

Student Ambassador tool kit for Academic Schools

This toolkit has been put together by the Undergraduate Recruitment and Widening Participation (UGR and WP) team to support Academic Schools in using Student Ambassadors.

The toolkit includes:

- Information about Student Ambassador training that is available from the UGR and WP Team
- Briefing information for Student Ambassadors involved in Visit Days for their School
- Comprehensive guidance for Schools in using their current students to market their courses in their key feeder institutions

Student Ambassador training from the UGR and WP Team

The UGR and WP Team are available to deliver training to Student Ambassadors recruited by Academic Schools on a range of different topics related to their role. This includes:

- Key selling points relating to The University of Manchester
- Campus tour training
- Student Finance training
- Health and Safety training
- Child Protection training
- Student Ambassador: "dos and don'ts"

Training can be tailored to the requirements of the Academic School.

To discuss training requirements, please contact **Rachel Cook**, UGR and WP Officer (Rachel.cook@manchester.ac.uk, 57546).

Using Student Ambassadors for Visit Days

Student Ambassadors are great resource and can provide honest, enthusiastic and believable dialogue about what it is like to study a specific course at Manchester. Feedback from both parents and prospective students is that they really appreciate the opportunity to speak to current students when visiting the University.

The UGR and WP team recommend that Student Ambassadors should be an integral part of School's post application Visit Days allowing potential students the opportunity to ask questions of current students about what they will potentially study. As well as providing training for Student Ambassadors, the UGR and WP team have produced a briefing sheet for Ambassadors working on visit days. This is included as **Appendix 1**.

Comprehensive guidance for Schools in using their current students to market their courses in their key feeder institutions

This is an excellent recruitment opportunity for subject areas, particularly those that are not taught at A level or struggle with recruitment. Students are able to talk to small target audience of prospective students who are studying required subjects for admission to courses within that School.

This guidance includes:

- Guidance on making contact with the school/college
- Briefing information for students before they attend school/college
- Example of the sort of presentation students can give in their school/college
- Suggested levels of payment for students involved in this activity

1. Guidance on making contact with schools and colleges

It is suggested that students contact their old subject teachers directly, in their own words, offering to come in and speak to their current A level (or equivalent) classes about their own experience of studying their current course at university. We suggest email is the best method of contact.

Where possible, students should return to their old school/college. Where this is not possible, a student who has already attended their old school/college may be keen to visit another school/college as well. In this case, the UGR and WP Team suggest that the academic School make contact with the school/college in the first place, rather than the student.

The UG Recruitment and Widening Participation Team (UGR and WP Team) are currently looking into producing a filterable spreadsheet based on UCAS course codes, which gives information on key feeder institutions and names of students who studied there by School/subject area.

This information will be available on request to Academic Schools, enabling the Central UGR and WP Team to keep track of requests and visits, ensuring that repetitive offers of visits are not received by the same school/college from different subject areas.

Please contact Rachel Cook (rachel.cook@manchester.ac.uk) for more information.

1.1 Information that should be included in contact with the school/college

Students should be encouraged to include the following information in their email:

- Current year of study
- Current course title
- Range of key features of their current course
- Accommodation information (where they live currently and where they have lived previously)
- Any extra-curricular activities they take part in

Students should be happy to tailor their talk to the needs/wants of the teacher.

Example emails are included as **Appendix 2**.

2. Briefing information for students before they attend school/college

2.1 Good practice guidelines

When delivering their talk students should:

- Provide full and honest information; making sure the information they are giving is accurate and up to date;
- Not make negative comments or comparisons about other courses or universities;
- Provide time for questions at the end of their talk;
- Be happy to take contact details of prospective students with specific questions they are unable to answer to take back to the lead member of staff in their School to action;
- Adhere to all the child protection and health and safety requirements of the school/college they are attending;
- Switch off their mobile phone while delivering their talk;
- Present their course, The University of Manchester and Higher Education in such a way as to promote a positive view of Higher Education to prospective students.

2.2 Content suggestions

The talk that students give should include the following information about their subject area (as appropriate):

- **Different types of courses**
- **Outline of study and assessment methods used**
- **Academic and Pastoral support available**
- **Entry requirements and selection process**
- **Professional accreditation**
- **Employability and the careers service**

The following non-subject based areas could also be discussed (as requested by the school/college):

- **Student Accommodation**
- **Extra Curricular activities**
- **Living in Manchester**

A briefing sheet that can be given to students prior to attending their old school or college is included as **Appendix 3**.

3. Example presentation

A template PowerPoint that students can adapt to their needs has also been produced.

4. Payment suggestions

The UG UK/EU Recruitment Working Group suggests that all travel costs for the students are covered by the School. Where possible this should be arranged in advance.

Students should be paid a set fee for delivering such a presentation which is at the discretion of the School. Consideration should be given to the time commitment of the event when deciding on a suitable fee, and whether the student has spent any time preparing for the visit as well. The UGR and WP team suggest setting a fee based on an hourly rate of around £7; this is approximately in line with the UGR and WP student ambassador payments.

Briefing sheet for Student Ambassadors working on School visit days

As a Student Ambassador of for the School of [*****] at The University of Manchester you will be giving information and guidance to prospective Manchester students and their families. It is therefore vital that you maintain a positive and professional attitude at all times.

