



# A Decade of UniTasterDays Insights – Five Tips for Building Relationships with Schools and Colleges

## Venture shortlisted for start-up award

Bridgnorth | News | Published: Sept 4, 2012

An online business set up by a 27-year-old from Shropshire has been shortlisted for a major national prize.

Subscribe to our daily newsletter!

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Jon Cheek set up [UniTasterDays.com](http://UniTasterDays.com) to allow teachers at schools, colleges and academies to book places on university taster days and workshops.

**CRINGE...**  
***Where it all started, back in 2012...!!***

*I want to ensure every school and college engages with higher education. So every student makes an informed university decision. On participation - and where and what to study.*

*I will support this by providing a clear signpost to the most comprehensive source of university events available for schools and students.*



## Tip 1:

**When producing student resources (for schools):  
we always remember the three key decisions for  
a student**

# Student priorities



1. Is university for them

2. What course?

3. What place?



The University of Manchester






# For example – the on demand platform.

UniTasterDays

For teachers & careers advisers ▾ For students ▾ For parents & guardians ▾ For university partners ▾

### On Demand Webinar Library




**Why study Biology at University**

**Biology**

A guide to studying Biology at university – including what to expect, application tips, careers and more! Featuring the University of Wolverhampton.

[Watch now](#)




**Why study Zoology at University**

**Zoology**

A guide to studying Zoology at university – including what to expect, application tips, careers and more! Featuring the University of Exeter.

[Watch now](#)




**Why study Biochemistry at University**

**Biochemistry**

A guide to studying Biochemistry at university – including what to expect, application tips, careers and more! Featuring Sheffield Hallam University.


[Watch now](#)



**Why study Liberal Arts at University**

**Liberal Arts**


A guide to studying Liberal Arts at university – with three expert speakers from the University of Birmingham, the University of Manchester and the



**Why study Animation, VFX and Games at University**

**Animation, Visual Effects & Games**

A guide to studying Animation, Visual Effects (VFX) and Games at university – including what to expect, application



**Why study Architectural Technology at University**

**Architectural Technology**

A guide to studying Architectural Technology at university – including what to expect, application tips, careers and a lab tour! Featuring

\*blackbullion

EXCLUSIVE



UnitasterDays.com

# THE UNI GUIDE PODCAST



E22: Bursaries, scholarships and free money for university



# JON HERING



For example – podcasts. How we do it.





## Tip 2:

**Make things easy for schools. Uni engagement is unlikely to be their priority.**



# Gatsby Benchmark 7

## Encounters with further and higher education

All pupils should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes both academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and in the workplace.

# How we do it



Removing  
barriers



Being useful



Keeping  
things up-to-  
date

# How you can



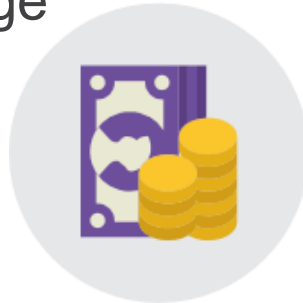
1. Work on your school and college webpages



