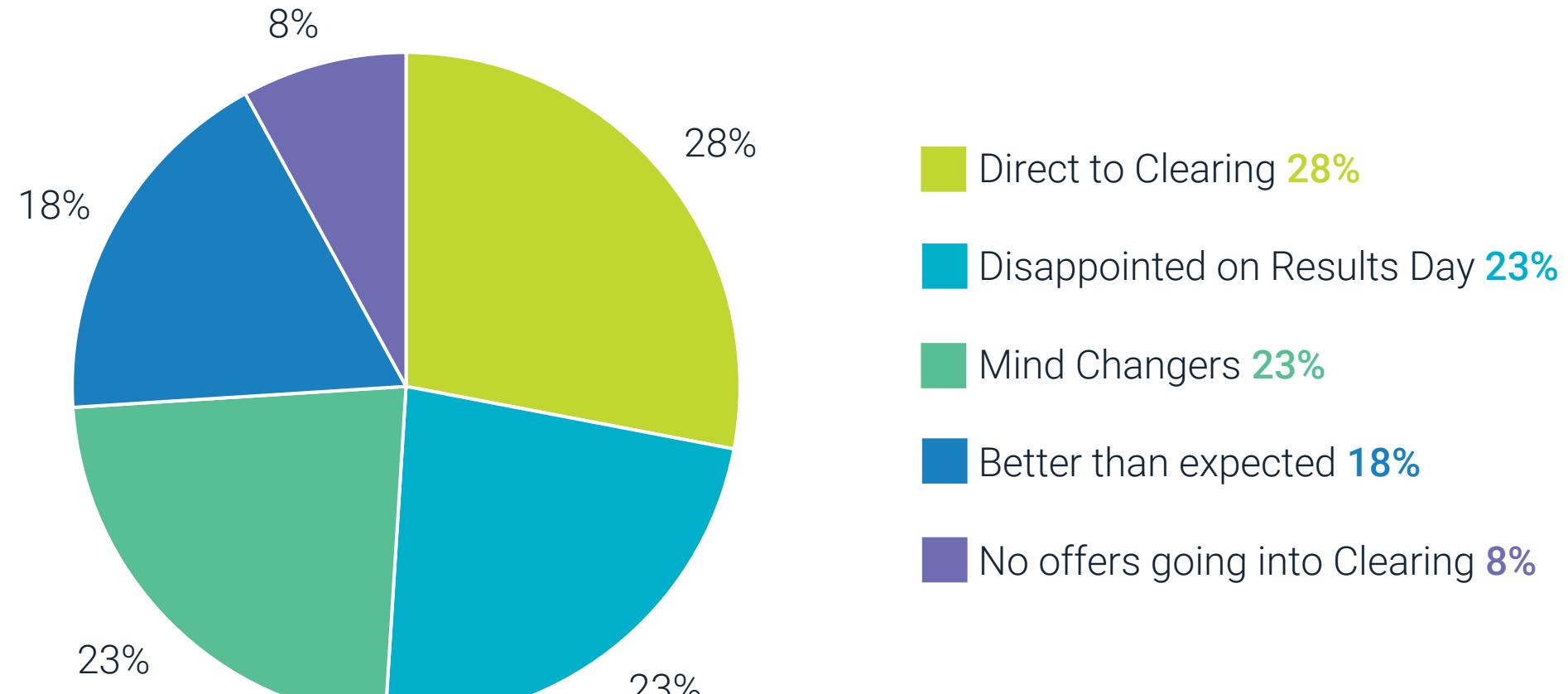


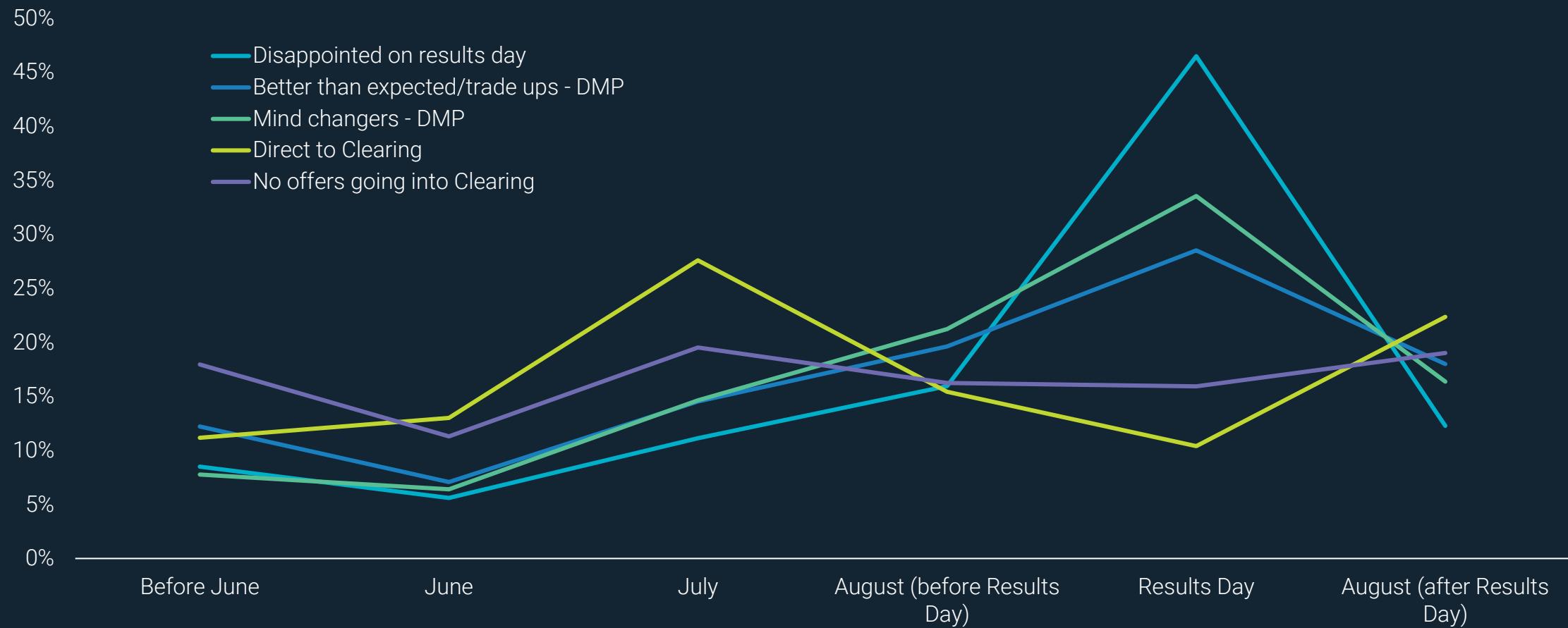
WHAT WORKED IN 2025 AND HOW TO MAKE IT WORK HARDER

