

★ RATEMYPLACEMENT

Top Tips to Engage Students in Autumn

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The Background

It's been a tumultuous few years for everyone in the world, particularly students.

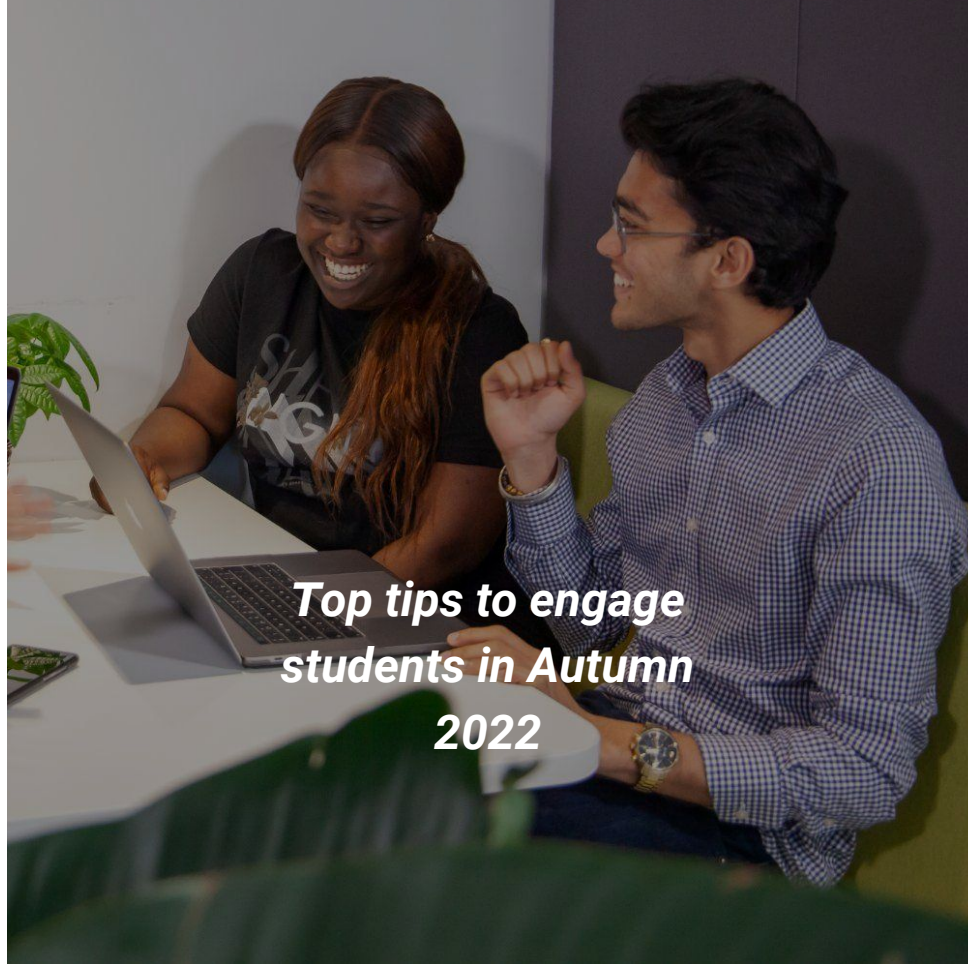
At RateMyPlacement, we wanted to find out how university students are feeling about their careers, and discover what they're really looking for. We also wanted to find out where students are going for inspiration and research, so we can be there to meet and engage them.

To do this, we partnered with youth research experts YouthSight, to carry out a survey in March / April 2022.

Based on these insights we've put together this report, sharing our top tips to engage students in Autumn 2022.

We hope you find it useful, interesting and informative!

The RateMyPlacement Team x



Youthsight Survey - Data Breakdown

We worked with YouthSight as an impartial partner to survey 2,007 students that were representative of the student population.



**2,007 students
surveyed**



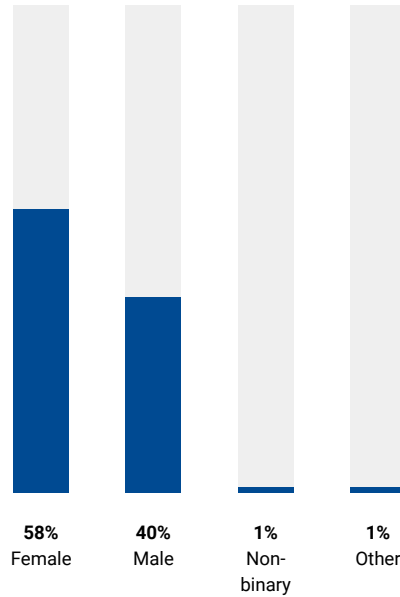
**153 universities
& HE colleges**

Youthsight Survey - Data Breakdown

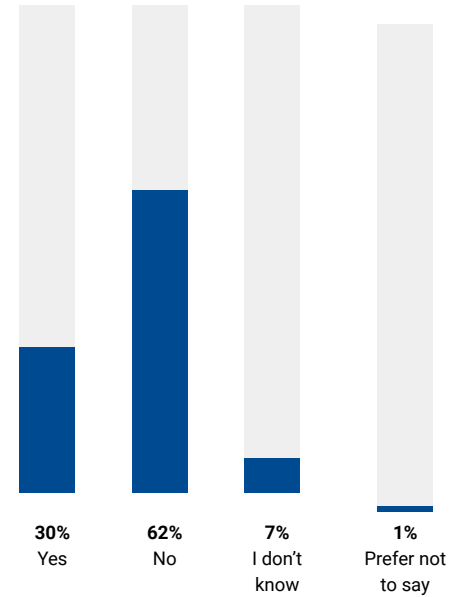
Year of Study



Gender



Eligible for free schools meals



Five top tips to Engage students in Autumn

- 1 Take a hybrid approach
- 2 Start the conversation early
- 3 Building confidence
- 4 Get 'reel' on social
- 5 Align to their interests and passions





Tip 1 “Take a hybrid approach”