2. Ensure external websites are up to date



3. Be clear on what you offer

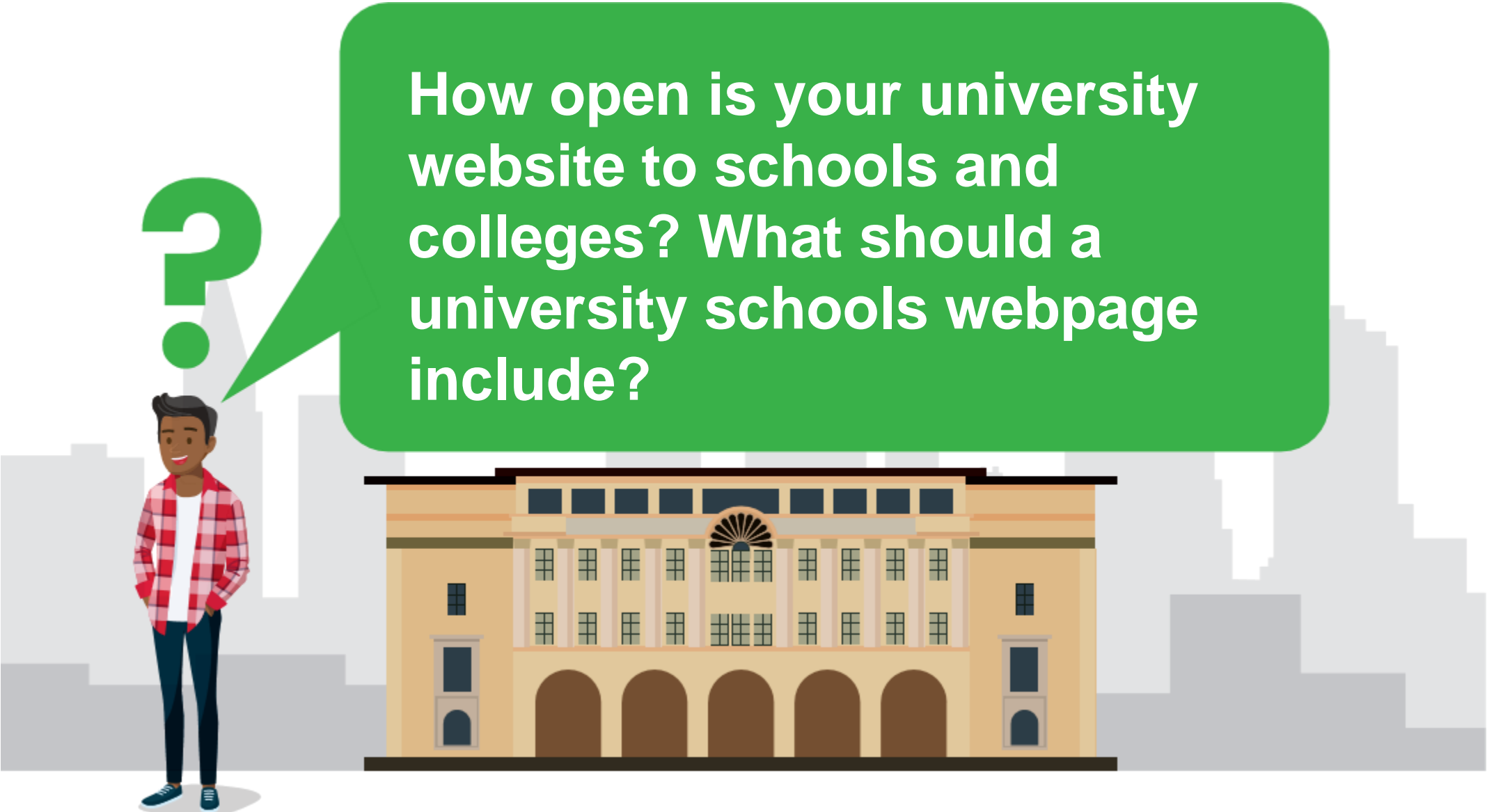


4. Be clear on who you offer it to



5. Address school barriers if you can –  
i.e. transport costs





How open is your university website to schools and colleges? What should a university schools webpage include?

## For example – webpages, my top 5

- 1.Ensure schools will be able to find your resources in the first place.
- 2.Meet the team. And friendly emails. Not The-longest-email-ever@uni.ac.uk
- 3.Keep event listings up to date. Coming soon. Coming when?
- 4.Address the barriers
- 5.Avoid acronyms.



## **Tip 3:**

**Schools need pre-16 engagement too.  
Build the relationship. Connection counts.**



Image of a green car with UniTasterDays.com written on it





**Tip 4:**  
**External websites are your friend –**  
***“Says the man that runs one..”***

## Education Outreach Team

We deliver activities for school and college students to raise aspirations and encourage progression to university



List unlimited general and subject specific events for schools and students with unlimited account holders. Including an institution profile.



# On Demand Videos

[For teachers & careers advisers](#) ▾[For students](#) ▾[For parents & guardians](#) ▾[For university partners](#) ▾

## On Demand Webinar Library



### Biology

A guide to studying Biology at university - including what to expect, application tips, careers and more! Featuring the University of Wolverhampton.

[Watch now](#)

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### Animation, Visual Effects & Games

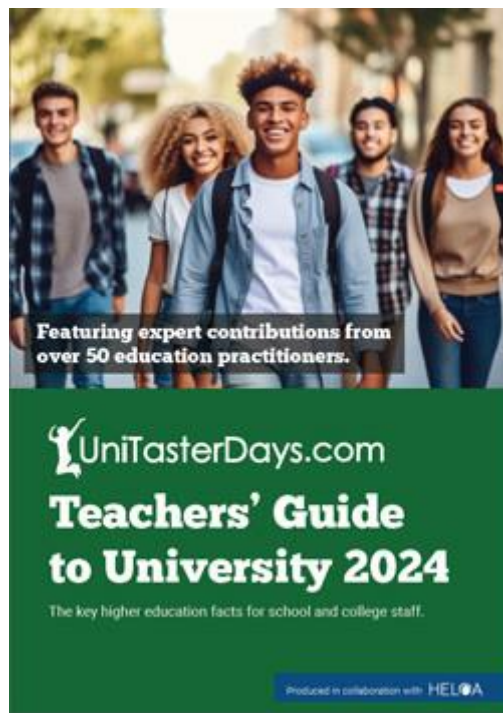
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### Architectural Technology

