

Session Title:	A decade of UniTasterDays Insights – five tips for building relationships with schools and colleges
Speaker(s):	Jon Cheek
Chair:	Llinos Angharad Williams
Reporter:	Niamh Gallagher

Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	UniTasterDays
Overview/Aim of session:	Jon as a massive advocate of HE outreach, wanted to use his expertise (12 years in the sector) to share tips for building relationships with schools and colleges
Workshop Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Where it started <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Wanted to fill the gap of there not being somewhere centrally for school/college staff to seek support from universities. <p>Five Tips:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>When producing student resources (for schools) we always need to remember the 3 key decisions for a student</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is university for them? ○ What course? ○ What place? ● Make sure everything we do helps with those three. ● How UniTasterDays does it – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ On demand platform they can access information from e.g. The Uni Guide Podcast 2. <u>Make things easy for schools. University engagement is likely to be their priority.</u> ● Gatekeepers knock users back – having forms, sign ups etc. before they can access a site – they'd rather hit x and try

somewhere else.

- o The resources/support needs to be open access as possible.

One basic and quick fix is to show how to meet Gatsby benchmarks.

Jon also shared an anecdote from his wife who is a teacher. To put into perspective about teachers not wanting to use their time to fill in surveys/forms his own wife didn't answer the email he sent of a survey which was collecting data from them to use for a resource for her school.

- **How UniTasterDays does it –**

- o removing barriers
- o keeping up to date
- o Making things quick and easy

e.g., A lot of schools have display screens dotted across their sites, but they struggle to have content for them– UniTasterDays share a slide deck of useful information for them to use.

3. Schools need pre-16 engagement too. Build the relationship - connection counts.

Best way to build relationships is to do it from as early as possible as it makes a massive difference.

- If you believe you should but get pushed back, try emphasise the below–
 1. the kids will always remember.
 2. you will become the go to person in that school/college going forward.

UniTasterDays recently launched their regional platform – as part of staff registering for it, it asks 'which year group do you support?' (most have said ks5 only so schools/colleges after support for ks4< struggle)

Schools love fun and engaging.

- o Recommend the upcoming creating engaging training (bookings are open now) March 11th in Birmingham
 - Played video from the last session.

4. External websites are your friend – not just UniTasterDays

Some unis use them to the full potential, some don't...

e.g UniTasterDays

Tips:

- List events – you can list however many you like.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create on demand videos – they do all the leg work; speaker just needs to talk. • School resources – get involved with the teacher, students, and parent’s guides. <p>e.g. LinkedIn – if you’re not on it, get on it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careers colleagues love it – always asking for support for events (you can also reach out to them too) • Personal benefits • Institution benefits • Message facility <p><u>5. Piggy Back</u></p> <p>Lots of websites have lots of resources that you can use. No point fixing something that isn’t broken or creating something that already exists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e.g. UniTasterDays HE jargon buster can be imbedded into your webpage (see slide)
<p>Case Studies/Examples:</p>	<p>But what about those who work in the schools, what are they saying?</p> <p>Jess – Founder of Careers People and sits on UTD advisory board and Top tips are on the slides.</p> <p>Jon shared a call out on LinkedIn and responses also on the slides.</p>
<p>Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:</p>	<p>Question to the room – Does your university have or want to start a guidance podcast?</p> <p>Answer - 65% no 29% yes</p> <p>Jon played a snippet from E22 of The Uni Guide podcast.</p> <p>Jon wouldn’t recommend doing one though– he can do it cause he’s impartial but that’s not possible with your own institutions (you’ll only attract your prospective students- essentially filtering your audience from the get-go)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are also a lot of work!! <p>He’s ran The Uni Guide Podcast for over a year – didn’t think it was going to be as much work as it is:</p>

- From Identifying topics and guests, contacting said guests (usually gets ignored), meeting them, briefing them, doing the interview *which has to be professionally edited and recorded* – It takes several hours.

You need to do them well for them to be successful.

Jon did announce despite this that he is also launching 'The One in 5 Podcast – it's UniTasterDays & 2x UniConnect Programmes coming together to share insights and offer support.

- It's essentially University support by disabled students for disabled students.

Question to the room - How can you (or your institution) make things easier for schools?

- Bangor University
 - o Aligning with 'Teachers need it quick and easy'.
 - He worked somewhere previously that provided teachers with a leaflet of their whole offer – it had a QR code on it which they scanned for a booking form to book the activity in.
 - Booklet was updated every year, and the teachers got the new copies every summer.
- University of Huddersfield
 - o Offering drop in sessions
 - I go in on a Monday every week in one target school and offer drop ins – time of year dependent it ranges from general IAG to personal statements, choosing a course etc. etc.
 - o From this, it's done heaps for relationship building – more sessions and lunch time workshops booked in across the year and there's more familiarity with the students and University of Huddersfield.
- **Jon's top 5**
 1. School & college webpage (review it)
 2. Ensure external websites are up to date – e.g., UniTasterDays
 3. Be clear on what you offer
 4. Be clear on who you offer it to
 - E.g., clarifying you don't do pre-16 activity.
 5. Address school barriers if you can
 - Transport costs
 - Make it clear if you reimburse.
 - Student finance
 - Do fun sessions.
 - Make it easy for schools to know you do it and do it fun.
- **Interactive tally held on what room thinks is the most**

useful from the above

1. 29%
2. 0%
3. 36%
4. 4%
5. 32%

Question to the room - How open is your university website to schools and colleges?

- Solent
 - I don't like ours – to find it you must click on collaborate (thinks it's ridiculous as schools won't think of looking there)
- Edge Hill
 - Our webpage is actually quite good it can be found under schools and colleges at the very bottom of the home page.
 - The banner at the top of that page then has buttons for e.g., 'invite us to a session' and 'enquire about booking a campus visit' which takes you to our online booking form that gets sent directly to the relevant officer once completed.
- Aberdeen
 - Not a fan of theirs, it's not accessible on mobile vs web.
- Bangor
 - Found having a picture of the team is useful on theirs
- Jon's top 5
 1. Ensure schools will be able to find your resources
 2. Meet the team and friendly emails, not not-the-longest-email-ever@uni.ac.uk
 3. keep event listings up to date. Clarify when 'it's coming soon' – perhaps give a check back on such date.
 4. Address the barriers
 5. Avoid acronyms/jargon – HE: schools 'might' know but students may not.

Question to the room - Does your university offer financial support for students/school groups?

1. no 33%
2. thinking about it 10%
3. yes 57%

Question to the room – Does your university have regional colleagues in post?

	<p>3- do 42% 2- thinking about it 12% 1-don't 46%</p> <p>Regional is growing – more than there ever there are recruitment staff located in an area where their institution isn't based. IF you do:</p> <p>The regional platform has launched – if you have regional contacts or are a regional contact, get added on.</p>
<p>Questions and Answers:</p>	<p>Jon stayed behind for questions but ran out of time to take open questions from the room.</p>
<p>Summary Key takeaways:</p>	<p>Jon: 'You change lives – remember that'</p> <p>Remember:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When producing student resources (for schools) we always need to remember the 3 key decisions for a student 2. Make things easy for schools. 3. Schools need pre-16 engagement too. 4. External websites are your friend. 5. Piggyback.