

Communicating Through Content

Content Guidelines and Toolkit

 STUDENTS'
UNION UCL

where **more** happens



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Introduction

This guide and toolkit aims to help you communicate through content. We'll cover how we align the content we create to our brand and define the guiding principles which set the direction for what we do.

In 2017, after months of research and development, we launched 'Students' Union UCL' – a new identity for the Students' Union. Alongside our Branding and Editorial Style Guide, this content specific guide helps us manage and maintain the Students' Union UCL brand.

Our audience experiences multiple facets of our brand, across numerous channels. Our content creators range from volunteers to specialist full-time staff. This diffused and delegated content creation process presents lots of challenges when managing a brand, but we use this to our advantage. We're a place where more happens and the diversity of our membership is reflected in the diversity of the content we create.

If you're looking for editorial style guidelines (correct ways to write times and dates), please refer to our Branding and Editorial Style Guide which can be found on studentsunionucl.org/brand



Guiding Principles and Values

Our core, guiding principles outline the key aspirations for our content. We want our members to;

- Be inspired.
- Participate.
- Feel supported and at home.
- Trust and believe us.
- Use our services and facilities.
- Understand and value the role of the Students' Union.

Every project that aims to use content as part of the marketing and communications plan will have its own set of aims. These aims are likely to sit within one of the six principles outlined above, for example during the Welcome period (see page 30), our content aims to emphasise the role of our Sabbatical Officers. Doing so will support our guiding principle to help students 'understand and value the role of the Students' Union' and will receive extra emphasis in our Welcome content planning.

The values which set the tone for all of our work at Students' Union UCL, including our marketing and communication, are to be:

- Student-driven.
- Inspiring.
- Bold.
- Fun.
- Inclusive.



Style Guidelines

Our audience is broad and uses a wide array of communication channels. Alongside this, lots of people are creating content for the Union which makes it vital that a consistent brand tone of voice is maintained throughout all of the content we publish.

These guidelines will help us to:

- Keep tone, voice and messaging consistent and true to the brand and personality.
- Guide others on how to write for union audiences.
- Maintain a high standard of quality.
- Create more effective and engaging content.

Writing Content for Students' Union UCL

Before writing content, it's important to remember the values and purpose of the Students' Union: we're a charity that exists solely for the benefit of our members, students at UCL. We should aim for our content to be for, by and about our members, inspiring to those who read or engage with it. It should represent a bold and welcoming Union that is fun, inclusive and honest.

Our content should exemplify that Students' Union UCL is **where more happens** – these words are intended to demonstrate that there is always more going on than students are aware of – in all areas of Union activity. These words suggest that the Union enables students to make more of their time at university and have the best experience possible, reminding students of the Union's location in one of the most diverse, exciting, and international cities in the world.

What should our content sound like?

Our content should be conversational, easy to understand and engaging. Content should also align to the values and principles of the Union.

How to combine our guiding principles with our values in your content:

Be inspiring

Our Union is direct, strong and positive. This should be reflected in how we talk. In particular, we should:

- Use active voice, not passive - e.g. 'We made it better' (active) instead of 'It is better because of our work' (passive).
- We should ask questions (rhetorical or actual) to encourage our audience to consider how our content might apply to them. Opening with a question can immediately engage a reader to carry on reading.
- Using varied sentence lengths create a dynamic rhythm and pace. Short sentences in between longer sentences can grab people's attention.

Be trustworthy, inclusive and friendly

The Union must be seen as friendly and approachable in order to win the trust of students. Therefore we should make sure we always appear warm and welcoming when we communicate.

- Use of first person narrative when talking about Students' Union UCL ("we", "us", "our" instead of "Students' Union UCL").
- Use second person narrative when referring to the audience ("you" instead of "students", etc.).

- Avoid over censoring negative or less-flattering comments or insights. Including and acknowledging weaknesses can help to portray a level of openness and honesty that will make our content, and thus our brand, more trustworthy to audiences.
- Don't exaggerate. We want to make our content sound fun and exciting, but this should not come at the expense of being honest – don't promise that an event will be "the best night of your life" unless you know it absolutely will be.

Be informative, but not overwhelming

University life can be a lot to take in. We want students to be able to come to us for answers that make them more confident, rather than more confused.