With Kate Wright, Dr Simon Moore & Kyle Campbell

CLEARING SURVEY RESPONDENTS



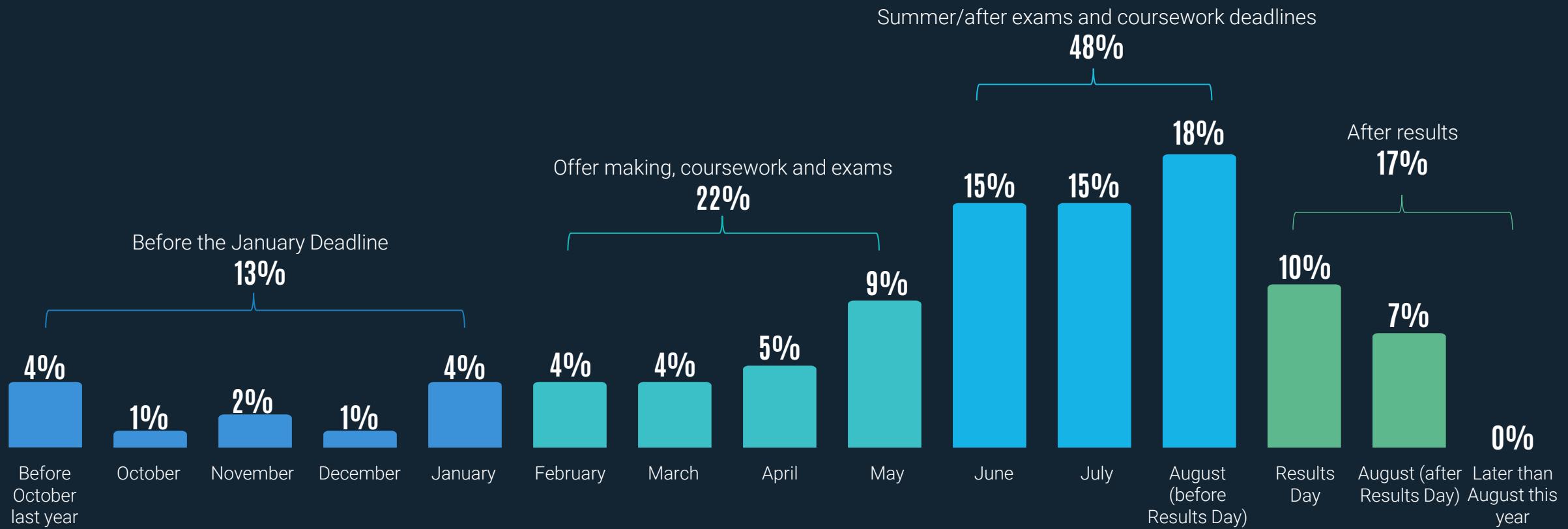
TIMELINE OF FIRST ENQUIRIES TO UNIVERSITIES ABOUT CLEARING BY PERSONA



Q. When did you first start making enquiries to universities or colleges about Clearing (e.g. joined a Clearing email list, signed up for Clearing notifications, phoned a Clearing hotline etc.) No. respondents: 4,644

FROM SLOW Wobble TO SHARP JOLT

When those declining their firm choice started to think about applying elsewhere



Q: When did you start thinking about applying somewhere else? Base: Declined firm choice 852

Note: Not all respondents were school leavers, approx. school timetable provided for context

BOTH CLEARING RELATED AND GENERAL UNIVERSITY MESSAGING STOOD OUT

Clearing Specific

- 38% Courses were available
- 23% Clearing contact info/number
- 19% Explaining Clearing process
- 16% Reassurance from previous Clearing students

General University

- 28% Showing uni life /life at that uni
- 24% Rankings/awards/statistics
- 17% Showing the location
- 16% Course related
- 12% Showing the accommodation

