

Session Title:	Recruitment and Admissions for PG Courses
Speaker(s):	Emma Price (Keele University)
Chair:	Calum Fraser
Reporter:	Carl Griffiths

Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	UK PG Recruitment Manager at Keele University Single individual at Keele focused on the UK PG market.
Overview/Aim of session:	Focusing on PGT home recruitment, create opportunity to discuss: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PG Recruitment Activities - Target Market identification - PG Activity Types
Workshop Content	<p>Checking with room, few have any dedicated resource within PGT recruitment in their institutions. PG recruitment presents lots of challenges.</p> <p>PG Admissions presents lots of differences between UG and PGT processing. Need to consider changes and improvements for us and applicants as part of the customer service journey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emma presented Keele structure (in slides) for an example <p>All of us are working differently as institutions in terms of resourcing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Org chart shows example of structure and the full PGT picture at Keele – Emma represents sole UK PGT focused recruitment individual. <p>Global PG student recruitment is 90% International focus at Keele.</p> <p>First discussion: What are the challenges of PG Home Recruitment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Changes after the pandemic - Lots of challenges - Cost of living crisis – how do we as universities communicate these key messages

about finance support

- Events we attend and the importance of knowing the nuts and bolts to present appropriately at events.
- How to access target markets, as there are markets everywhere.
- Understanding the portfolio and ensuring it's market appropriate: on campus FT vs online PT (particularly from the pandemic). Ensuring that prospects would be able to balance their lives now with their jobs, etc.
- Dedicated PG portfolio to ensure course content and method of study is appropriate

Key target markets to consider:

- Continuing UG students going straight on to PG (own or other universities')
- Returning students – career changers, upskilling, for fun, potentially alumni

Background of PG No's.

- Low until 2016 with the master loan coming in – funding led to a spike in interest
- Steady increase in numbers until the pandemic, when there was a PGT home increase due to job losses and career upskilling, along with job market uncertainty.
- As pandemic ended and job market recovered, there was an impact on numbers, further compounded by the cost of living crisis leaving potential students struggling to justify costs

Discussion: How do we engage with the different markets?

Feedback:

- Some have used games with prizes to drive applications to UG through a PG event.
- Pushing ownership onto academic departments to promote through their channels.
- Range of current on campus events
- Linking up with industries, e.g. to direct short courses and CPD/apprenticeships

Activities for external markets (seen as the most difficult to engage with)

- Recruitment fairs (although there aren't as many as UG). Including FindAUniversity. Raises institution profile.
- Recommendation: sign up to Find A Uni insights, including their Future Masters Survey: 16000 students – 1/3 would apparently go to a recruitment fair to find out more about

their options.

PG Open Events

- In person and virtual options

Keele experience and key tips: Reset these events to make them “fit for purpose”

- Smaller numbers engaging had led to disengaged internal stakeholders
- Changed the format: Virtual in the AM to enable better reach and access, and in person in the PM with the same format in both versions.
- Gained good feedback from staff
- Led to record breaking attendance
- Reduced overall number of events from 4 to 3 to push better traffic into a smaller number of opportunities
- Focused on subject specific webinars, visa compliance for international students, student life, etc

With internal students:

- Carried out focus groups with UG & PG students – how they wanted to be communicated to.
- They were an “on the door step” market that needed better comms.
- Provided 10mins presentations to final year lectures.
- Provided insight from graduate outcomes survey – key stats, such as professional and manager level progress vs solely UG on aspects such as earnings and progress.
- Provides information to ensure students can make informed choices.
- Drop in sessions
- Information sessions
- Taster sessions
- Collaborate with key internal stakeholders, such as academics, careers, student services.
- Ensure that there is consistent messaging and people are aware of key messages.

TSR in 21/22 identified 45% of UG students would consider PG study, so ensuring that you retain at least 20% and above must be a focus, but recognising that many students will also want to experience elsewhere.

This activity is only one piece of the puzzle and other teams we work with need to be factored in, to enable us to consider aspects such as:

- Bursaries and scholarships
- Out of home, 3rd party advertising

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Web content - Comms campaigns - Internal comms <p>Discussion: How do admissions processes differ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very different process in PG: - Not limited, flexible, direct and often hard to track - Need to be aware of the admissions process and that there is no UCAS or unifying system, so we could all process differently - Very manual process and not just automatically fed in, with involvement often in looking through transcripts and applications - No clearing, although UG students may be used to this concept - Multiple entry points. - Challenges therefore for prioritisation for admissions colleagues – CPD/modular sessions could even have monthly start points. <p>PGT Admissions at Keele:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recently reviewed process – how to be more efficient and effective - Simplified process for Keele students - Not typical application of statements – can just send email with internal course interest - Aiming for an “Apply Now” for a Pre-Populated form - For non-competitive courses – the removal of reference, as there was never a bad reference, and this was just another administrative step - Automation of offers to applicants <p>Final thoughts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do we need a PGT network? - Do any already exist? <p>Provided email: e.price@keele.ac.uk</p>
	<p>Examples as above from Keele throughout.</p>
<p>Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:</p>	<p>As above</p>

<p>Questions and Answers:</p>	<p>How did you get academics engaged with hybrid activity on the same day?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It was simultaneous at first and didn't work, so moved it and trialed it and the academics gave good feedback. Each session is only 1.5 hours.- Difficulty in academic representation, so reduced the involvement to just PGT programme directors, therefore reduced the resource, and it is built into their workload allocation.- It can be sign up with the sessions offered, or set as just drop in. <p>Virtual events worked?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It was done in collaboration with international colleagues, as it's better for all markets, but particularly can help international. However last time it was predominantly UK.- On demand content is helpful too.
<p>Summary Key takeaways:</p>	<p>We need to work together and collaborate to share the issues, challenges and feedback and identify opportunities for us all to help face those challenges.</p> <p>PGT requires nuance and its own focus where possible to understand the markets, the types of events suitable for your markets, and the processes occurring internally and within admissions.</p>