- Use clear directions to show students what action they need to take next.
- Adjectives can be used to create emotion, but don't overdo it. Too many pretty words can become redundant or uninspiring.
- Use short headlines that begin with keywords. Have the first sentence sum up the rest of your content. Use sub-headings at key points in your page to make it easier to read and for users to find the information they want.
- Use plain and simple English instead of hiding behind flowery language. Aim for a reading age of 9-11 years old.
- When responding to requests, be as helpful as possible. Give as much information as you can in your first response. For example, if the answer to a student's question is on a specific web page, don't just provide the link - also give a quick response to their query.

Be professional and excellent, but not corporate

Students' Union UCL is both a fun organisation, and a respected and formidable voice for students across at UCL. We should maintain a light-hearted image where appropriate, while retaining a sense of competence and responsibility.

- Be accurate. Use the correct names for locations or organisations, make sure any numbers that are referenced are up to date, and have a process in place for checking if content needs to be amended in the future.
- Use correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.
- Avoid relying on management jargon and acronyms. Specialist language can be used sparingly where it helps to explain the subject better. Always clarify jargon, if used.
- Be conversational. Use things like brackets sparingly, but do use them (they can make little asides sound more natural - like this!).
- Use contractions, where appropriate, to sound less formal.
- When used well, humour can add elements of light-heartedness to your writing. Social media is a good place to add elements of word play, sarcasm, self-depreciation or juxtapositions.

Be fun, but not childish

As a students' union, we have a license to be less formal and more playful than other university bodies. Where appropriate, we should be able to use humour and be a little more entertaining.

- Use conversational language to avoid sounding stuffy or corporate.
- Humour is subjective, so it is important to be aware of the audience you're talking to.
- Bear in mind: any jokes that rely on insulting or demeaning an individual or group do not fit into our values.

Note: The Union's "fun" personality will be conveyed strongly through use of visuals as well as text content. It is always better to demonstrate that the Union is fun through evidence rather than trying to state it – "show, don't tell" is the key message here. Students having fun together is the best way to portray this



Guiding Principles

How can we create content to support our guiding principles?

Our six guiding principles work similarly to strategic priorities. Everything we create to communicate our activity should support these guiding principles.

Be inspired...

All of our content should inspire those who read, watch or listen to it to try something new for themselves. This should be achieved through:

- An emphasis on the individual – showcase multiple voices throughout our content, not just our own. This includes ensuring students act as content creators and not just passive consumers of content.
- A focus on the future through the language, style and substance.
- Use an active voice and bold language (i.e. “We will”, “We can”)
- Ensure all content includes clear calls to action that show possibility and aspiration.

In practice

Content should showcase the vast range of opportunities and experiences on offer, as well as material that presents the possibility of what could be achieved for the individual. This includes:

- Creating content that provides clear opportunities to help people to think about and develop their own ambitions, dreams and goals.
- Audience takeovers of core social media channels and accounts.
- Inviting guest contributions to our channels, such as blog posts or advice articles from current students.
- Demonstrating the personal impact of involvement on individual development and confidence.
- Using infographics to demonstrate the range and breadth of experiences and activities on offer.
- Use of humour and fun.
- Use of vibrant and authentic imagery, showing real students in real locations.

Values

Inspiring
Fun
Student-driven

To participate...

While our content should inspire ambition, it should also encourage a sense of being part of a community with mutual benefit and goals. That is to say that our content should equally encourage our audiences to participate in the direction of the Union as a whole, as much as the Union plays a role in their own personal development as individuals. A clear call to action should be present throughout all of our content. In many cases, “join us”, “can you help?” or “get involved” will be the goal and our content should encourage this by:

- Enabling students to see themselves as part of a community.
- Demonstrating the impact of participation – individually and institutionally – showing how student involvement can really further a cause.
- Clarifying the role and reach of student representatives.
- Creating content that gives students an active voice on issues and matters that shape the future of the Union and the university.

In practice

Create content that builds a sense of community and encourages involvement to achieve more together. This includes:

- When planning content, always consider how to incorporate a “what next” call to action that moves the audience towards getting more involved with the Students’ Union. On the website, this can easily be done by providing links throughout the content piece and a call to action at the bottom of the page.
- Including questions in our content (in page titles and body copy) that encourage them to think about their future and that of the University, either passively thinking or contributing their thoughts through social media and comment functionality.
- Using language that clearly shows that this is their Union (i.e. talking about “our Union” not “the Union”, or using language such as “with you” and “together”).
- Creating content to inspire interactivity, encouraging students to ask questions – both online but also integrated with offline opportunities in face-to-face situations to ensure students can participate on a range of platforms and at their convenience.

Values

Student-driven
Inclusive

Where more happens

Students’ Union
UCL has more
to get involved
in than students
know about.