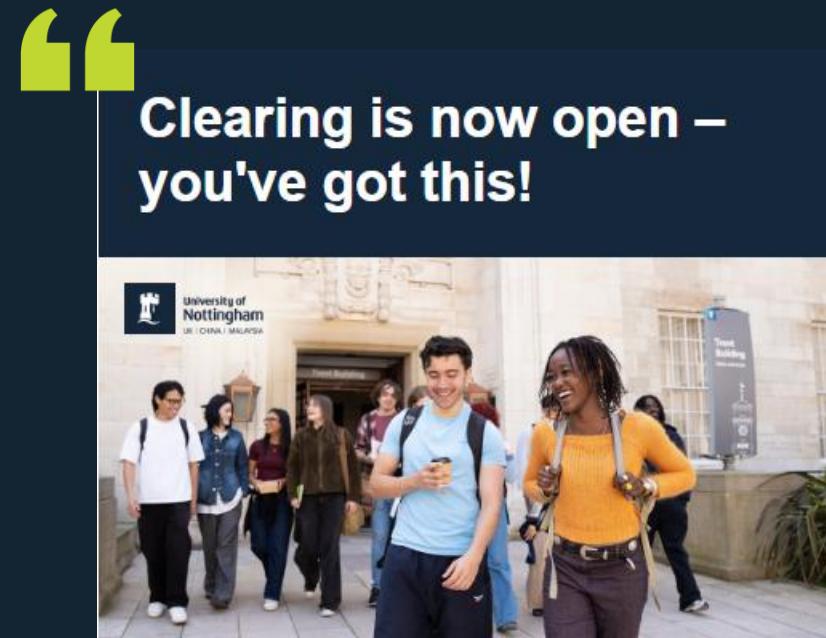
29%

Didn't see or couldn't remember any university or college ads during Clearing

HIGH PERFORMING SUBJECT LINES

	Unique open rate	Subject line
1	71.8%	Top [N] UK Uni in London - places available now
2	69.5%	%%FirstName%%, find your place in Clearing at [University]
3	69.2%	%%FirstName%%, Clearing is open – apply now!
4	67.6%	Places available now at [University] for September
5	66.7%	%%firstname%%, Clearing places available at [University]
6	65.9%	%%FirstName%%, Study in [City]. Clearing places at [University]...
7	65.5%	Courses still available at [University], don't miss out!
8	65.0%	You've got this, %%firstname%%! [University] has your back
9	64.4%	%%FirstName%%, you can still join a LOCATION this September
10	62.6%	%%firstname%%, search Clearing courses at [University]
11	62.1%	%%Firstname%%, join a top 150 global university this September
12	61.9%	There's a place for you at [University].
13	61.9%	%%FirstName%%, Study in [City]. Clearing places at [University]...
14	61.2%	Missed out or changed your mind, %%FirstName%%? [University] still has places available
15	61.0%	Still thinking? Think [University].

HIGH PERFORMING RESULTS DAY EMAIL CREATIVE



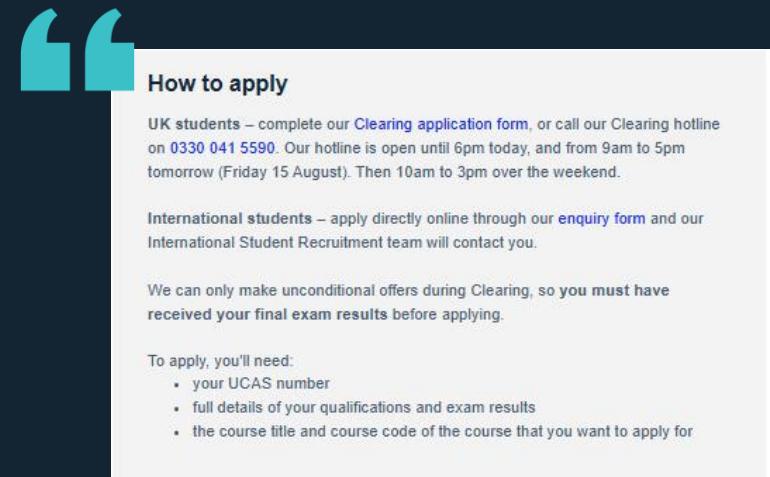
Hi %%firstname%%,

You can now apply through Clearing to the University of Nottingham, the UK's number 1 university for graduates entering highly skilled jobs (HESA Graduate Outcomes 2025).

Take your time to find a course that is right for you, check you meet the entry requirements, and submit your application.

[Find Clearing courses >](#)

We have useful resources on our [website](#) to help you through the process, including guidance on how to apply, updating your student finance application and securing your accommodation. Plus, hear first-hand advice from current students who have been through Clearing.



How to apply

UK students – complete our [Clearing application form](#), or call our Clearing hotline on [0330 041 5590](tel:03300415590). Our hotline is open until 6pm today, and from 9am to 5pm tomorrow (Friday 15 August). Then 10am to 3pm over the weekend.

International students – apply directly online through our [enquiry form](#) and our International Student Recruitment team will contact you.

We can only make unconditional offers during Clearing, so you must have received your final exam [results](#) before applying.

To apply, you'll need:

- your UCAS number
- full details of your qualifications and exam results
- the course title and course code of the course that you want to apply for

Accommodation guarantee

If you accept an offer through Clearing and apply for accommodation by Friday 22 August 2025, you are guaranteed a place in our university arranged accommodation. See our [terms and conditions](#).



[Find out more >](#)

Courses may come in and out of Clearing at any point. Please [check our website for updates](#).

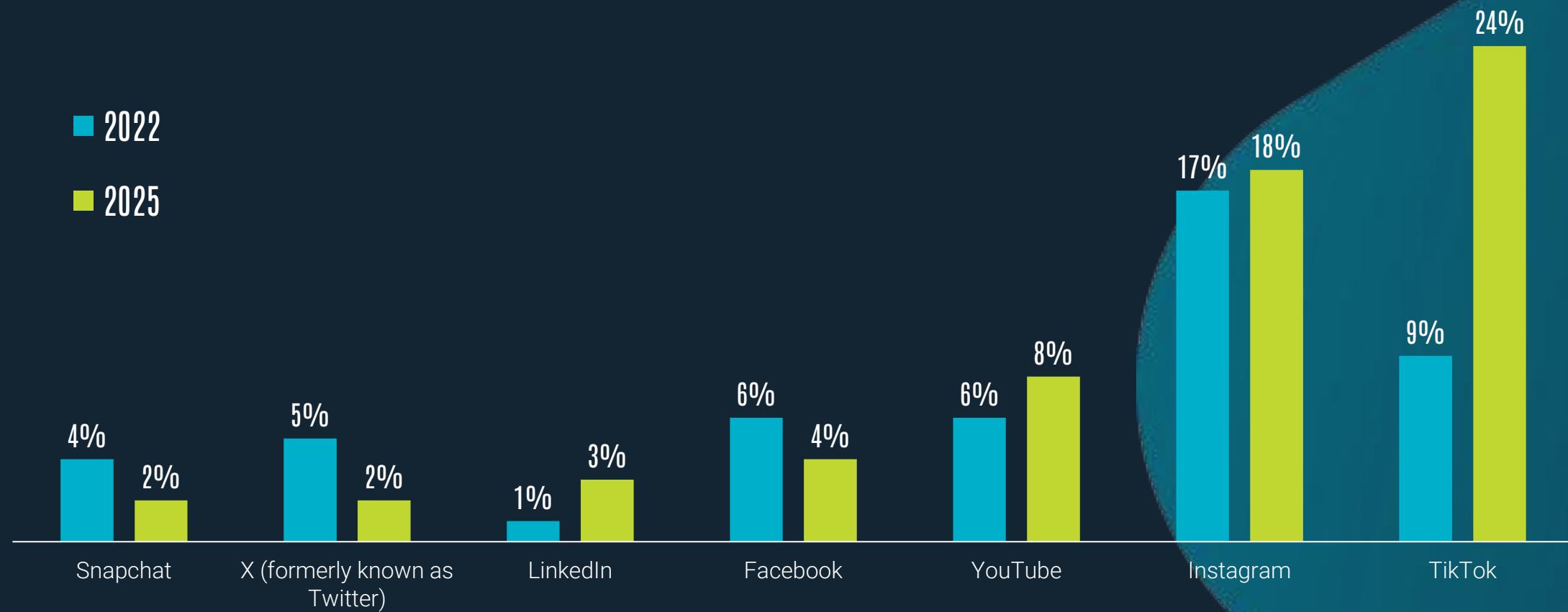
We know that this is a big decision, so choose the best path for you.

