# #EntEdOnline

### Reaching new students: engage students for the extra-curricula

*Recognising that some of the previously ‘tried and tested’ methods for communicating with your students are unlikely to be available to you for the start of new term 2020/21, EEUK has created this guide to help you keep connected with the new student body as you take your offer online or ‘at a distance’.*

First step is **review what has worked** in the past. Appreciate that this might be the year you need to let go of your traditional or ‘to-go’ approaches which involve handing things out or addressing large groups, such as:

* Pamphlets, programmes, and flyers
* Single “shout-outs” or lecture inputs
* Student ambassadors
* Freshers Fayres/stands/stalls
* On-campus displays & posters
* Freebies/give-aways
* In person taster events/speakers
* Campus challenges

So to take up the challenge of promoting online and ‘at a distance’ it can be helpful to review ‘what worked’ and dig deeper into your evaluation to try to understand the “why” (rather than the ‘what‘ of what worked, try to pinpoint why you reached them) in order to replicate this in a new way for 2020/21.

**Take up the challenge**

EEUK Associates are finding that the good practice and underpinnings of existing approaches still apply to use this guide to inspire you when connecting with a new group of students. Whilst many have tried a wide range of channels/social media, there is increasing anecdotal evidence that student areseeking regular and stabile points of engagements. So if you have used all the channels and approaches to test out what works, now might be the time to establish one platform as your online ‘home’ and draw students to this through your promotional approaches on other platforms.

**Top Tip: Make your sessions a regular (weekly/monthly) fixed point and look to include a social aspect as a key part of the actual activity.**

**Draw upon your networks**

Your personal and institutional connections into the new student body are going to be key to reaching a new group this academic year. Draw upon your employability and enterprise contacts, whether formal structures/committees or personal contacts and those that have regular communications with students. Identify who you can draw upon and think about how you can make life easy for those you are approaching. Can you find ways to support their new approaches?

Think about:

* providing a **power point “advert**” or **slide deck** that academic staff can use as a “holding slide” during breaks or as they wait to start an online class
* how to email a set of **key links** that they can drop into the “chat” for students to access directly
* making life for easy to staff to hook their students to you ensuring contact details are clear, links/dates are highlighted and a regular session (online or in person) is clear for a “same time, each week” presence.
* Connecting with your **Student Union** or key societies
* Find ways of reaching out to student **ambassadors** or reps and the staff and student networks that cut across faculties and the institution

**Make it personal & bring it to life**

Think about how you can make a personal connection with new or returning students. Can you show staff faces and university places on slides, in videos, through TikTok or by other visuals to make the abstract and online, more personal and connected. Use short video links to be visible and share your operation. Ideas like a “walkthrough” of your services and showing things “as if” will create a tangible visual of your now-online services.

**Power of the Student voice**

Recognise the power of ‘student to student’ messaging. The student voice will carry online and share the power of your offer through those that have experienced it. Use students from previous years to connect, buddy up or speak with small groups of interested students. Using chat features online or themed and facilitated breakout groups to create spaces to talk. (Note: appreciate the need to structure and support this – see our previous [blogs](file:///Users/lynnobyrne/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail%20Downloads/EFF3EAF7-5F6D-4106-A8E8-BD3607116D6A/Beyond%20Blended%20Learning%20Blog%201%20EntEdinAction.docx) for [ideas](file:///Users/lynnobyrne/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail%20Downloads/EFF3EAF7-5F6D-4106-A8E8-BD3607116D6A/Enterprise%20for%20All%20decisions%20and%20lessons%20learnt%20Blog%206%20EntEdinOnline.docx) and [top tips](file:///Users/lynnobyrne/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail%20Downloads/EFF3EAF7-5F6D-4106-A8E8-BD3607116D6A/Top%20Tips%20Blog%207%20.docx) that apply to all online delivery)

**Mixed messaging**Reach out to your students where they are. Use a wide range of institutional and social media channels to draw the them to your hub/online home (as we [recommend](file:///Users/lynnobyrne/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail%20Downloads/EFF3EAF7-5F6D-4106-A8E8-BD3607116D6A/Top%20Tips%20Blog%207%20.docx) being part of the institutional IT VLE or infrastructure to ensure that services and activities are available to all and [managed/tracked).](file:///Users/lynnobyrne/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail%20Downloads/EFF3EAF7-5F6D-4106-A8E8-BD3607116D6A/Enterprise%20for%20All%20decisions%20and%20lessons%20learnt%20Blog%206%20EntEdinOnline.docx) This might mean drawing on new social media channels or encouraging your student contacts to blog, vlog or tweet to share your offer within their networks and groups. There are opportunities to make this a competition or challenge them to support you, as evidence of the importance of networking.

**Top tip: use official channels to operate but reaching out through student channels and spaces to draw students to you and connect with them.**

**Asynchronous or synchronous**

The challenge of reaching students can also be dependent on things outside your control, including their personal working-at-home circumstances and access to wifi. Consider how best to communicate and allow access to your events, activities and learning. Look at our [guides](file:///Users/lynnobyrne/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail%20Downloads/EFF3EAF7-5F6D-4106-A8E8-BD3607116D6A/Beyond%20Blended%20Learning%20Blog%201%20EntEdinAction.docx) and consider some of the [ideas](file:///Users/lynnobyrne/Library/Containers/com.apple.mail/Data/Library/Mail%20Downloads/EFF3EAF7-5F6D-4106-A8E8-BD3607116D6A/Top%20Tips%20Blog%207%20.docx) like recording and sharing, but also approaches that build interactivity like making one student a scribe in order to provide context/content for those not able to attend in person.

**On-campus Eyes**Recognising that the campus will remain an anchor point for any institution, your traditional physical presence through signage, pull-ups, or plasma screen messages which will keep profile high with those on campus who can act as ambassadors for your work. Think about clear infographics that work online and in the physical and provide a message worth sharing!

**Rules of Engagement**Make it clear when working online that your extra-curricula activity, whilst voluntary, follows institutional rules on inclusivity, discrimination, and inclusion. Be clear as to the engagement you support and what you don’t (bullying and harassment) and draw upon university guides (IT) and institutional guidance throughout.

Thanks to EEUK Directors Lauren Davie and Phil Clegg for sharing their expertise July 2020