Our content needs
to demonstrate
the many ways
that students
can join in with
whatever aspects
of union life appeal
to them most.

Guiding Principles

To feel supported and at home...

Building on the sense of being part of a community, our content should be warm and welcoming, emphasising the Union's role in helping students settle into university life and being there to help them at any point. This should be achieved through:

- A focus on the questions, issues and concerns that matters to individuals and not just listing services as per the organisational structure.
- Creating content with a friendly, personal tone of voice – focused on “you” and being part of a community.
- Use of visuals and multimedia to foster a sense of belonging.
- Demonstrating the Union's history of inclusivity and support.

In practice

Create content that reassures and supports. This includes:

- A focus on the individual, with student-generated content and advice articles sharing insights and guidance with their peers.
- Two-way conversation where possible, encouraging questions and discussion on social media platforms and in person.
- Showcasing diversity in all content, including in imagery, multimedia and selection of individuals for case study/guest contributions. Help students see people like themselves in your content and show that you really get them.
- Clear signposting of support and advice available without the students needing to understand your organisational structure. Avoid departmentalisation in communication.
- Acknowledging that with such a high population of postgraduate students, Welcome information will be required all year.
- Planning and distributing content in a time-specific way, ensuring students see support information at the most appropriate time without them having to proactively visit the Union website. This could include some personalisation of messaging to deliver – e.g. stress and mental health support during exam periods.
- Where appropriate, profiles about Union staff – showing the people behind the services and their commitment to supporting student needs.

Values

*Student-driven
Inclusive*

Where more happens

*Students' Union
UCL supports and helps its members in ways they may not ever have considered.*

Our content should remind students that they are all part of the same Union, and that they can all expect to access the same help, advice and support.

To trust and believe us...

Our content should be open and honest, encouraging students to build trust and confidence in us. It should be clear and useful, ensuring we are consistently seen as credible and reliable. This should be achieved through:

- Honesty and transparency in all our communications.
- Clearly showing and demonstrating our impact.
- Being honest and open about the journey the Union is on to improvements – demonstrating responsiveness.
- Inviting, and acting on, feedback.

In practice

Create content that shows that we are truthful and authentic, as well as available and open with them. This includes:

- Not over-promising/over-selling – ensuring you can deliver what your content commits to.
- Celebrating success openly and proudly to build a sense of excellence and achievement.
- Showing the decision-making process including clear and easily digestible reports of meetings and outcomes.
- Acknowledging complaints and concerns, and clearly demonstrating how they are being taken seriously.
- A transparent approach to replying to comments and questions online (e.g. replying publicly on social media) – welcoming all perspectives, even those that disagree with the Union position.
- Making contact details and places to approach for help readily available so students can quickly access help and support.

Values

*Inclusive
Student-driven*

Where more happens

The Union is always doing more on behalf of its members than students are aware of.

The content we produce should show students how effective Students' Union UCL is at representing their interests, through transparency, openness and a willingness to admit when things go wrong.

To use our services and facilities...

Our content should encourage students to make more of the physical spaces and facilities offered by the Students' Union, as well as utilise the online services available. This should be achieved through:

- Professional presentation of facilities, events and venues so we can compete with other local competition for student time and money.
- Smooth and intuitive transactions on the site (e.g. ticket sales, membership, event promotion etc.).
- A focus on ensuring content makes student lives easier and on their terms.

In practice

Create content that demonstrates we are a professional, excellent organisation. This includes:

- Clearly signposting Students' Union UCL facilities and spaces on websites and physically on site – ensuring they are clearly identified as Union owned and run.
- Showcasing them professionally online with high quality imagery and promotional copy, with excellent editorial standards.
- Implementing user-friendly processes and forms.

Values

*Inspiring
Fun
Student-driven*

Where more happens

There's always going to be a Union resource that students have not used.

Our content should let students know that there are places they can go and things they can do that they may never have considered.

To understand and value the role of the Students' Union...

Our content should make it clear that the Union is behind the enormous range of services, activities and spaces on offer at UCL. We shouldn't be shy about celebrating our successes and impact, reasserting our contribution regularly throughout the academic year. This could be achieved by:

- Sharing content about successes, wins and impact.
- Repeatedly re-affirming the brand name and visual identity on materials and communications.
- Being consistent in the application of the name, strapline and descriptive overview.