No matter what you decide, we wish you every success in the future and remember, you've got this!

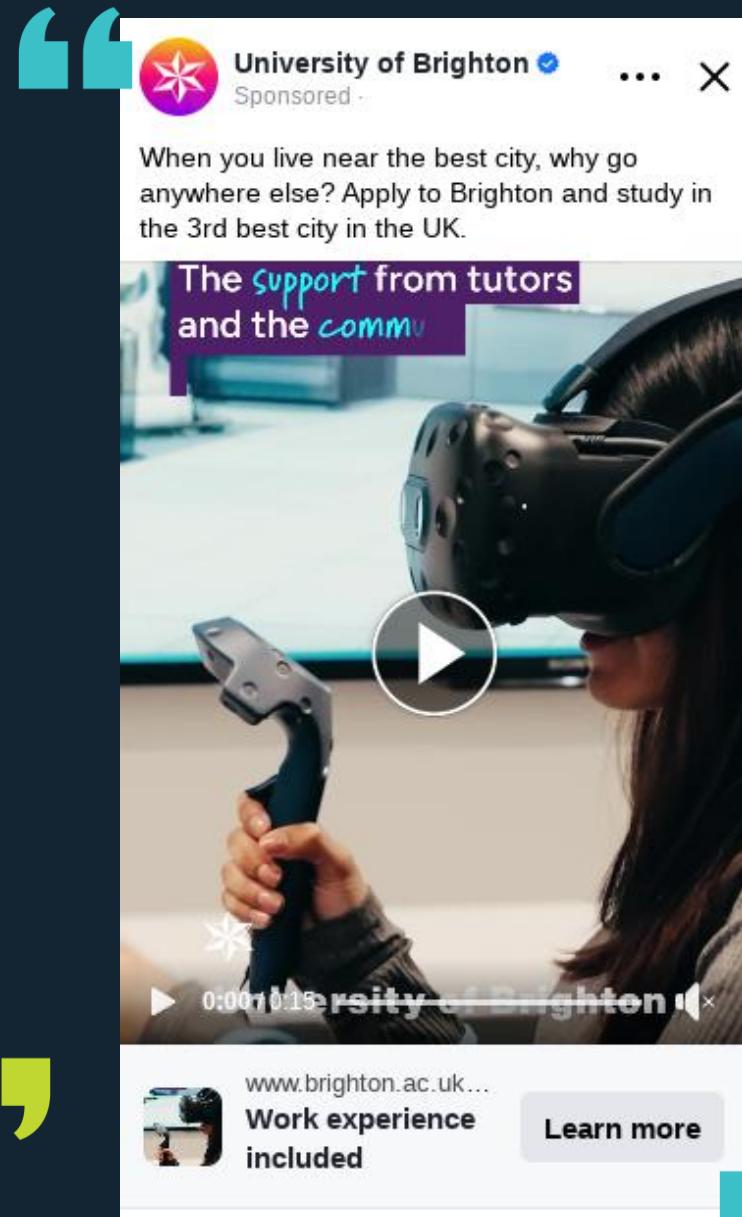
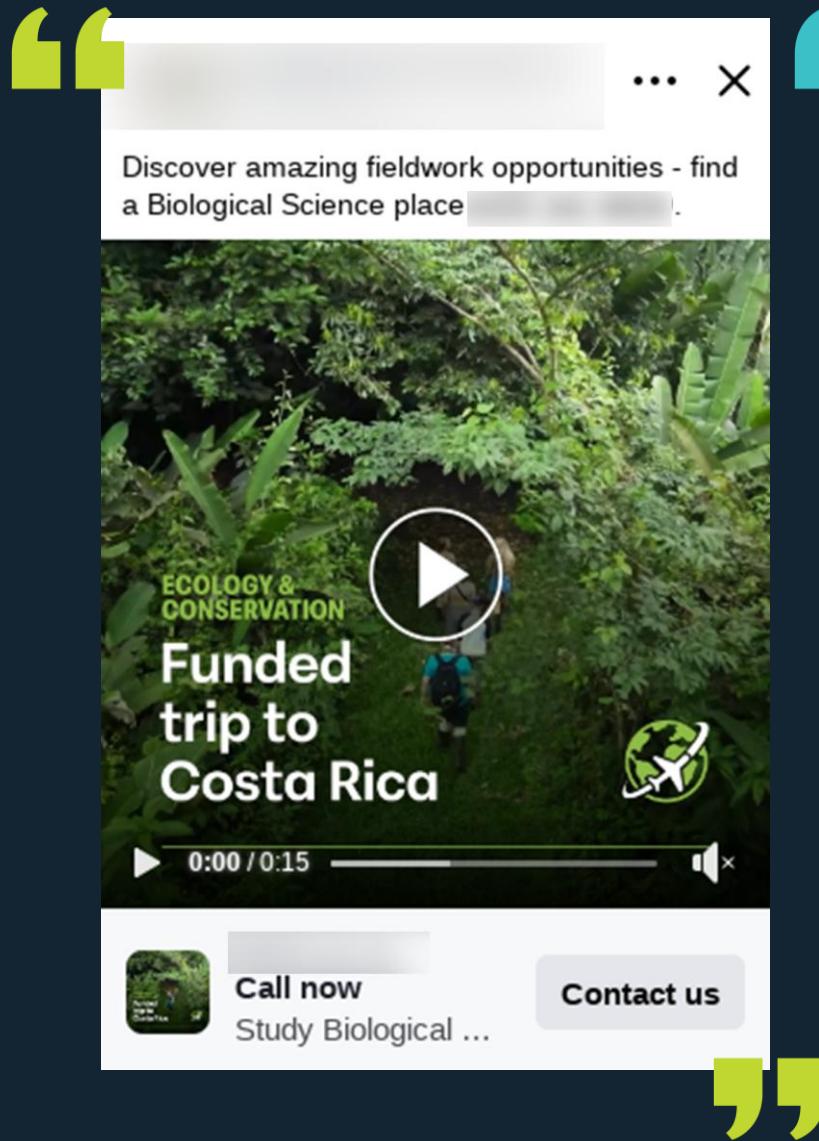
Best wishes,
University of Nottingham