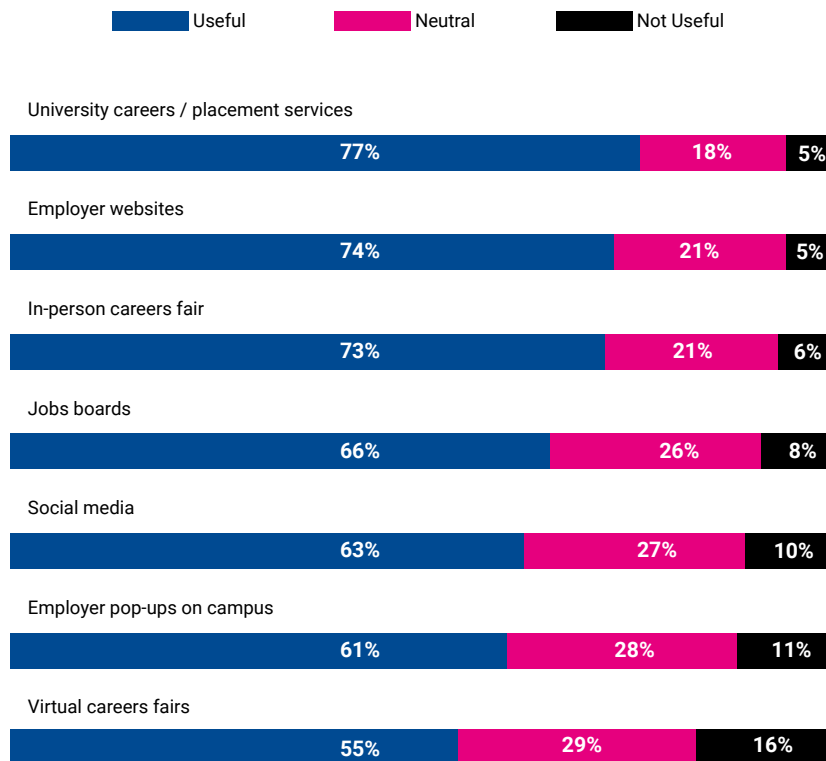
#1 Take a hybrid approach

Overview

The first tip to engage students is to take a hybrid approach. When we talk about hybrid in this context, we mean engaging with students through a variety of face-to-face and digital activities across multiple touchpoints.

We asked students how useful a range of activities are when they are searching for internships, placements and graduate jobs, and the graph on the right shows their answers:

Q: How useful are the following when searching for internships, placements and graduate opportunities?



#1 Take a hybrid approach

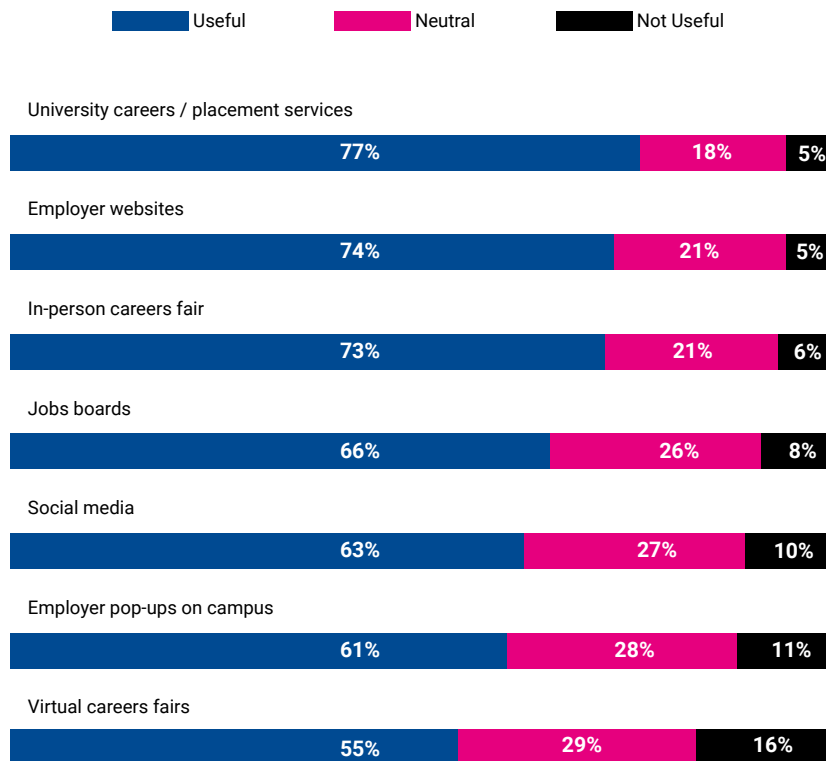
Analysis

To explain the graph, the blue bar shows how many students said they'd find the activity useful, the pink is neutral and the black is not useful.

The **most useful activity** that came out top was careers / placement services!

The third most useful activity was in-person careers fairs, which **73%** of students said. This is probably due to most students not experiencing a face-to-face careers event since starting university, so they are craving this experience of chatting to employers in this setting.

55% of students find virtual careers fairs to be useful, showing that virtual events still have an important part to play in student engagement.



#1 Take a hybrid approach

How

Students want digital and face-to-face interactions

A combined Hybrid approach is what students want - it's a mixture of meeting face-to-face where possible but they also love the accessibility of information on websites, at virtual events, on job boards and across social media platforms.

Here's some ideas for how you can combine face-to-face and digital attraction activities...



Brand Ambassadors

Student Brand Ambassadors are brilliant at providing peer-to-peer and authentic content for students, so helping to promote their opportunities to your students via email or on social media is another great way of helping to engage students.



Live streaming

Have you explored the potential to live stream via social media platforms? We're planning to live stream RateMyPlacement's virtual events that we're running in Autumn across all of our social platforms. So this could be a good idea to make your content work harder for yourselves.

NUE AWARDS

Tip 2 “Start the conversation early”

#2 Start the conversation early...

Overview

Our second tip is to start the conversation early.

We have some very interesting data that showed us just how important it is to engage students early on with their careers.

Employers often set application windows to fit within internal processes and there is often a discussion around 'going to market earlier for the best talent'.

But... what did students say when we asked them when they were looking for roles?

Q: Where are students currently in terms of searching for opportunities?

I have not started looking yet

30%

I look all year round

25%

I started in January time

13%

I started in September / October time

12%

I've already secured a role

8%

I do not intend to search for one

12%

#2 Start the conversation early...