In practice

Creating content that clearly attributes the service, opportunity or change to Students' Union UCL. This includes:

- Clearly, consistently and confidently referring to Students' Union UCL where possible in content – and utilising the visual identity everywhere.
- Creating case studies, news stories and announcements about impact and ensuring a content distribution plan is in place rather than relying on students noticing when visiting the website.
- Use of physical spaces to share success/impact stories (e.g. digital signage).
- Live project reporting to remind students of Union priorities and commitments – and stressing its pro-activity.

Values

*Student-driven
Bold*

Where more happens

Students might not realise what the union does behind the scenes.

Our content needs to reinforce the idea that the union is a positive force in students' lives, through actions that are both highly visible and under the radar.

Aligning Content to our Brand Values

Union Values	Student-driven	Content should demonstrate real student experiences, decisions, and profiles through user-generated content and transparent, two-way conversation. Highlight transparently how Union priorities are set and how students can shape that direction.
	Inspiring	Create content that inspires and supports ambitions, show success, share personal stories, demonstrate the joy of taking part and trying something new. Adopt language and vocabulary that evokes ambition.
	Fun	Content should be sociable and relatable, showing, through multimedia approaches and user-generated content, the many ways the Union creates enjoyable experiences.
	Bold	Adopt language that inspires action. Put the core question “so what?” at the heart of the content planning process to help ensure that content always aims to communicate impact. Content should be used to invite questions, dialogue and exchange (even disagreement and controversy).
	Inclusive	Content should demonstrate a diverse, inclusive and respectful community, using language which is inviting, and a vocabulary that is understandable if you are new to London and the UK.
Brand Personality	Friendly	Content should be warm and welcoming, and while still professional and accurate, in a less formal tone than university communications.
	Useful	Content should be clear, simple and findable. Adopt language that emphasises the student need rather than the organisational structure.
	Honest	Content should be transparent, open and accurate. Share what needs improving and the journey to achieving the Union’s goals.
	Fun	Do not be afraid to poke fun at ourselves and use humour, where appropriate.
	Excellent	Content should be of the highest quality, with accurate information, seamless user experience, consistency of tone, and correct spelling and grammar.

Governance

With a devolved approach to developing content amongst the staff team, and a large number of short-term student content creators working on projects, our governance approach for creating content needs to be realistic and achievable. The following structure is recommended.

Roles and responsibilities

This is our default approach to creating content, this may not always be possible to achieve, however, the principles of this approach should be followed.

Creator / Coordinator

The person primarily responsible for developing and producing the whole piece of content. They may work with a range of **Contributors** and adopt an editorial approach.

Responsibilities

- Planning.
- Aligning with content style guidelines.
- Research/sourcing.
- Production.
- Checking accuracy of content.
- Ensuring the quality of any rich media content created or provided.
- Sourcing permission for any contributions.

Subject Expert / Contributor

The person who is the expert on the subject matter covered by the content. Contributors provide parts of the overall content e.g. an interviewee or student writer.

Responsibilities

- Supplying information and data to the creator / Coordinator.
- Checking content for subject matter accuracy if required.
- Contributing to review and editing of core information when updates are required.
- Providing any political context to the content, highlighting any reputational risks or sensitivities.

Owner / Approver

The person who takes responsibility for the content after it has been published and is therefore responsible for maintaining, updating or archiving the content. This may be the creator or the central marketing team.