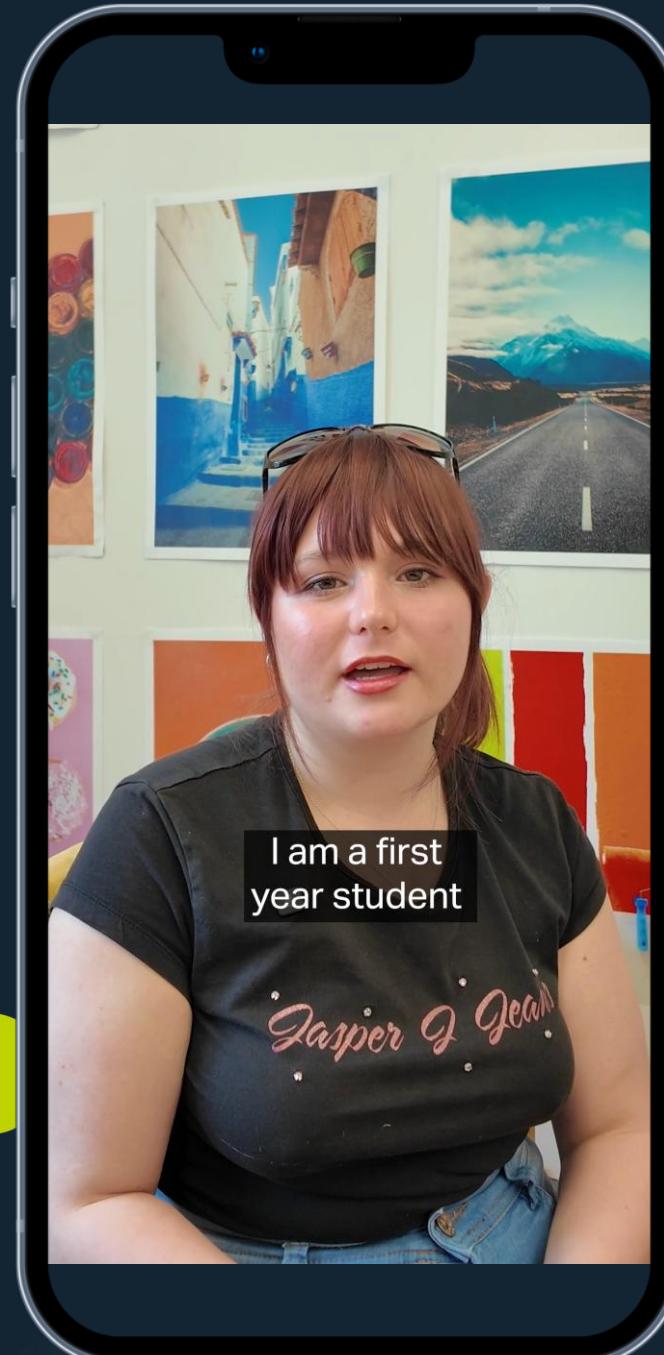
TREND DATA: SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS USED TO SEARCH FOR CLEARING PLACES



