



Supporting students to master the university journey – My 5 ‘Must-Knows’

Jon Cheek
Director of UniTasterDays



Hello!



Cringe...

Venture shortlisted for start-up award

[Bridgportn](#) | [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.

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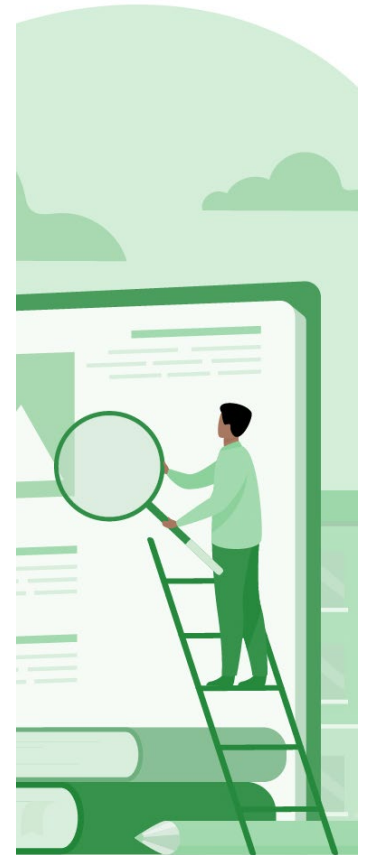
Jon Cheek set up [UniTasterDays.com](#) to allow teachers at schools, colleges and academies to book places on university taster days and workshops.

+ 14 years!

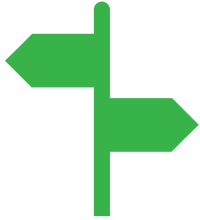


Ultimately – what do students need to know?

1. Reasons to consider university
2. Deciding what to study
3. Deciding where to study
4. How they'll pay for university
5. Where to find help



They have big choices to make



Is university
right for them?



What should
they study?



Where should
they study?

Reasons to consider university

There are lots of reasons why people go to university, far beyond what you might expect...



1

Why university?



A quick challenge... Why do students go to university? Try and think of a few reasons..

2 minutes

Reasons to consider university

To earn
more money

To live
independently

To make their
family proud

To fulfill a
career need

To try
new things

To study
their passion

To develop
life skills

To meet
new people

To travel
the world

To discover
a new subject

To live in a new
place

To delay
the real world

Memory test!

Draw the previous slide from memory.
How many of the 12 reasons can you remember?



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Deciding what to study

There are over 30,000 courses to choose from, ranging from academic to vocational courses



2

Real or made up .. Find the 3 traitors!

Animal Behaviour

Candle Making

Football Business

Golf Management

Artificial Intelligence

Contemporary
Circus

Acting

Animation

Viking Studies

Cryptocurrency






Perfumery

Entrepreneurship

Remember...



Every course is different – even those with the same name. For instance, *Maths* at one university will have a different focus to *Maths* at another university!

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
9:00 – 10:00	Maths	PE	ICT	Music	Science
10:00 – 11:00	English	Maths	English	Science	English
11:00 – 12:00	Drama	Science	Maths	Maths	PE
12:00 – 1:00					
1:00 – 2:00	ICT	Music	PE	English	ICT
2:00 – 3:00	Science	Drama	Drama	PE	Music

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
9:00 – 10:00		Writing for Theatre			
10:00 – 11:00					
11:00 – 12:00					
12:00 – 13:00				Theatre and Human Rights	
13:00 – 14:00	Dissertation Meeting				Theatre in Education
14:00 – 15:00					
15:00 – 16:00					
16:00 – 17:00					
17:00 – 18:00					
After 18:00					

Source: University of Essex

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
9:00 – 10:00	Food shopping	Writing for Theatre	Working as a student ambassador at a Drama and Theatre Studies visit day		
10:00 – 11:00				Group meeting/ rehearsal	Group meeting/ rehearse
11:00 – 12:00	Dissertation Meeting	Lunch		Theatre and Human Rights	Lunch
12:00 – 13:00		Reading for classes			Lunch
13:00 – 14:00	Gym	Gym		Wash clothes	
14:00 – 15:00					
15:00 – 16:00	Lunch				
16:00 – 17:00	Essay prep				
17:00 – 18:00					
After 18:00	Drama rehearsals	Working at the theatre	Socialise	Working at a pub quiz	Working at the theatre

Source: University of Essex

Deciding where to study

There are over 160 universities
in the UK, varying in location, size,
history, specialities, and facilities



3

Their new home



They are not just picking a course. They are not just picking a university. They are picking a home for the next 3 years and (often) beyond!

Feature	
Beautiful campus and green spaces	
Excellent sports facilities	
24-hour library	
Active student societies	
Everything on one campus	
Wide range of clubs and societies	
Reputation for Creative Writing	

How they'll pay for university

So many students have no idea how
student finance works.