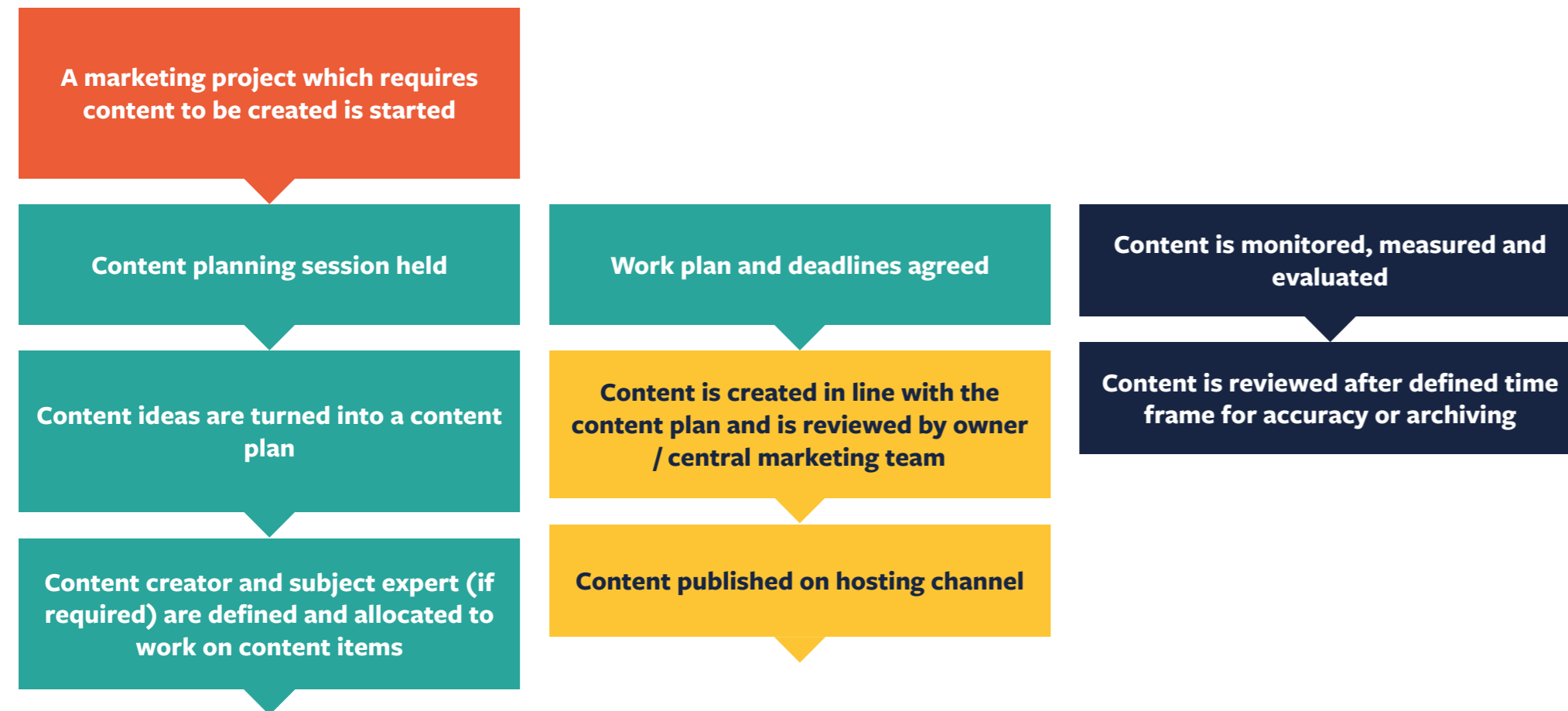
Responsibilities

- Ensuring the high quality of content and presentation.
- Responding to questions relating to the content after it has been published.
- Deciding the appropriateness of the distribution channels or hosting channel.
- Maintaining accuracy of content.
- Ensuring updates are planned and archiving scheduled (if required).
- Measurement and evaluation.

Workflow

An agreed workflow for planning and creating content should be followed to ensure consistent, high quality publishing.

The following workflow for planned content is suggested where possible:



Example:



Approvals and quality

It is important that content is regularly assessed and reviewed for quality, and that an approvals process be implemented for the creation and publishing of content across all formats (online and offline).

While local content editors will be responsible for accuracy of content relating to their area, the marketing and communications team are empowered to:

- Review content to check for quality and accuracy
- Request changes to content that doesn't align to the content guidelines
- Remove or immediately edit content that is deemed to be potentially harmful to the Union's reputation or in conflict/contradiction to content produced elsewhere.

Content Toolkit

Quick Reference Guides and Glossary



These tips will help you create content that can be read by screenreaders and other assistive technology.

Further information on how to make your documents, webpages and presentations accessible can be found on the ISD website: www.ucl.ac.uk/isd/services/websites-apps/creating-accessible-content

Accessibility

Ten tips for creating accessible written content

1. Use heading styles, and use them in a sensible hierarchy in both Word and web pages, and create bookmarks and document structure tags when creating PDFs.
2. Add descriptive Alternative Text to images to help those who use screen readers (and if an image is purely decorative, use Alt=""). You should do this in Word and PowerPoint documents too, not just web pages.
3. Use descriptive hyperlinks to direct your audience to other content instead of web address links (and never use 'click here').
4. Use bullets and numbered lists to break up text – and use punctuation at the end of each item.
5. Make sure the text is in a big enough font in slides and written documents.
6. Don't underline text or it will be confused with links.
7. Think about people with shade-blindness and colour-blindness, and use contrast and patterns to convey meaning as well as colour. Avoid using red, green and pink to convey information. Print colour items in black and white to see how the contrast works.
8. Include captions, transcripts and/or audio descriptions in multimedia if possible.
9. Use Left Justified paragraphs, and increase your margins to reduce the width of blocks of text to improve readability.
10. Run the 'Check Accessibility' tool on your Microsoft Office files – it will highlight areas for improvement.