Analysis

Students are not just looking in the Autumn term anymore and their timelines do not always match employers.

30% of students had not started looking yet when we carried out the survey in March. This rose to **47%** of 1st years.

A quarter of students are looking year-round for a position - this number increases among 2nd and 3rd year students (**28%** and **30%** respectively).

This suggests some students are missing out on roles by looking too late. So engaging with them as early as possible through a mix of digital & in-person interactions, as mentioned earlier, could help them apply in time.

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30%

I look all year round

25%

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12%

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8%

I do not intend to search for one

12%

#2 Start the conversation early...

How

'Register your interest'

One suggestion to encourage an early start is to recommend students to fill in 'Register Your Interest' forms on job boards and employer websites.

By registering their interest in jobs before they go live, students get notified once the job opens, helping to ensure they don't miss an opportunity.

10,000 students registered their interest on RateMyPlacement last Summer across various employers.

10,000
Students registered their interest last Summer!

Get there First
Register your interest for jobs BEFORE they go live
LINK

Get there First
Register your interest for jobs BEFORE they go live
LINK

32 Placements, Internships, Insights & Vacation Schemes and Virtual Experiences matching register your interest
Search & apply for undergraduate work experience

1 - 20 of 32 results [SAVE YOUR SEARCH](#)

Text Search: register your interest [Clear filters](#)

- M&G** Register Your Interest - Technology Internship
M&G plc
£228,000 - £29,999 Internship (1-4 Months) Central London and City, Scotland
- M&G** Register Your Interest - Investment Internship
M&G plc
£228,000 - £29,999 Internship (1-4 Months) Central London and City
- M&G** Register Your Interest - Customer Innovation Internship
M&G plc
£228,000 - £29,999 Internship (1-4 Months) Central London and City, Scotland
- IBM** [Register Your Interest] Technology Placement - 2023 Intake
IBM
Ongoing £18,000 - £19,999 Placement Year (10 Months+) Nationwide [Best Student Employer](#)
- IBM** Register Your Interest - HR Placement - 2023 Intake
IBM
31st August 2022 £18,000 - £19,999 Placement Year (10 Months+) Nationwide [Best Student Employer](#)
- IBM** Register Your Interest - Marketing Placement - 2023 Intake
IBM
£18,000 - £19,999 Placement Year (10 Months+) Nationwide [Best Student Employer](#)

A woman with long black hair and glasses, wearing a black jacket, is sitting and talking to a man with dark curly hair and glasses, wearing a light blue shirt. The man is sitting at a desk with a laptop and looking at the woman. There are plants in the foreground and background. The text "Tip 3 'Building confidence'" is overlaid on the image.

Tip 3 “Building confidence”

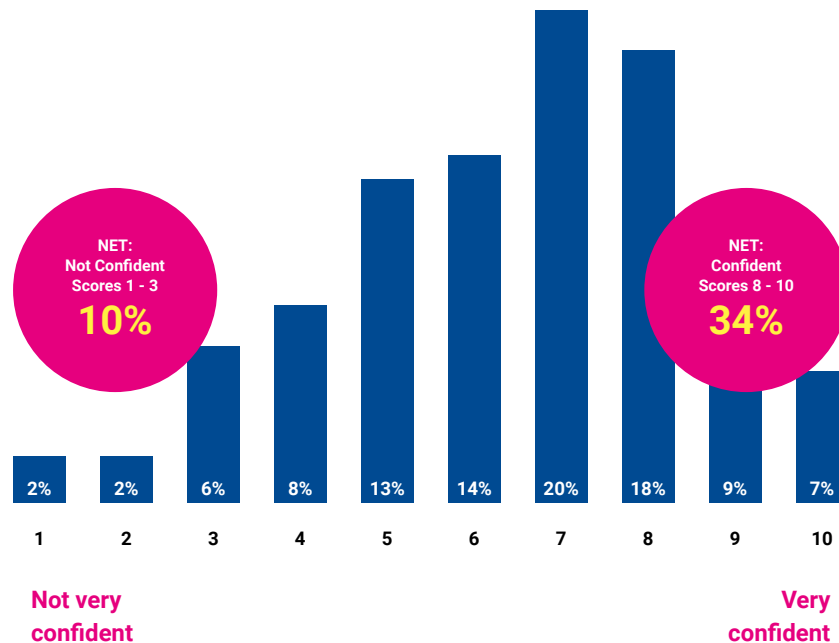
#3 Focus on building confidence

Overview

This tip is all about how important it is to support students with building their confidence, which has definitely had a knock over the last few years.

The graph on the right shows where students marked themselves between 1 and 10 on a confidence scale, with 1 being not very confident and 10 being very confident.

Q: How confident do students feel about applying for internships, placements and graduate opportunities?

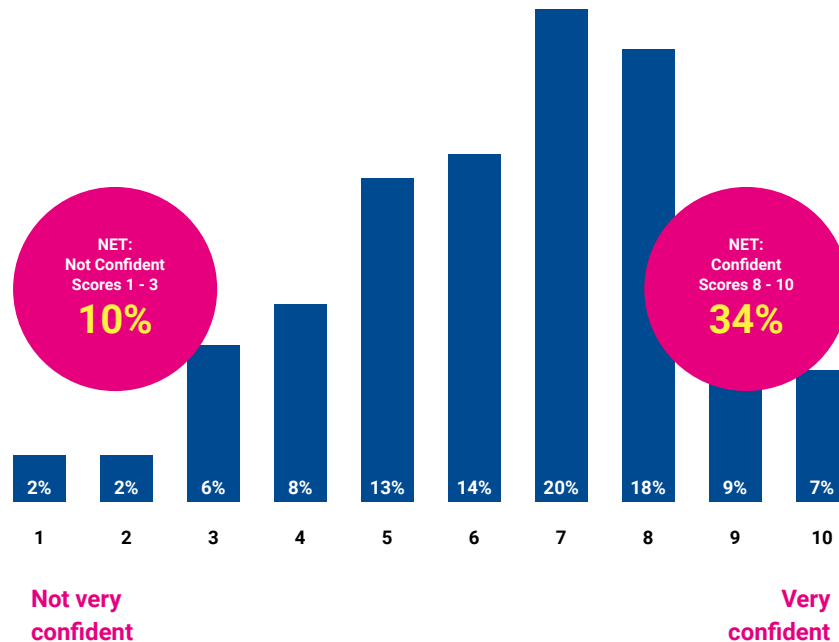


#3 Focus on building confidence

Analysis

Only a third of students feel confident when applying for internships, placements and graduate opportunities (as indicated by students who selected 8, 9 or 10 on the graph).

