

Open days are one of the most effective ways to convert prospective students into applicants. However, many universities struggle to attract the right attendees. The reasons for this include:

### Lack of awareness

Many students and their influencers (teachers, parents, career advisors) are unaware of open day dates and their benefits.

### Competing priorities

Students have numerous commitments, and an open day may not always be top of their agenda.

### Travel constraints

For students living further away, attending an open day requires logistical planning and potential costs.

## Increasing brand awareness in a crowded market

Universities operate in an increasingly competitive landscape, so ensuring visibility among prospective students and their influencers is vital. Without a strong and consistent marketing presence, institutions risk being overshadowed by competitors with more aggressive strategies.

## Reaching the right audience

Traditional marketing efforts often fail to reach the key influencers in a student's decision-making process.

## Securing student applications

Even when a university successfully attracts attention, converting that interest into applications remains a challenge. Common barriers include:

### Information overload

Prospective students receive vast amounts of information, making it difficult for any single institution to stand out.

### Lack of targeted messaging

Without direct and relevant communication, students may not feel personally engaged.

### Competition from other universities

With so many options available, institutions must work harder to differentiate themselves.

# Our tips for university recruitment



# Play the **long** game

Just like universities, schools are busy places to be. To ensure your events and activities for schools secure a prime spot in teachers' minds (*and therefore learners' minds too*), you need to develop a **long-term email marketing strategy**.

Your strategy should include different types of email campaigns delivered throughout the academic year, each with a unique focus and objective. Below are some example campaign types with tips on what to include:

## Awareness

- ✓ Introduction to your university with credibility-building stats and insights.
- ✓ Soft call-to-action e.g. 'Find out more' that links out to further information specific to your audience.
- ✓ Designed as per your university branding for continuity.

## Lead-nurturing

- ✓ Benefits-led content e.g. the benefits of your events and open days.
- ✓ Inclusion of free resources and lead magnets (e.g. a free poster on what personal statements should include).
- ✓ Call-to-action to get in touch with your team.

## Events

- ✓ Date of your event and call-to-action included in the header section.
- ✓ Concise, informative content ideally visible before the fold (the point at which teachers have to scroll).
- ✓ Direct call-to-action button e.g. 'Register now'.

# Mailing lists **matter**

Directly connecting with the relevant teachers will help you to get your message in front of more students.



To maximise your engagement rates, create content tailored to your audience and deliver it to them directly. If delivering a nationwide campaign, consider adapting your content to that area e.g. *'Join us in encouraging learners in the Northwest ...'*



## Not got direct email addresses?

Add *'FAO: [Job role e.g. Careers Officers]'* at the start of your subject line to ensure your message gets passed to the right contact.



**Top teachers and decision makers we recommend for universities to contact:**

### Senior Leaders

*E.g. Head Teachers, Deputy Heads, Business Managers, Chair of Governors*

### Heads of Year and Key Stage Coordinators

*E.g. Head of Year 7-13, Year 7-13 Coordinators.*

### Heads of Key Stage 3-5

### Heads of Careers / Careers Officers

### Subject-Specific Heads of Department

*E.g. Head of Business and Economics*

### Subject-Specific Teachers

*E.g. Business Studies Teachers*

### International School Staff

# Stay in **sync** with schools

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As you'll know, there are busy months for student recruitment within the university calendar. But there's also a lot going on in schools and sixth forms too during those months too. Depending on your target audience, you'll need to consider what else is a priority for teachers at the time you're planning on delivering your campaigns. To ensure your campaigns generate high engagement, follow these guidelines:



## Give teachers notice

Make sure you allow enough time for teachers to learn more about your events before your event dates, especially if you're offering an on-campus visits. They'll need to cross-check dates with other staff members, get approval from senior leaders, and seek parental permission too.



## Send topical campaigns

For example, if you're promoting subject taster sessions, consider delivering either on or near a relevant week, e.g. British Science Week for science sessions.



## Know your school term dates

This is especially important if promoting your outreach activities to schools in different UK regions.



We might have some **FREE** useful resources to help you...

Read until the end!

# Make your marketing **memorable**

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In addition to email marketing, send postal campaigns to develop a strong brand identity. But make sure your direct mail is timely, and your campaigns genuinely do stand out. All visuals should be engaging, and copy should be informative, succinct, impactful and if possible, playful. This'll help you to capture attention.

As well as providing key information about your university open days, events and courses in your postal marketing campaigns, consider sending free posters or guides with valuable content (e.g. a poster on 'how to write the perfect personal statement'). This will help you to increase teacher and student engagement.



*"We receive literally thousands of telephone calls on the day the A level results come out, with potential applicants requesting vacancy information and teachers seeking advice for their students from around the UK. I'm convinced that our annual Buzz Education mailshot contributes to our success in these campaigns."*

**Barrie Clark, Swansea University**



# Take your marketing **overseas**

Expand your reach by including British international schools in your marketing strategy. Email marketing is a cost-effective way to connect with schools and decision makers worldwide, helping you build relationships with prospective students and boost your application numbers.