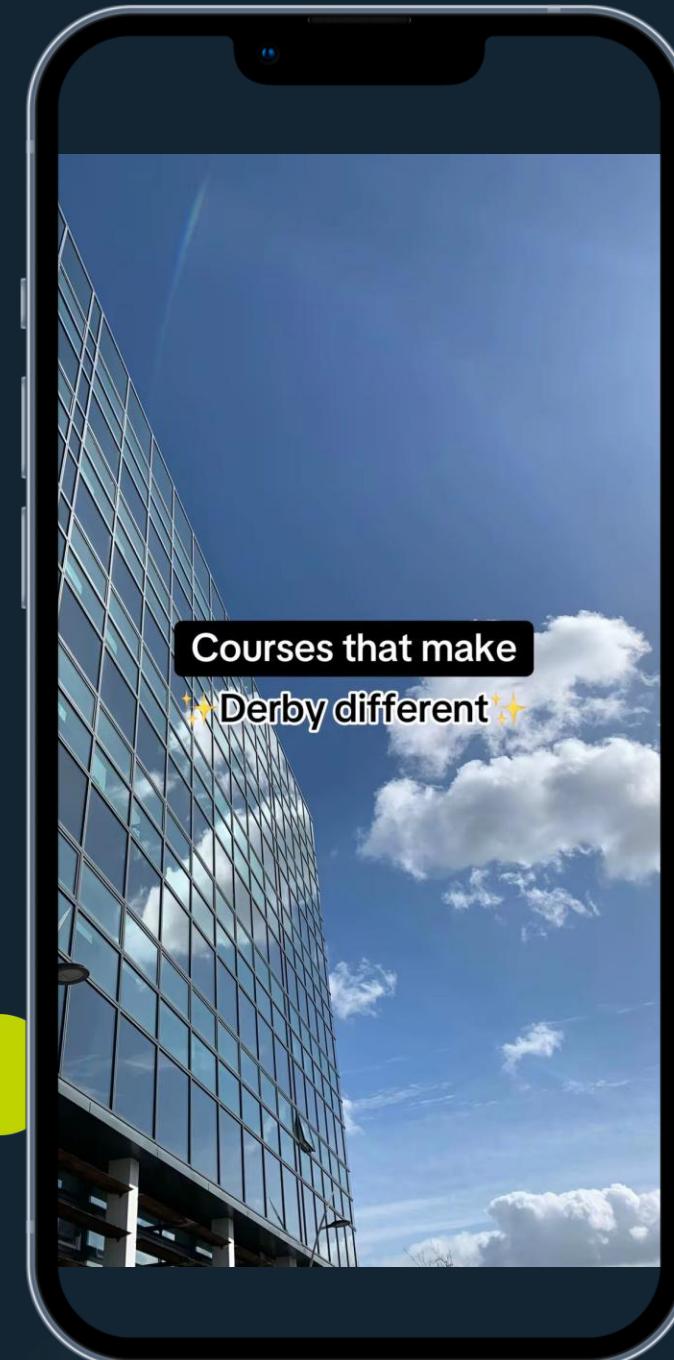
HIGH PERFORMING META ADS



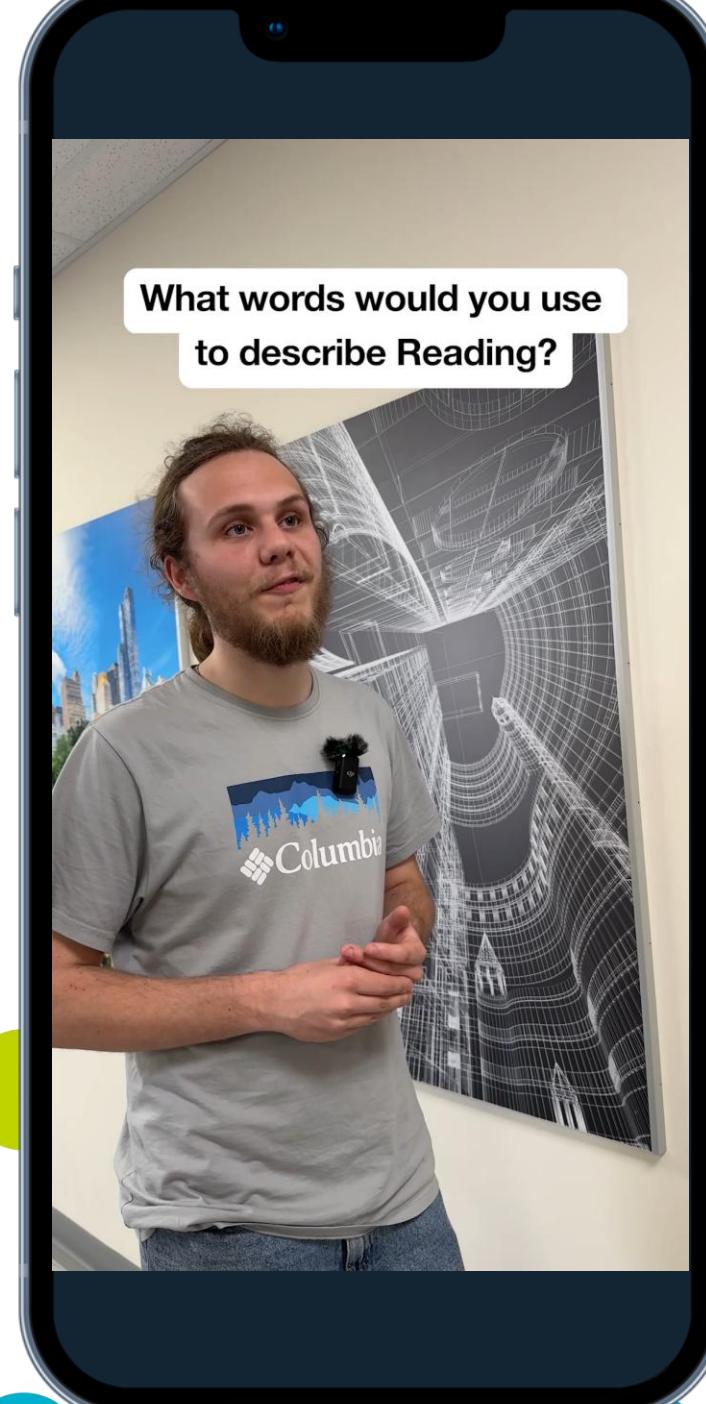
HIGH PERFORMING TIKTOK ADS



TIKTOK CAROUSEL



HIGH PERFORMING TIKTOK ADS



FIRST IMPRESSIONS PIVOTAL

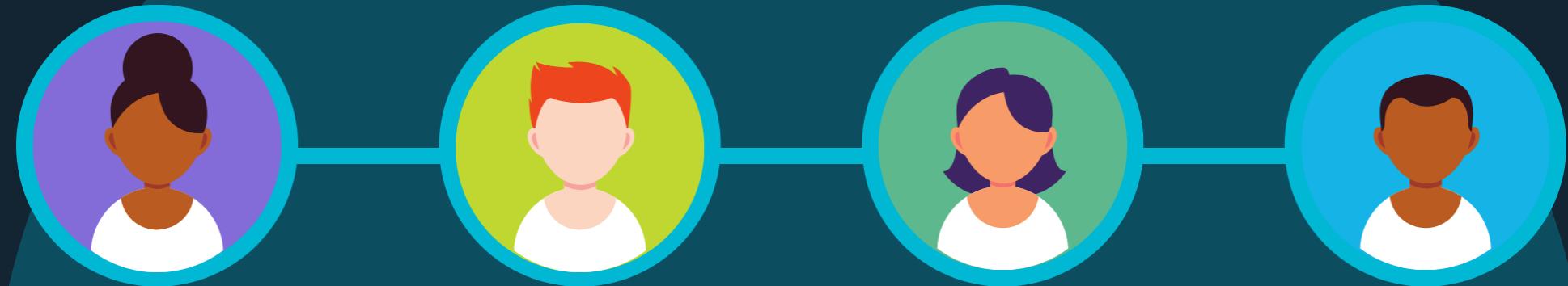
Selection, procedure and time pressure
= **Stress and Anxiety**

Results in cognitive bias:

- Less Openness
- More focus on *maintain* than potential *gain*
- Seek anxiety reduction than positive opportunity
- More attention to irritation/annoyance/unfamiliar signals







SOCIABLES

ADVENTURERS

INDIVIDUALISTS

PLANNERS

NEEDS ENGAGE PEOPLE MORE THAN FACTS



Is the content telling them what they might gain?