However, on a positive note, only one in ten do not feel confident applying for internships, placements and graduate opportunities, indicated by students scoring 1, 2 and 3 on the graph.



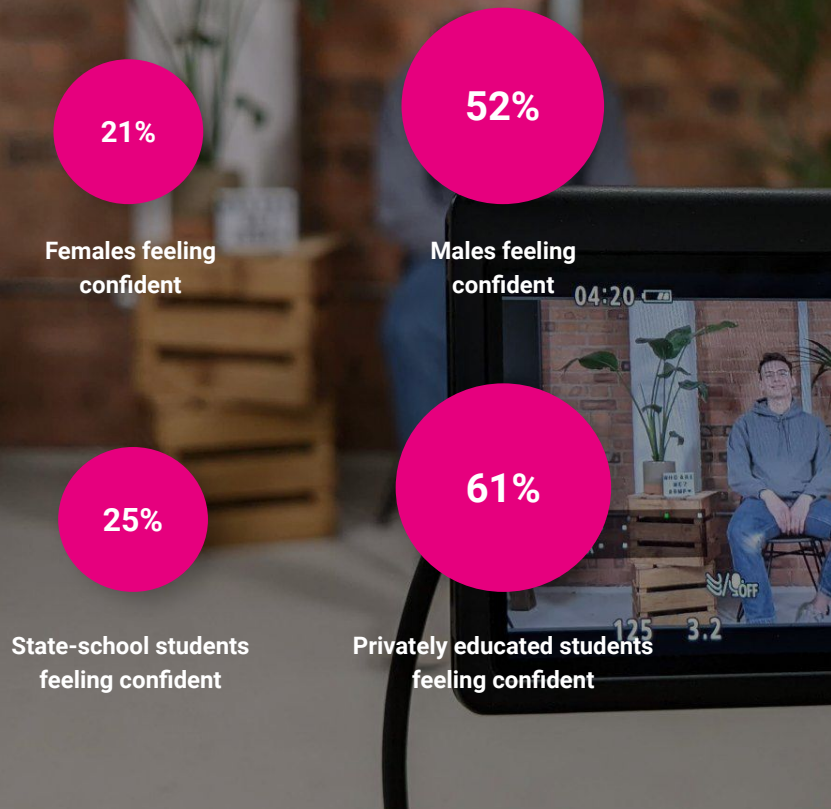
#3 Focus on building confidence

Analysis

In terms of gender, there is a staggering difference between females and males, with females feeling far less confident than their male counterparts - as you can see on the right, **21%** of females said they feel confident vs **52%** of males.

25% of students who went to state-run or state-funded schools said they felt confident vs **61%** of students who went to independent or fee-paying schools, showing how much of a gap there is between state and privately educated students.

Q: **How confident do students feel about applying for internships, placements and graduate opportunities?**



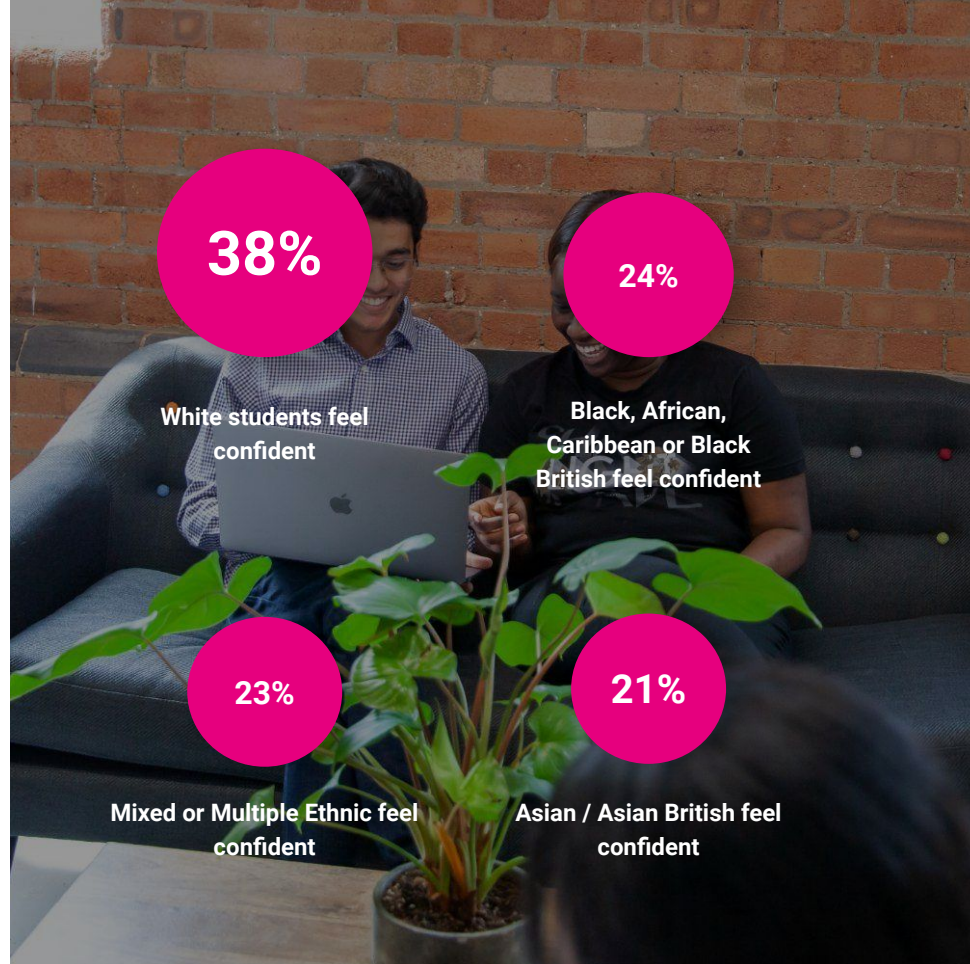
#3 Focus on building confidence

Analysis

When broken down by ethnicity, white students feel far more confident applying for internships, placements and graduate opportunities than their peers from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority backgrounds.