4

What do you get?



Tuition Fee Loan

- For course fees
- Up to £9,790 a year



Maintenance Loan

- For living costs
- Up to £14,000+



Student loan repayment challenge

- You studied, graduated, and secured a job
- You earn £35,000 a year
- That is £2,916 a month

Each month, you need to give some of your £2,916 to the Student Loans Company to repay your student loan.

How much you need to repay based on your salary?

Take a guess!

Where to find help

There is a treasure trove of helpful resources for you to access, such as guides, websites, videos, and...

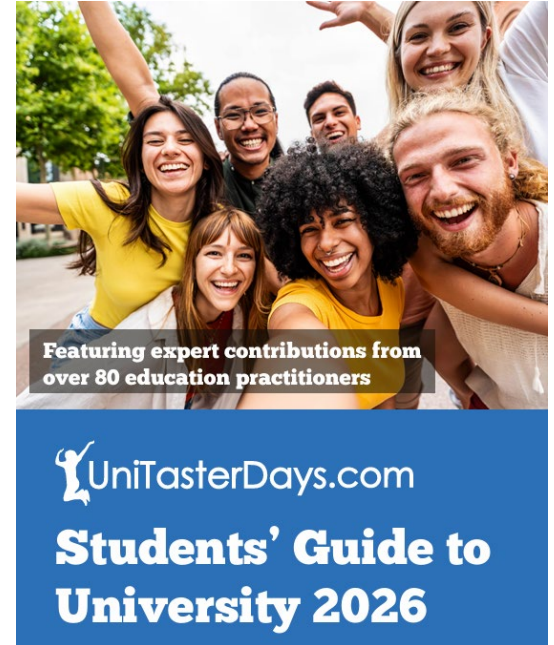
5

A woman with dark hair, wearing a yellow top and large black headphones, is smiling and looking towards a man. The man, wearing a brown jacket and large black headphones, is also smiling and looking towards the woman. They are sitting at a desk with two professional microphones in front of them. A glass of water and a smartphone are also visible on the desk. The background is a bright, out-of-focus office setting.

Students' Guide – 2026 out now

- Over 80 contributors
- Universities from across the UK
- Links to a range of free resources
- Free to download, share, host

[UniTasterDays.com/StudentsGuide](https://www.unitasterdays.com/StudentsGuide)



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- ✓ The key university facts for parents
- ✓ Featuring editorial from over 80 university experts
- ✓ Available for direct download!



Featuring expert articles written by over 80 education practitioners

UniTasterDays.com

Teachers' Guide to University 2026

The key higher education facts for school and college staff

UniTasterDays.com/ParentsGuide

UniTasterDays.com/TeachersGuide

Subject videos



Politics

Thinking about studying Politics at university? This impartial guide explores course options, shares application advice, and highlights the wide range of careers a Politics degree can open up. Featuring Aberystwyth University.

[Watch now](#)



Aviation

An impartial guide to studying Aviation at university. Explore course options, application advice, whether a degree is needed to become a pilot, and the range of career pathways available. Featuring the University of West London.

[Watch now](#)



Classics and Ancient History

Thinking about studying Classics and Ancient History at university? An impartial guide to courses, applications and careers. Featuring the University of Bristol.

[Watch now](#)

[UniTasterDays.com/SubjectVideos](https://www.unitasterdays.com/SubjectVideos)

Podcasts



UniTasterDays.com/TheUniGuide

Podcasts



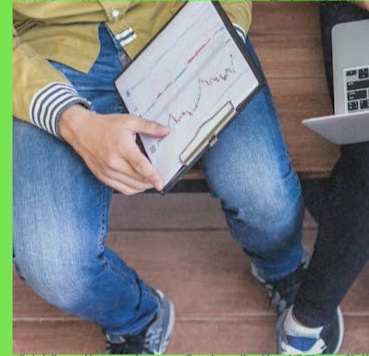
UniTasterDays.com/TheUniGuide



UniTasterDays.com/OneInFive



“ ———
One personal statement tip
few think about is right on
your doorstep..





Informed Choices

Choosing the right subjects to study post-16 is very important in helping you to get into university, particularly a Russell Group university.

If you don't know what degree subject you want to study, it's important to choose A Levels (or equivalent qualifications) that keep as many options open to you.

Whatever your situation, Informed Choices can give you the start you need in deciding what to do next.

Get started

[InformedChoices.ac.uk](https://www.informedchoices.ac.uk)

Thank you

For everything you do – you make a huge difference.

Please stay in touch – Jon Cheek on LinkedIn and:

[UniTasterDays.com/Email](https://www.unitasterdays.com/Email)