- Power
- Status
- Respect
- Predictability



Or reassuring them what they will not lose?

- Face
- Safety
- Inclusion
- Time



Is it content suggesting new solutions and skills?

- Self
- Discovery
- Pride
- Exploration



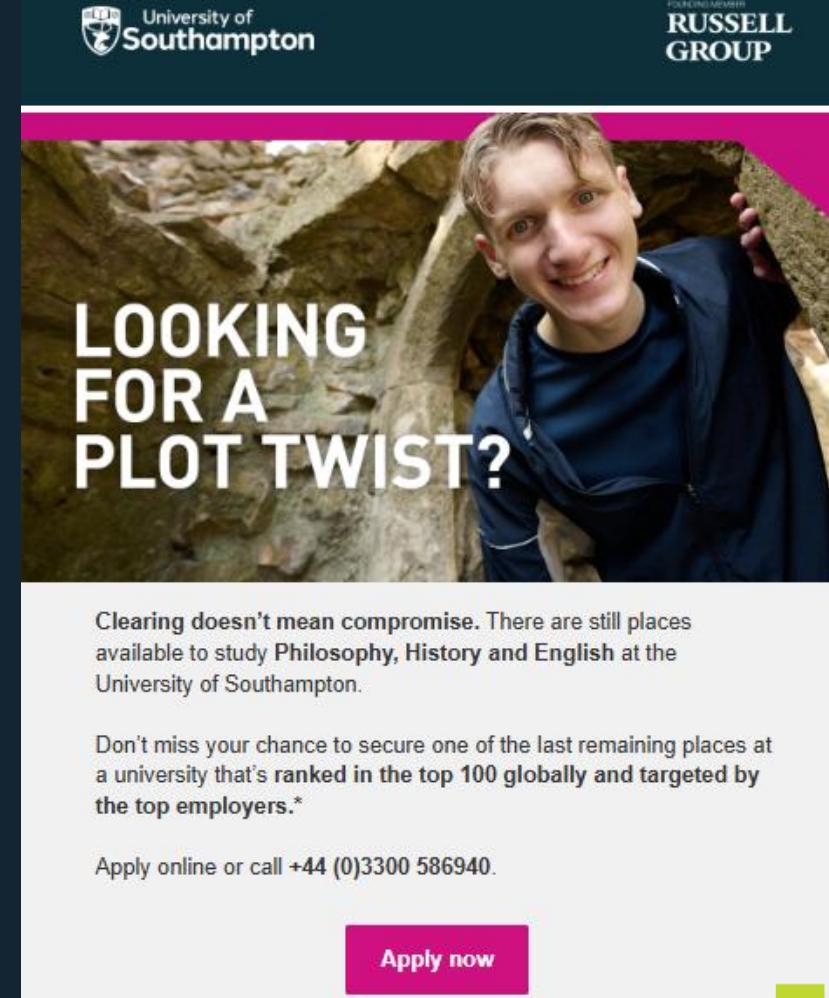
**"JOIN THE ADVENTURE WE HELP YOU
EXPAND YOUR MIND, YOUR SKILLS AND
YOUR NETWORK".**



**"WHAT MAKES YOU UNIQUE? EXPLORE STUDY
ROUTINES & CLUBS DESIGNED AROUND YOU!"**

HIGH PERFORMING SUBJECT EMAIL CREATIVE

“



The image shows a snippet of the University of Southampton's website. At the top, there are two green double quotes. Below them is the University of Southampton logo and the text 'University of Southampton'. To the right is the 'FOUNDRY MEMBER RUSSELL GROUP' logo. The main visual is a photograph of a smiling young man with short hair, wearing a dark blue hoodie, standing in a stone archway. Overlaid on the image is the text 'LOOKING FOR A PLOT TWIST?'. Below the image, there is a block of text: 'Clearing doesn't mean compromise. There are still places available to study Philosophy, History and English at the University of Southampton.' Another block of text follows: 'Don't miss your chance to secure one of the last remaining places at a university that's ranked in the top 100 globally and targeted by the top employers.*' At the bottom, there is a pink 'Apply now' button. A green double quote is located at the bottom right of the snippet.

University of Southampton

FOUNDRY MEMBER

RUSSELL GROUP

LOOKING FOR A PLOT TWIST?

Clearing doesn't mean compromise. There are still places available to study Philosophy, History and English at the University of Southampton.

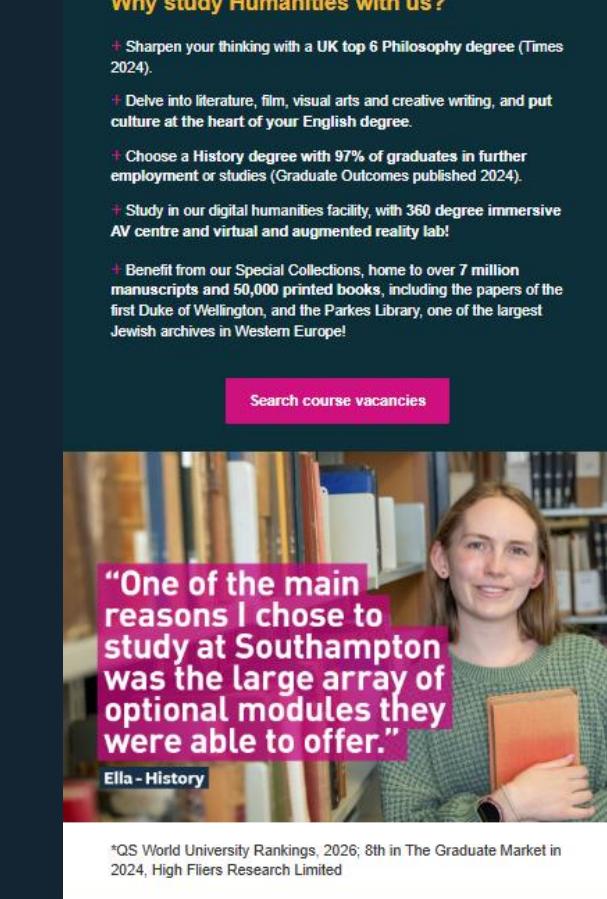
Don't miss your chance to secure one of the last remaining places at a university that's ranked in the top 100 globally and targeted by the top employers.*

Apply online or call +44 (0)3300 586940.