38% of white students said they felt confident, vs **24%** of Black, African, Caribbean or Black British students, **23%** of students from Mixed or Multiple Ethnic backgrounds, and **21%** of Asian / Asian British students.

Q: How confident do students feel about applying for internships, placements and graduate opportunities?



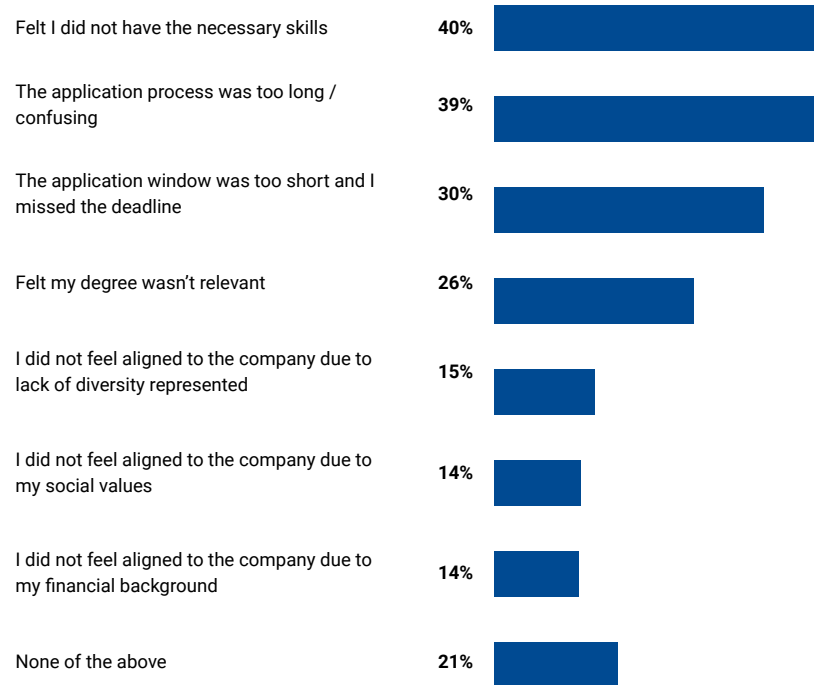
#3 Focus on building confidence

Analysis

How can we support and encourage students to build their confidence?

To help us find out, we asked students what is stopping them from applying for an internship, placement and / or graduate opportunity.

Q: What factors have stopped students from applying for internships, placements and / or graduate opportunities?



#3 Focus on building confidence

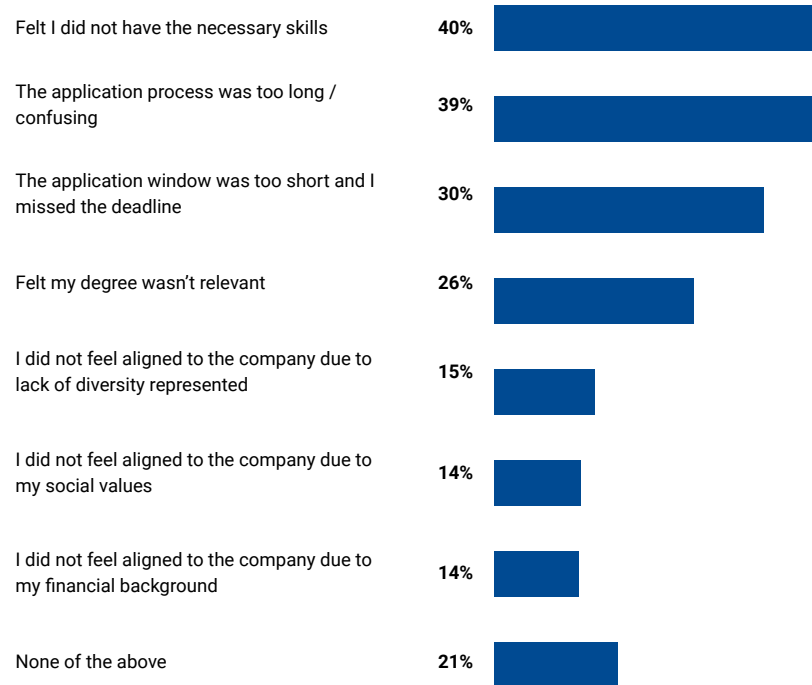
Analysis

Two in five (**40%**) students said they had stopped their application because they didn't feel they had the necessary skills.

This is more common for females, with **46%** saying they stopped their application because they didn't feel they had the necessary skills vs **31%** of males.

It was also really high for students from a mixed ethnicity background, where **53%** said they stopped their application as they didn't feel they had the necessary skills.

Q: What factors have stopped students from applying for internships, placements and / or graduate opportunities?