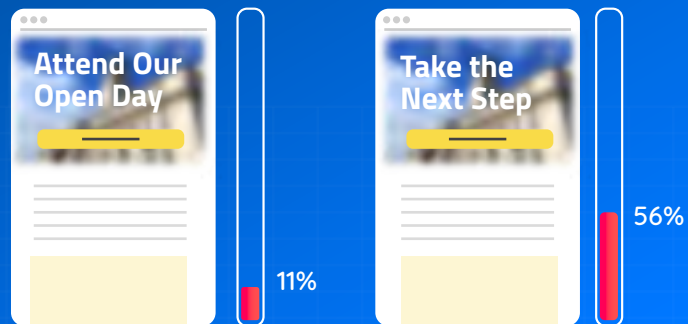
According to COBIS (Council of British International Schools), the international school market is expanding. This growth therefore brings with it new opportunities for UK universities to attract more international students to study with them.



# Test, measure, **repeat**

Run A/B tests on your campaign content to identify what works well and what doesn't for your specific department.

A/B tests are where you send two slightly different versions of your campaign. You can test different campaign content, imagery, or subject lines to identify which generates the highest engagement.



## How this works in action

We worked with The University of Law to deliver a series of email marketing campaigns promoting their degrees and inviting students to attend their open days and careers events.

To identify the top-performing subject lines and gauge which topics captured teachers' attention the most, we set up A/B tests on several campaigns, including one promoting their schools and colleges newsletter. The email that performed best included the subject line highlighting that clearing was now open for students, as opposed to the more general subject line focused on summer. This insight helped us to focus our messaging moving forwards and boost their open day registrations.



*“Great service and great results - would recommend.”*

Julie Tanner, *University of Law*



## Are you ready to...

- increase your open day bookings?
- attract prospective students?
- sell the student experience?
- promote undergraduate study?
- showcase your study options?

Get in touch with our education marketing experts today:

☎ 01257 460036

✉ [info@buzz-education.com](mailto:info@buzz-education.com)

🖱 [buzz-education.com](http://buzz-education.com)



★★★★★

*"The campaign generated a high level of click through to our website. I highly recommend their services for a school-focused campaign."*

Richard Brock, King's College London



★★★★★

*"Can't recommend enough - fantastic customer service - I always get a response within a few hours and our email campaigns have always generated a good response too and the team never fail to follow this up."*

Helen Griggs, Henley Business School



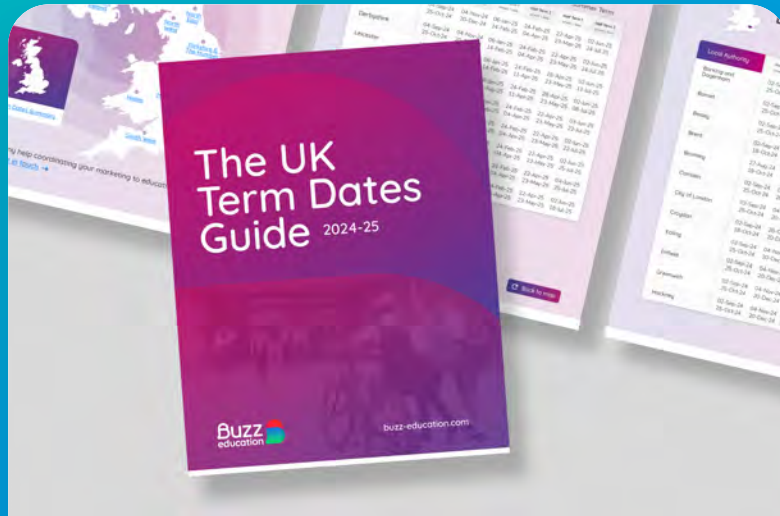
★★★★★

*"The campaigns have increased the click-throughs to our advisor webpages, and have increased open day registrations. We've generated links with schools and colleges that our Schools Team have found crucial."*

Julie Tanner, University of Law

[FREE MARKETING RESOURCES THIS WAY](#) →

# Free tools to optimise your marketing

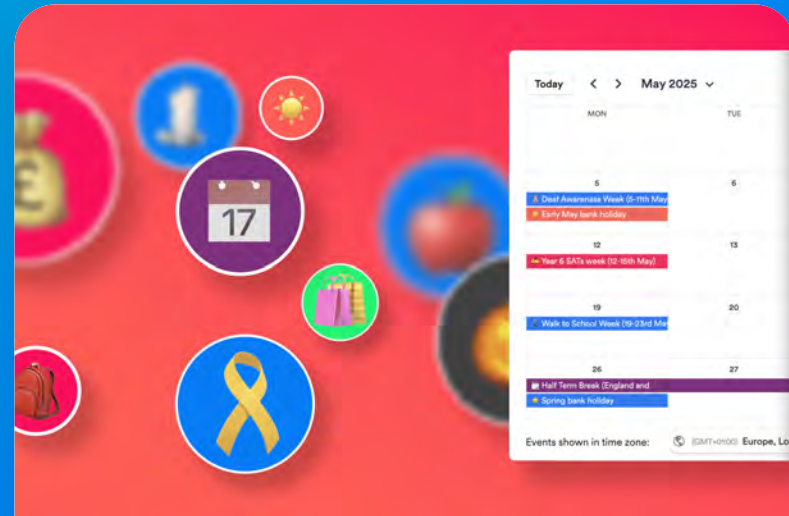


## Education Resources

### 2024-25 UK Term Dates Guide

Send your campaigns to schools at the right times with the help of our free term dates guide.

[Download now](#)



## Marketing Resources

### Marketing to Education Calendar 2024-25

Discover all the key events in the 2024-25 academic year with the help of our interactive Marketing to Education calendar.

[Take a look](#)

[buzz-education.com](https://buzz-education.com)