A guide to studying Architectural Technology at university - including what to expect, application tips, careers and a lab tour! Featuring

# School resources



## Search regional university school and college representatives

Once you've entered your school information, we'll display your nearest contacts

Start by entering your school name or school postcode

Q Search



## Browse regional contacts near Bridgnorth Endowed School (reset)



**Ester Hill**

Midlands Regional Outreach Officer

University of Gloucestershire

📍 I'm working with schools and colleges in your area – just **15 miles** from you



**Lois Barlow**

Outreach Officer

University of Plymouth

📍 I'm working with schools and colleges in your area – just **18 miles** from you



**Lauren Perry**

Regional Student Recruitment Officer

University of South Wales

📍 I'm working with schools and colleges in your area – just **18 miles** from you



**Jeff Chilton**

Student Recruitment Officer

Aberystwyth University

📍 I'm working with schools and colleges in your area – just **18 miles** from you



**Emily Day**

Student recruitment officer

Lancaster University

📍 I'm working with schools and colleges in your area – just **18 miles** from you



**Barney Goatley**

Recruitment Officer

University of Sheffield

📍 I'm working with schools and colleges in your area – just **24 miles** from you



### Jeff Chilton

Student Recruitment Officer  
Aberystwyth University

[Home](#) > [Regional contacts](#) > Jeff Chilton (Aberystwyth University)

Jeff has years of experience working in Student Recruitment/ Schools and Colleges Liaison, across a number of Higher Education institutions. During this time, Jeff has developed a suite of informative and engaging presentations to support post-16 learners with making informed decisions about next step options. At every stage possible, these presentations are also brought to life and made engaging and fun! He also delivers the keynote welcome presentation at Aberystwyth University Open Days and has also been a guest speaker on a UniTasterDays podcast.

Based in Wolverhampton, Jeff is proud to represent Aberystwyth University at schools and colleges across the Central England region, where he attends Fairs and Parents Evenings and delivers presentations.

Jeff is always happy to talk to learners about his volunteering journey. In his spare time, Jeff is a football commentator for Alan March Sport and commentates at Wolves home games for blind and partially sighted spectators.



**Jeff is supporting schools 18 miles from you**  
Send an enquiry to discuss supporting you too.

#### Send a message to Jeff

I am a

☐ A Teacher☐ A School Administrator☐ A Mentor/Careers Advisor☐ A Pupil / Student (age 16+)☐ A Parent / Guardian / Carer

Your message

Would you like more information about this event?

Use this box to send a message directly to the institution delivering it. This may include how to book the event, questions about event suitability, event dates, or any other questions you may have in mind.



I consent to this enquiry being sent to the institution and the colleague listed - and for them to contact me following this. This is in accordance with the UniTasterDays [privacy policy](#).