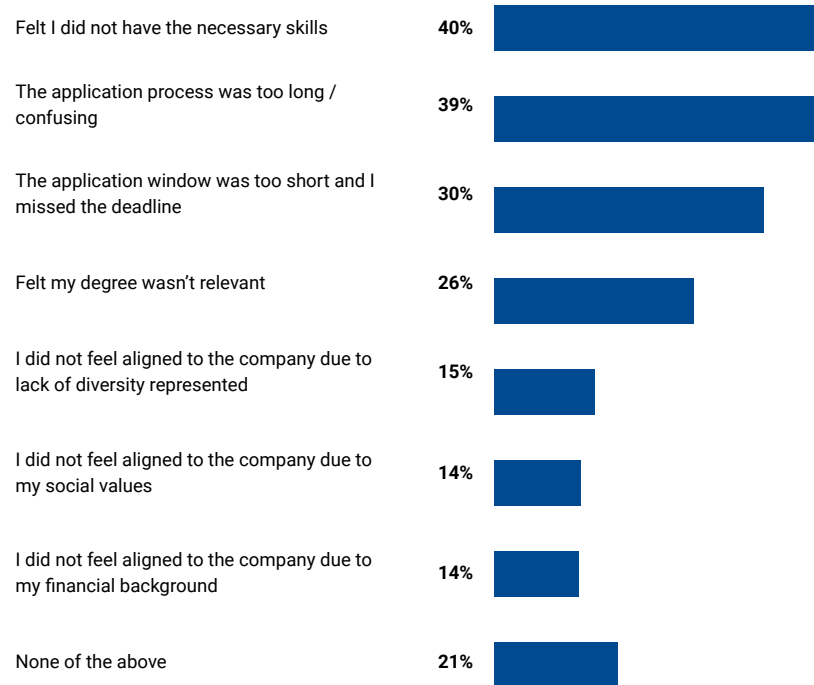
#3 Focus on building confidence

Analysis

The second highest barrier to students applying was that the application process was too long or confusing, with **39%** of students saying this. This rose significantly when broken down by ethnicity...

57% of students from a Black, African and Black British demographic said the application process was too long or confusing, which had stopped them applying, compared to **38%** from a white background.

Q: What factors have stopped students from applying for internships, placements and / or graduate opportunities?



#3 Focus on building confidence

How

With so many factors affecting students' confidence and stopping them from applying, what can we do to help increase confidence levels?

Here are 3 ideas we had...

1

Students feeling like they didn't have the necessary skills came up as the largest barrier to them applying. Providing skill development sessions and workshops, or promoting free skill development courses could help them feel more confident.

2

Providing **mentoring sessions** came up as a helpful activity to help build student confidence, with **40%** of students saying this would make them feel more confident when applying to jobs.

3

Sharing expert application advice sourced directly from employers and their recruiters, can help build confidence for those students who find the process confusing. Students want application advice that are more specific to them, their industries and the roles they're applying for *E.g. top tips from a KPMG recruiter.*

Tip 4 “Get ‘reel’ on social”

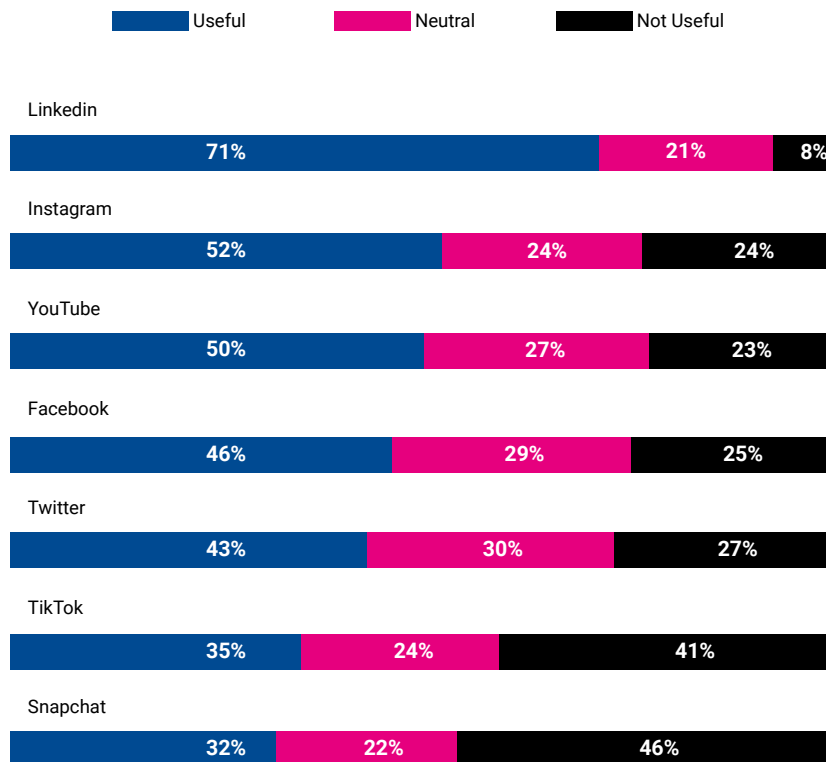
#4 Get 'reel' on social

Overview

We know a huge proportion of Generation Z are on social media, watching video content and scrolling through reels. But how do we in the early careers sector, prioritise time for certain platforms over others? And what content should we be producing? This is an always evolving conversation, and one we are always trying to navigate ourselves too!

Firstly, it's important for us to know which social platforms are most useful when they're searching for career-related information.

Q: How useful do students find the following social platforms when searching for career-related information?



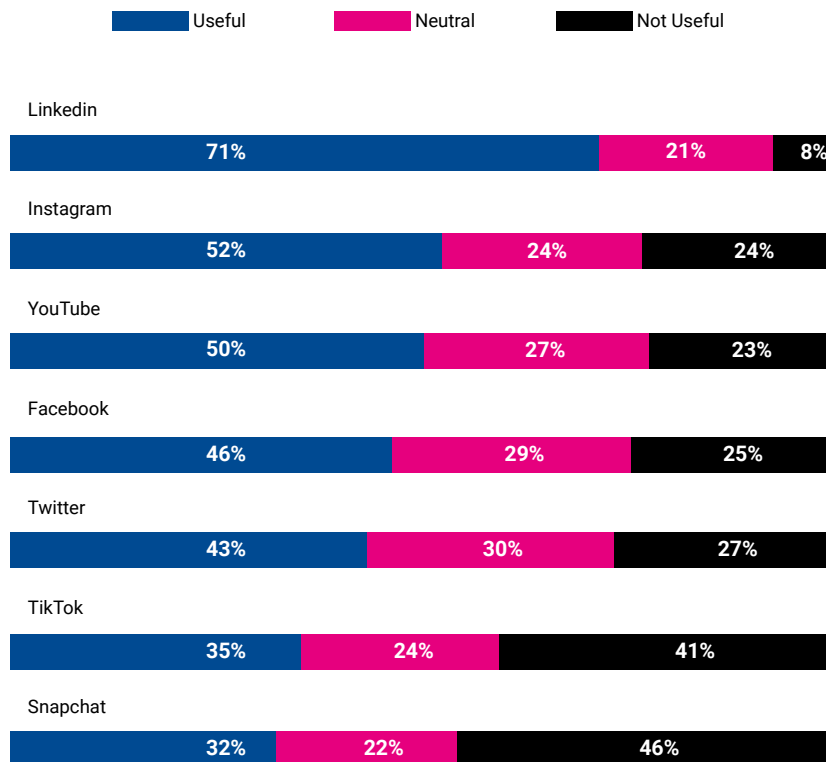
#4 Get 'reel' on social

Analysis

Generally, students find that LinkedIn is the most useful social platform for finding career-related information, with just over seven in ten choosing this option. This makes sense as it is a specific job-hunting social media platform.