When working as a Student Ambassador you should:

- Ensure that any information you give regarding The University of Manchester and your course is honest and of a positive nature but without exaggeration; you should be able to market Manchester and the School of [*****] through your own experiences;
- Ensure that you do not say anything of a detrimental nature regarding other Higher Education institutions;
- Ensure that you arrive promptly every time you work and if you can not make it, let the organiser of the event know as soon as possible;
- Adhere to any health and safety requirements outlined by the organiser;

The sorts of things that applicants and their parents might be interested in finding out about are:

- **Outline of study and assessment methods used** (including information on contact hours, lab work, field work, dissertation topics, independent research opportunities, the role and structure of each year and the importance of the assessment performance connected to each, opportunity for free choice modules and/or specialisation in a niche area)
- **Academic and Pastoral support available** (including information on any introductory/preparatory modules available to support transition in first year, the role of the academic advisor/personal tutor, peer support/PASS)
- **Study facilities** (including information on the university library, labs, subject specific libraries or resources, the Alan Gilbert Learning Commons)
- **Employability and the careers service** (have you used the careers service, do you have any plans for after graduation, have you attended careers fairs/events organised for your subject area)
- **Special features** (what makes the course at Manchester different? Why did you choose Manchester? Study abroad, year in industry, links with employers, specific modules)

You might also want to talk to visitors about:

- **Student Accommodation** (where you currently live and where you have lived in previous years, particularly highlighting University Accommodation guarantee and the pastoral support available here)
- **Extra Curricular activities** (including any sports teams, clubs or societies you are involved in, student radio, newspaper, Student Ambassador programme, Students in Schools, Manchester RAG etc, particularly highlighting anything you were not involved with before university)
- **Living in Manchester** (night-life, music venues and gigs, shopping, sporting events, city-based events and activities e.g. Manchester Pride, Christmas Markets, Manchester 10k, travel around the city/public transport)

Remember, if you don't know the answer- ask a member of staff!

Appendix 2

Example text for students to use when contacting their old school/college

I studied [insert A level subject] with you from [date] to [date] at [insert school/college name]. I'm now in my [insert year of study] studying [insert course title] at the University of Manchester, which I'm really enjoying. I'm actually working as a Student Ambassador at the moment, which involves working with prospective students and letting them know more about the University and my course.

I wondered if you might be interested in me coming into [school/college] to talk to your current [insert A level subject] students about what it's like to study [insert course title] at university? I'd be more than happy to give a short presentation on my course, and the... [insert range of features here representative of the subject area/student, perhaps: the different study methods available, contact hours, lab work, practical work, how students are assessed, subject specific resources available, pastoral support, teaching styles, study abroad, year in industry, careers support] available at Manchester. I'm also happy to include information on student life more generally. I'm currently living in [private housing/halls of residence. Also include information on previous year's accommodation where relevant]. I take part in [add in any clubs, societies, or extra curricular activities, including those related directly to their subject area].

I'm happy to tailor my talk to cover the areas you think would be most useful to your students. I'll be back in [insert home town] for the [insert holiday period] between [date] and [date], so if you'd be interested in me coming into [school/college], just let me know.

Example text for academic School to send to offer a visit from a non alumni student

As we currently receive a large number of applications for [insert subject area] from [insert school/college name], we would like to offer you the opportunity to have a [insert subject area] ambassador visit your school/college to speak to your [insert relevant A level subject] class.

Our ambassadors are used to working with prospective students and are always keen to visit [schools/colleges] to talk to your current A level students about what it's like to study [insert course title] at university? They would be available to give a short presentation on their course, and the... [insert range of features here representative of the subject area/student, perhaps: the different study methods available, contact hours, lab work, practical work, how students are assessed, subject specific resources available, pastoral support, teaching styles, study abroad, year in industry, careers support] available at Manchester. They can also include information on student life more generally.

We encourage our ambassadors to tailor their talk to the needs of the school/college and cover the areas you feel would be most useful to your students.

If you would be interested in having a [insert subject area] ambassador visit [insert school/college name], please reply with suitable dates/time slots and we will find a suitable ambassador for your group.

Briefing sheet for students giving talks at schools and colleges

When attending a school or college you should:

- Provide full and honest information; make sure the information you give is accurate and up to date;
- Not make negative comments or comparisons about other courses or universities;
- Provide time for questions at the end;
- Take the contact details of students whose questions you can not answer;
- Adhere to all the health and safety requirements of the school/college;
- Switch off your mobile phone while delivering their talk;
- Present your course, The University of Manchester and Higher Education in such a way as to promote a positive view of Higher Education to prospective students.

You should include the following information in your talk:

- **Different types of courses** (e.g. with a year abroad, with industrial experience, with a foundation years)
- **Outline of study and assessment methods used** (including information on contact hours, lab work, field work, dissertation topics, independent research opportunities, the university library and facilities for their course, the role and structure of each year and the importance of the assessment performance connected to each, opportunity for free choice modules and/or specialisation in a niche area)
- **Academic and Pastoral support available** (including information on any introductory/preparatory modules available to support transition in first year, the role of the academic advisor/personal tutor, peer support/PASS)
- **Entry requirements and selection process** (what subjects/grades did you get in your Level 3 qualifications, what did you include in your Personal Statement, did you have an interview/admissions test, is work experience required or recommended, what is a typical offer for your course currently: **remember** this may have changed since you applied!)
- **Professional accreditation** (where appropriate and why it may be important to consider)
- **Employability and the careers service** (have you used the careers service, do you have any plans for after graduation, have you attended careers fairs/events organised for your subject area)

The following non-subject based areas could also be discussed (as requested by the school/college):

- **Student Accommodation** (where you currently live and where you have lived in previous years, particularly highlighting University Accommodation and the pastoral support available here)
- **Extra Curricular activities** (including any sports teams, clubs or societies you are involved in, student radio, newspaper, Student Ambassador programme, Students in Schools, Manchester RAG etc, particularly highlighting anything you were not involved with before university)
- **Living in Manchester** (night-life, music venues and gigs, shopping, sporting events, city-based events and activities e.g. Manchester Pride, Christmas Markets, Manchester 10k, travel around the city/public transport)