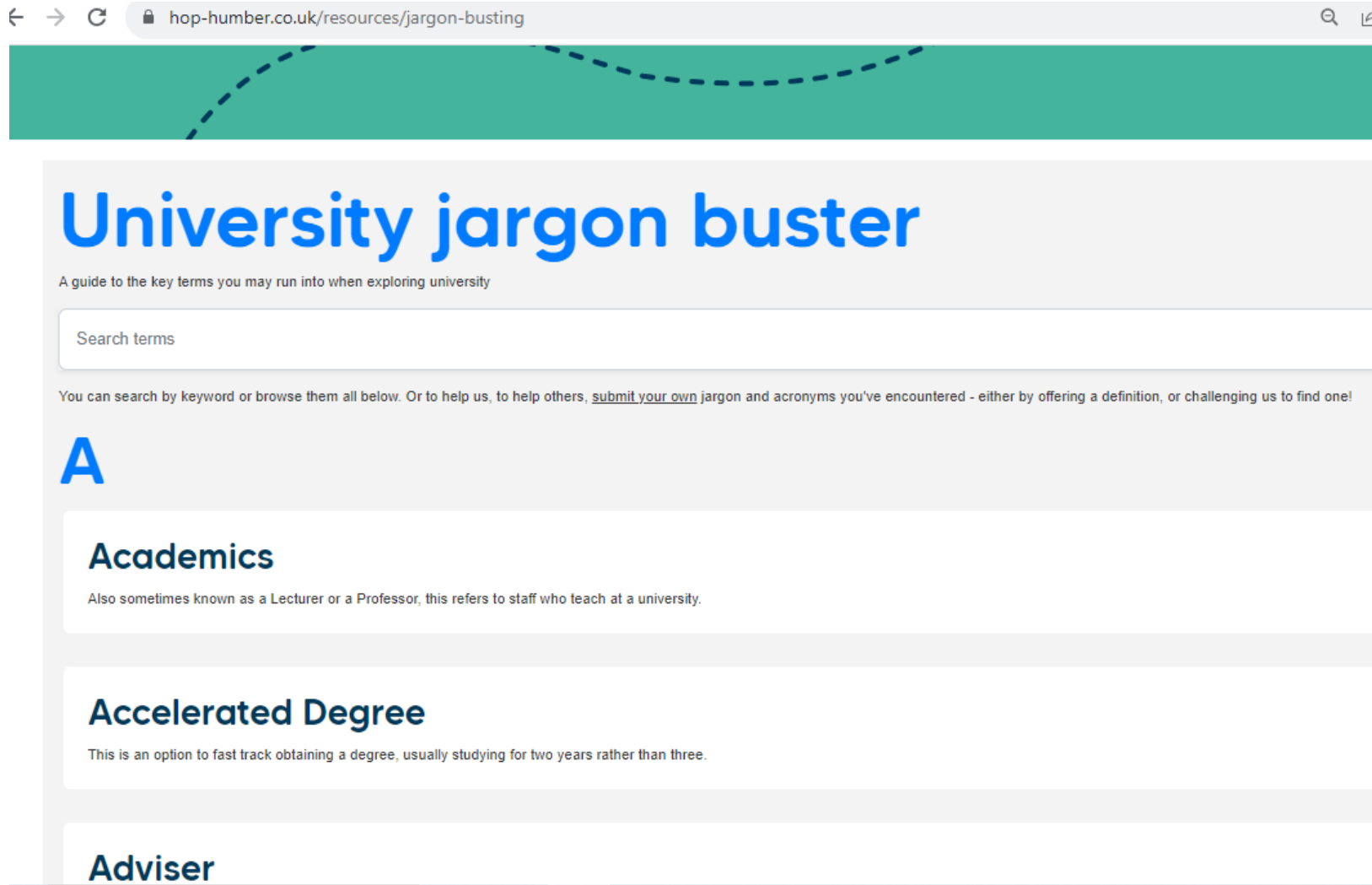


- Careers colleagues love it
- Personal benefits
- Institution benefits
- Message facility



# Tip 5: Piggy Back!

# Embeds



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying 'hop-humber.co.uk/resources/jargon-busting'. The page has a teal header with a dashed white line. Below the header, the title 'University jargon buster' is in large blue font. A subtitle reads 'A guide to the key terms you may run into when exploring university'. There is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search terms'. Below the search bar, a message states: 'You can search by keyword or browse them all below. Or to help us, to help others, [submit your own](#) jargon and acronyms you've encountered - either by offering a definition, or challenging us to find one!'. The page is organized into sections, each starting with a large blue letter 'A'. The visible sections are 'Academics', 'Accelerated Degree', and 'Adviser'. Each section has a brief definition below its title.

← → ↻ 🔒 hop-humber.co.uk/resources/jargon-busting 🔍 📄

## University jargon buster

A guide to the key terms you may run into when exploring university

You can search by keyword or browse them all below. Or to help us, to help others, [submit your own](#) jargon and acronyms you've encountered - either by offering a definition, or challenging us to find one!

### A

#### Academics

Also sometimes known as a Lecturer or a Professor, this refers to staff who teach at a university.

#### Accelerated Degree

This is an option to fast track obtaining a degree, usually studying for two years rather than three.

#### Adviser

# School resources





**Finally..**

**But how about school colleagues doing  
the day to day...**





## Meet Jess

- Founder of The Careers People
- Sits on the UniTasterDays Advisory Board
- Our Schools and Colleges Consultant
- Gives her Top 5..