The only other platforms that a majority feel are useful are Instagram (52%) and YouTube (50%).

On the other hand, the least useful social media platforms for career-related information are TikTok (35%) and Snapchat (32%).



Tips for your social strategy

How

We've looked at which social platforms students think are useful, but what content is important to them to see?

'A day in the life' content

Providing 'day-in-the-life' videos of current interns or placement students came up as the largest trend for social. Students want to gain more insight into the company, what the culture is like there and what the roles look like. In particular, they would like to see this from students who have followed the same path.

Application tips

Students want to find out more about what companies are looking for during the application process. They want the company's specific application process to be explained to them, and provide helpful tips and suggestions on how to impress them.

Reels get results

52% of students surveyed said Instagram was the second most useful social platform when searching for career related information. The very talented team at RateMyPlacement have been creating reels and experimenting with Instagram's tools and they are by far seeing a much bigger reach than other posts and stories. So we'd encourage you to play around with reels as much as possible in the year ahead.

Overall, we know social media is a minefield so our best advice is don't be afraid to experiment with content on different platforms, be 'reel' and get as many students and graduates involved to support your efforts.



Tip 5 “Aligning to their interests and values”

#5 Aligning to their interests and values

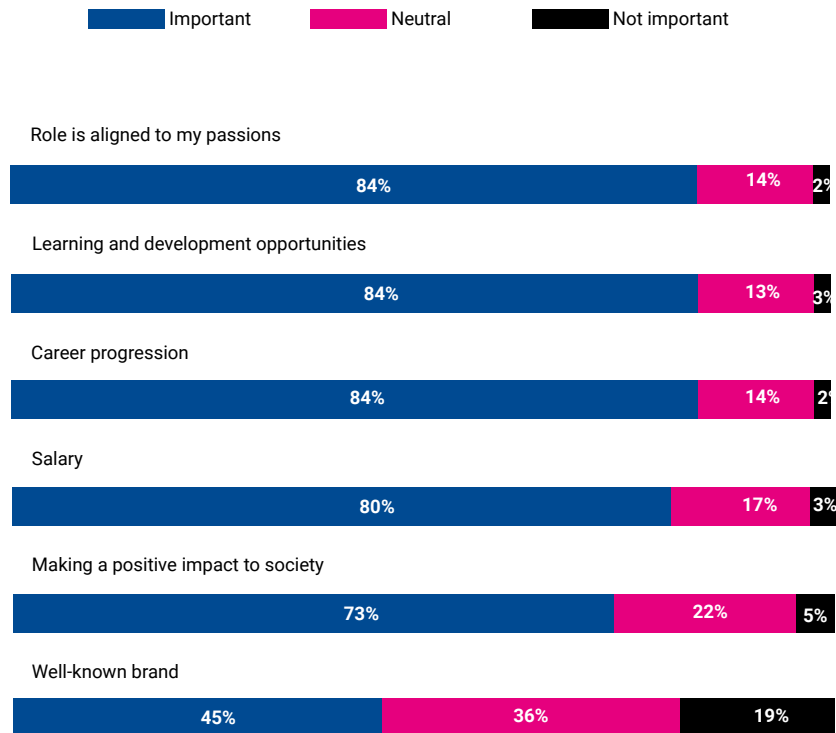
Overview

Our final tip for engaging students in Autumn is sharing career content that aligns with their interests and values.

As we know, Generation Z have their own set of priorities when it comes to what's most important to them at work.

So what is important to students when it comes to their job search?

Q: How important or not are the following when searching for internships, placements and graduate jobs?



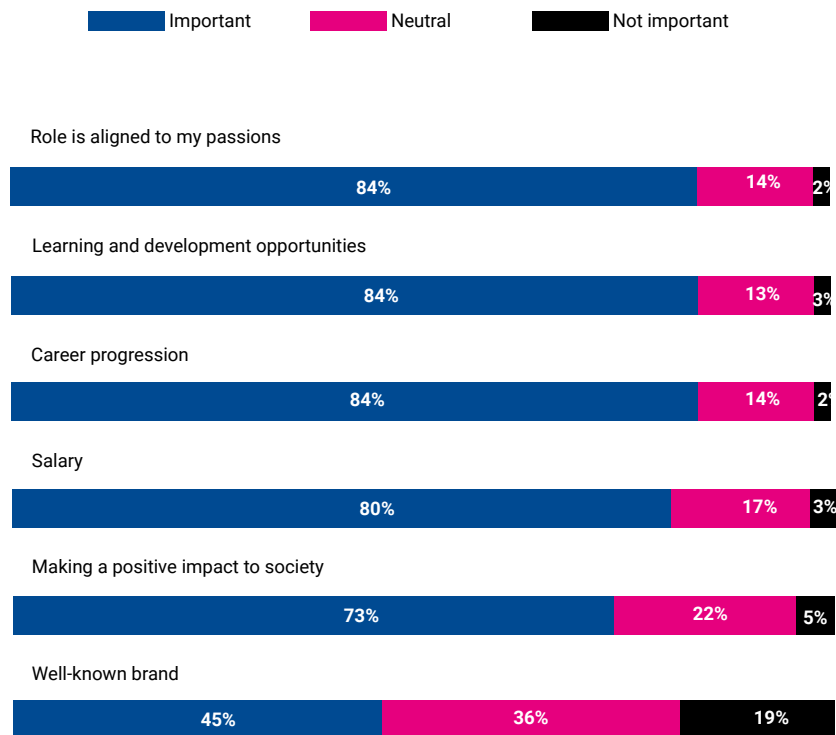
#5 Aligning to their interests and values

Analysis

Nearly all factors were important to a majority of students. Above all, students want a role that aligns to their passions, has learning opportunities and has great career progression - with **84%** of students considering these factors as important.