Apply now

“

“



The image shows a snippet of the University of Southampton's website. At the top, there are two blue double quotes. Below them is the text 'Why study Humanities with us?'. A list of benefits follows: 'Sharpen your thinking with a UK top 6 Philosophy degree (Times 2024).', 'Dive into literature, film, visual arts and creative writing, and put culture at the heart of your English degree.', 'Choose a History degree with 97% of graduates in further employment or studies (Graduate Outcomes published 2024).', 'Study in our digital humanities facility, with 360 degree immersive AV centre and virtual and augmented reality lab!', 'Benefit from our Special Collections, home to over 7 million manuscripts and 50,000 printed books, including the papers of the first Duke of Wellington, and the Parkes Library, one of the largest Jewish archives in Western Europe!'. At the bottom, there is a pink 'Search course vacancies' button. A blue double quote is located at the bottom right of the snippet.

Why study Humanities with us?

- Sharpen your thinking with a UK top 6 Philosophy degree (Times 2024).
- Dive into literature, film, visual arts and creative writing, and put culture at the heart of your English degree.
- Choose a History degree with 97% of graduates in further employment or studies (Graduate Outcomes published 2024).
- Study in our digital humanities facility, with 360 degree immersive AV centre and virtual and augmented reality lab!
- Benefit from our Special Collections, home to over 7 million manuscripts and 50,000 printed books, including the papers of the first Duke of Wellington, and the Parkes Library, one of the largest Jewish archives in Western Europe!

Search course vacancies

“



The image shows a snippet of the University of Southampton's website. At the top, there are two blue double quotes. Below them is a photograph of a young woman with short brown hair, smiling and holding a red book. Overlaid on the image is a pink box containing the text: 'One of the main reasons I chose to study at Southampton was the large array of optional modules they were able to offer.' Below the box, the name 'Ella - History' is mentioned. At the bottom, there is a note: '*QS World University Rankings, 2026; 8th in The Graduate Market in 2024, High Fliers Research Limited'. A blue double quote is located at the bottom right of the snippet.

“

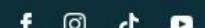
One of the main reasons I chose to study at Southampton was the large array of optional modules they were able to offer.

Ella - History

*QS World University Rankings, 2026; 8th in The Graduate Market in 2024, High Fliers Research Limited

“

CONNECT WITH US



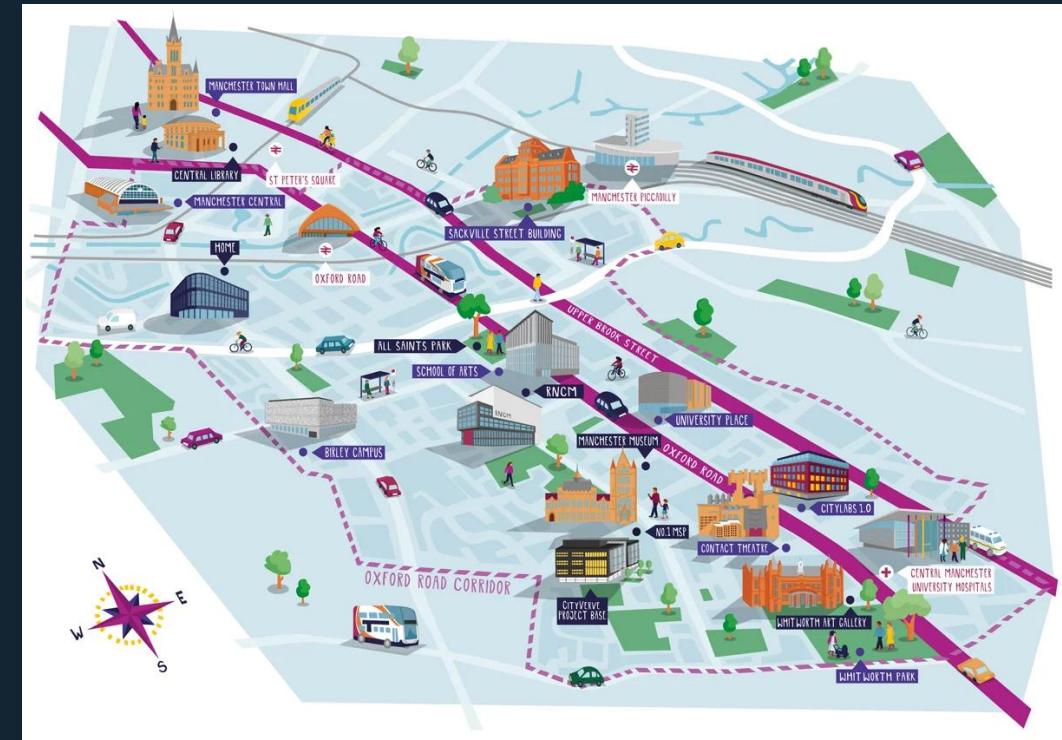
FOUNDRY MEMBER
RUSSELL GROUP

enquiries@southampton.ac.uk
University of Southampton
SO17 1BJ United Kingdom
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The Clearing Connection. UCAS



"FEEL SECURE: DISCOVER HOW [UNIVERSITY NAME] PRIORITISES YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY, WELLBEING AND SUCCESS.



"FEEL REASSURED THAT YOU HAVE EQUIPPED YOUR CHILD WITH THE SKILLS TO EXPLORE AND FLOURISH"

ACTIONS FOR 2026 PLANNING

- Prioritise clear, simple calls to action
- Ensure Clearing guidance is easy to find and digestible
- Tailor messaging for each audience segment
- Differentiate to resonate with 'gain' or 'maintain' audiences
- Focus on visibility, reassurance and clarity before results day
- Don't overlook parents and influencers - they may have a say



QUESTIONS