## Jess's Top 5 Tips if she was delivering this.

1. One point of contact
2. Regular communication
3. Ask what they need from you (including dates!)
4. Trust the year group the school asks for support with
5. Make everything as easy as possible



## Jess's Top 5 Tips if she was delivering this.

### ***1. One point of contact***

*The universities we have the best relationships with are those where we have one point of contact. This allows us to build a professional relationship and rapport with one person who we feel comfortable to contact, trust their delivery and work to support their goals as well as our own.*



## Jess's Top 5 Tips if she was delivering this.

### ***2. Regular communication***

*Yes, all careers professionals in schools are busy - but it doesn't mean we don't want to hear from you! Letting them know what talks have been popular with other schools, what you can offer the following term and dates you're in the area will remind us of your existence (no offence, like I said, we're busy people!) and prompt them to book events for students.*



## Jess's Top 5 Tips if she was delivering this.

### ***3. Ask what they need from you (including dates!)***

Our careers programmes are planned terms in advance. In fact, most schools can give you their key dates (careers fairs, futures days etc) for the whole year in term one. So if there is a particular region or school you're targeting, get in touch with them early on to offer your support and prioritise the dates they need you.





## Jess's Top 5 Tips if she was delivering this.

### 4. Trust the year group the school asks for support with

*As schools, we are often told universities can't work with Year 7 and 8. To us, this seems short sighted as the earlier we can make students aware of their options, the more of an informed choice they can make. If a school asks you to do a talk to a KS3 year group, trust that they know their students best and accommodate the request if you are able to.*



## Jess's Top 5 Tips if she was delivering this.

### ***5. Make everything as easy as possible***

*Forms, communication, risk assessments, worksheet printing - the easier it is, the better. Ease of booking will make a difference as to whether or not the school rebooks you for the following year. Also remember that we have no money, so every sheet of paper you need printed will come out of our (tiny) careers budget. Also, it is unlikely a whole year group, or even tutor group, will have access to IT so make sure you check this before arriving to ensure your talk is suitable.*



**Jon Cheek** • You



Founder of UniTasterDays.com - the university events website f...

Visit my website

1w •

School and college contacts with a university engagement remit... can you help? I am delivering a university CPD session in January, which will include tips for members of university staff to build links with schools.

I would like to add a school voice slide as part of it. How could universities help you more? What are your barriers to engaging more with universities? Booking events for your students, visiting universities etc.

Any comments here or sending a separate message to me would be really handy!

# Capacity issues and working only with older year groups

learners in a deprived part of [REDACTED] An issue that often arises is universities say they have a maximum capacity of 50-80 learners per school per visit. When we have 320-360 learners in each year group this isn't practical. We also have a lot of difficulty with arranging university visits for KS4 and 3, with most institutions saying they only accommodate KS5 or at mist year 11. But the ideal is to have 2 University visits before they finish year 11...

# Schools like a newsletter

# Making contact details more available

There are some incredibly proactive unis who send through monthly newsletters with all their events relevant to school pupils in them. They are fab as I can share all the information in my weekly careers bulletin, giving my pupils great opportunities. They are usually the contacts who are easy to get hold of, who always respond and are really helpful with queries. If more did that it would be so helpful.

It would help if it was easier to find school contacts on the uni websites as not always easy to find them.



# Contact again

## Forms less popular.

I agree with sometimes not being able to find contact details on websites. Also having a dedicated number or email for queries from school staff for example on results days and admissions queries is really helpful and helps establish links. Contact forms as a means of getting queries answered can act as a barrier- no audit trail especially if the response comes from an unmanned email box

# A shout out for Teachers conferences – let me know if you need a speaker!

I have had some great and varied contact with universities across the country.

At our annual Futures Fair (careers fair) we have some university stands and, even more meaningfully, presentations both live and virtual, often by academic staff, on non-school subjects or on the whole faculty. These are definitely meaningful encounters.

I subscribe to a range of university newsletters and put events, especially online tasters and competitions in our weekly careers newsletter sent by email to pupils.

The Career Advisor days are great especially when they showcase individual faculties or courses as this is great for my CPD. I try and visit a few a year. The best ones are individual and offer a tour as well.

# Not a surprise here – younger audiences again

Many Universities want to work with Year 12/13, we need much more provision lower down in the school to raise aspirations - 7,8,9,10 are great year groups to start engaging with. Being able to take groups to the University before they choose GCSE options or before they decide on P16 Pathways allows students to see how their choices can influence later decisions. I've actually seen first hand Year 8 students want to go to University after a campus experience - and then seen them go the very University they visited in year 8! It works!



# Thank you!