

National Expert Think Tank on fair admissions

Supporting fair admissions through effective communication applicant survey findings

A survey examining applicants' perceptions of the communications they receive from all their choices was conducted as part of the SPA National Expert Think Tank's research into fair admissions. Responses were gathered in April 2016 and findings from 1,604 respondents from UWE, Bristol are represented here.

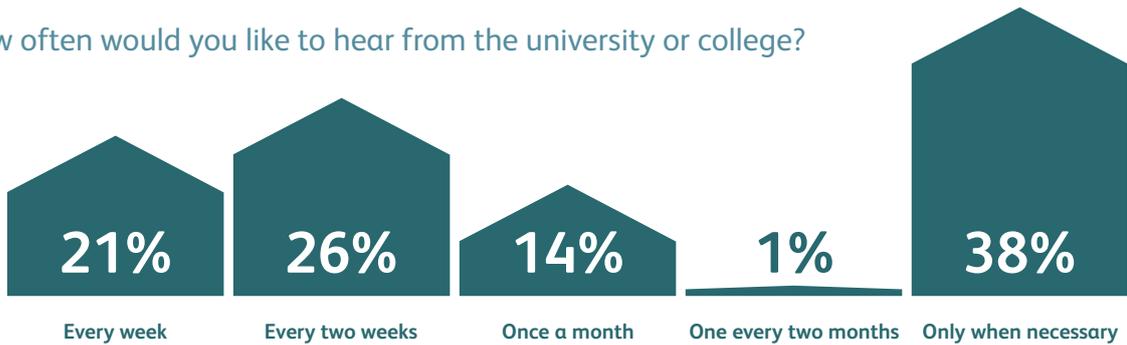
These findings will:

- ✓ Help UWE, Bristol to review, refine and enhance the timings, frequency, content and customisation of their applicant communications
- ✓ Help other HE providers consider what they can do to evaluate their own communication
- ✓ Allow other HE providers to compare themselves against this example from UWE

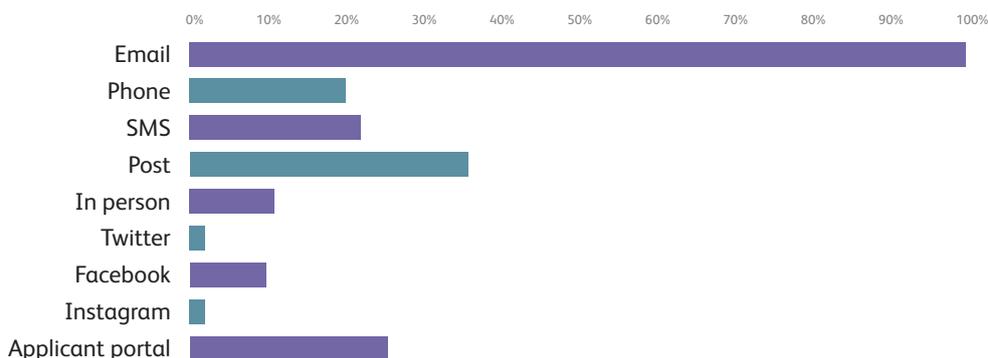
Q1: How many communications would you like between application and offer?



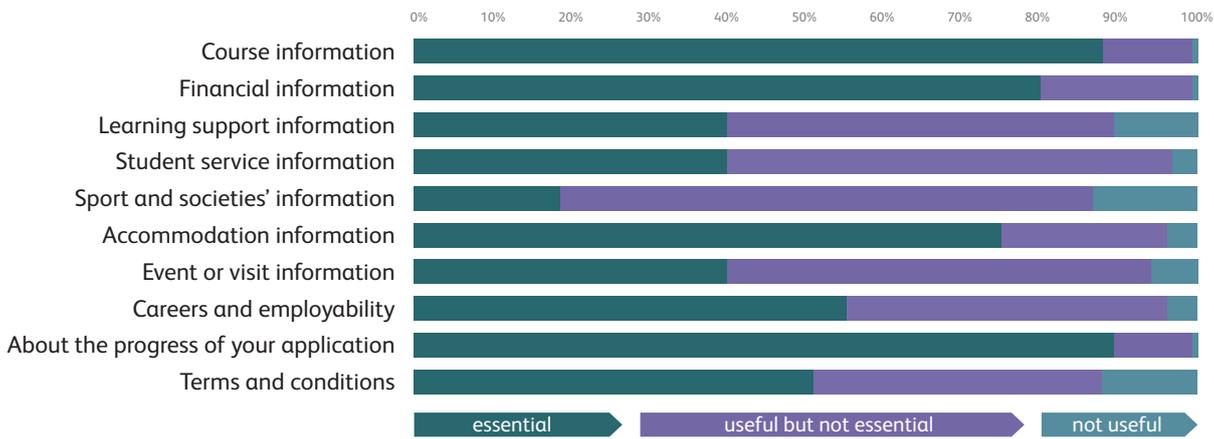
Q2: How often would you like to hear from the university or college?



Q3: How do you prefer to be communicated with?



Q4: What information is most useful to you apart from the decision on your application?



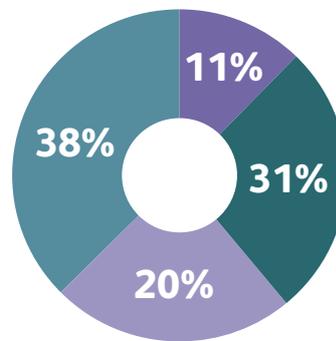
Q5: Do you feel that the communications were informative and supportive to your individual needs?



9% = no

91% = yes

Q6: In your opinion, which of the below options is the fairest for communicating with applicants?



All applicants should receive exactly the same

Similar, but tailored for specific groups

Similar, but tailored to individual

The same about their application, but additional information for individuals

Free text responses: examples that had a negative impact on your experience of applying

- Over-persuasive emails come across as pushy
- Bombarded with unnecessary emails – too many communications seen as desperate
- Sending communications before a period of closure can cause anxiety as institution cannot be contacted
- Communication seemed tailored to younger people... made me wonder if I was too old to go to university
- Bulk emails which are not relevant to the particular stage of the journey

If you would like to conduct a similar survey of your applicants, a survey template, along with a set of reflective questions and other resources is available at:
www.spa.ac.uk/resources/fair-admissions-nett

You may get some fascinating comments

Spying on the competition eh?
 Nice try, but you've already won, you got me.
 Leave them to their pain.

Free text responses: examples that had a positive impact on your experience of applying

- To the point – not too wordy
- Application journey emails very positive - where they are and what happens next
- Postal welcome packs / acknowledgement appears to be making more of an effort
- Timing of response – 24 hours is seen as good
- Feedback on offer decisions
- Treating applicants as individuals, not one of thousands applying to an institution