The least important consideration for students was the company being a well-known brand - with just **45%** choosing this as being important.

Q: How important or not are the following when searching for internships, placements and graduate jobs?



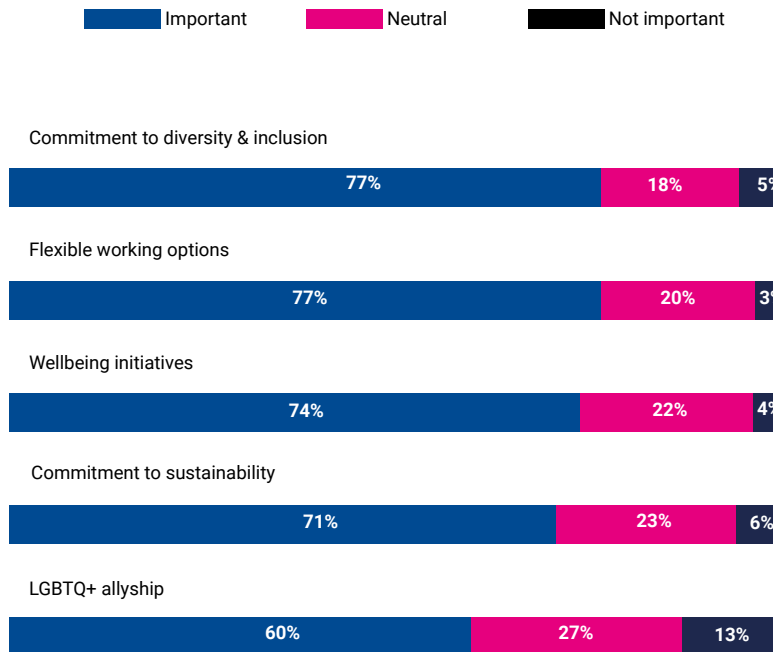
#5 Aligning to their interests and values

Analysis

We dove a bit deeper to find out what is important to students when it comes to finding an employer.

All five of the factors listed were perceived as important to over 60% of students, with a commitment to diversity & inclusion, and flexible working options, coming out on top with 77% of students considering them important.

Q: How important or not do you find the following when considering an employer to apply for?



#5 Aligning to their interests and values

How

A couple ideas include...

1

Hosting career events on hot topics such as D&I and sustainability, to help inspire students in topics they are most interested in.

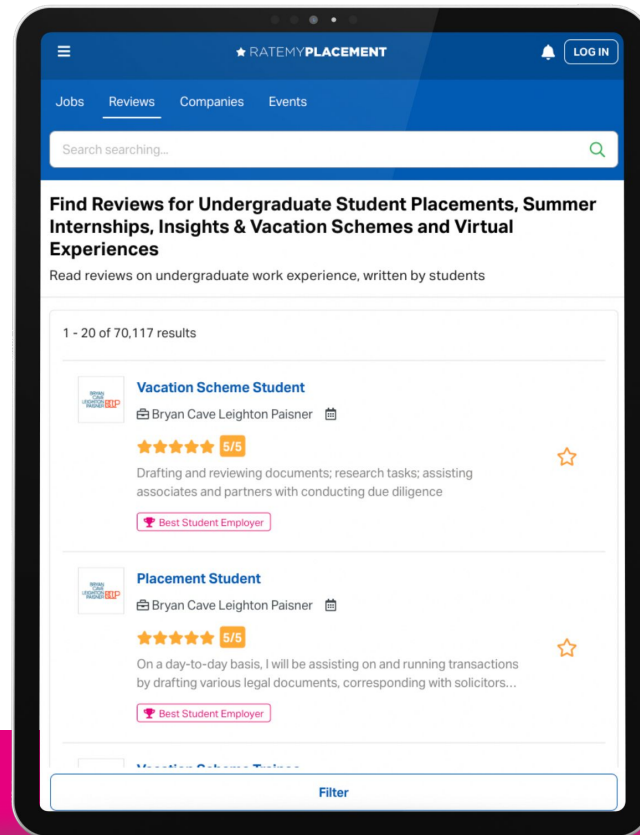
2

Our 1000s of reviews on the website ask students everything from the skills they developed during their scheme, to what the company culture is like, to rating the employer's D&I initiatives. Sharing our reviews with students can give them that extra bit of insight into an employer.

Q2. Have you learnt any new skills or developed existing skills?

Q3. Please rate the future employment opportunities?

Q15. How would you rate the diversity initiatives?



5 Top Tips to Engage Students in Autumn

Recap

To recap, here are your 5 top tips to engage students in Autumn 2022.

1. Take a hybrid approach - is what students want! They love the accessibility of virtual events, but they are also craving human connection and would love to see employers face to face where possible - so how can you support both?

2. Start the conversation early! Timelines for students applying for roles don't always match those from employers, making it so important to inform and engage them as early as possible so they don't miss out on opportunities. Engage them with case studies, hints and tips and application support.

3. Build confidence. Students feel that they don't have the necessary skills to apply or that the application process is too long or confusing. Help them build their confidence with skill development sessions, mentoring sessions and specific application advice from employers.

5. Get 'reel' on socials Reconsider the platforms and content you share across them. Use students to provide a helpful and authentic message... and have fun experimenting with video, reels and new innovations.

4. Align to their interests and values. Generation Z have their own set of priorities when it comes to what's most important at work. Host career events on hot topics such as D&I or sustainability, to really help inspire them.

Appendices

The raw data from the YouthSight survey, that powered this report, can be found via the link below:

[YouthSight report 2022.](#)

Questions are broken down by gender, socio-economic background, year group and ethnicity. So you can search to your heart's content!



Thank you!

Thank you so much for reading! We hope you've found this report interesting, useful and thought-provoking.

If you have any further questions on this or about how RateMyPlacement can help you engage your students in 2022-23, please contact our university liaison:

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Ali Lindsay &
Oliver Sidwell
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of RateMyPlacement

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