And remember, by making your files fully accessible to people with disabilities, they will be easier for everyone to use.

Quick Guide to Sounding Good

The Union is a fun, friendly place to be. In a lot of ways it's a refreshing counterpoint to UCL's very corporate face. **So have fun with your comms — it's easier than you think.** If you can find a way of enjoying writing content, other people will enjoy reading it. This advice is useful if you're writing for students, online. But it works across all outward facing communication.

Things to think about before you start writing:

- The average reading age for people in Higher Education is 9.
- Think about your audience, we're not saying 'dumb down', we're saying write clear sentences without added fluff. Also, don't forget, lots of people reading your work are reading in a second language.
- Only around 20% of the content on a webpage is read, no matter how great it is. Instead of reading, people are searching for information and seeking out relevant words. Make the thing they're looking for clear, put it at the top of the page.
- Research suggest you only get seven seconds of someone's attention online, so get to the point.
- Don't get hung up on the 'fun' part. It's just one characteristic of our voice and sometimes subject matter or audience requires a different approach. Write in a helpful, friendly and useful way and you'll be living the brand just fine.

Quick wins:

- Wherever appropriate, change "students" or "our members" to "you". It's immediately more engaging.
- Plan your content around an action. What do you want the reader to do?
- We've got a planning grid to help you do this, it's on the S drive.
- Don't over-sell and throw in extra adjectives. There's no such thing as a phenomenal feedback form.
- Get rid of those unnecessary words or phrases like 'as a result' and stop using words like 'facilitate' when 'help' works just fine.
- Try to use short headlines that begin with keywords and then sum up your content in the first sentence. You can use subheadings to support readers who are scanning.
- Be confident in using plain and simple English, instead of over the top, flowery language. If your subject matter is technical, use short easy to read sentences.
- Talking about us? Use first person narrative — "we", "us", "our" instead of "Students' Union UCL"

Checklist

- Is the call to action clear?
- Is the content useful to the reader? Is it correct and complete?
- Are you talking to students, and not about students?
- How long is your longest sentence or paragraph? Can you break it down?
- Are you delivering on the promise made in your title?
- Always read it back. Does it sound fun and friendly? Is it helpful and useful?
- Have you broken up your content using headings?
- Are you using 24 hour times 10:00 / 22:00?
- Are you using 'and' instead of '&'?
- Have you used full names instead of abbreviations and acronyms where possible?

When it's OK not to go full brand:

- Officer blogs and student generated content should stay true to their own voice. They're at the heart of this organisation and we want to hear their experiences honestly.
- Academic reports or research findings don't need to sound Union-y. But consider putting together a more accessible summary that does fit in with our overall tone.

Measurement and Evaluation

As part of the content planning process, measurement and evaluation targets should be set.

For digital content, relevant metrics include:

Channel / Platform	Measurement
Facebook	Organic Reach Engagement total Engagement rate (reach/engagement)
Twitter	Organic Reach
Instagram Grid	Engagement
Instagram Stories	Views Engagement
Website	Unique Visits
Newsletter	Open Rate Click Through Rate

Specific campaigns and projects may have their own measurement metrics, such as comments or purchases. However, the above gives an overview of what to look for to measure success.



Content Types

Below is a table of the most commonly used content types and activities. New types of content are created all the time, but the below should help you choose the types of content that could help to achieve your marketing plan.

Content Type	Description / Objective	Good For...	Distribution Channel	Hosting Channel	Difficulty
Video – handheld/selfie	Recorded on a phone, short (less than 2 minutes) diary style video blog / Quickly created authentic, honest and accessible content	Building a connection with an audience in an authentic way	Instagram Facebook	Instagram Facebook	Easy
Video – documentary narrated	Stock footage, combined with first person interviews, described by a narrator, professionally edited / Describing relatively complex issues in 3 to 5 minutes	Deepening the understanding of an already interested audience	Union Website Newsletter	YouTube	Difficult
Video – documentary presented	On camera explanation of issues covered in the video / Putting someone front and centre of an issue	Building recognition of the presenter, connects with an audience in a deeper way than anonymous narration	Facebook Instagram Union Website Newsletter	YouTube Facebook	Medium
Video – interview	Interview with somebody giving their first-hand experience of a subject / Tells the story through others experience	Connecting with an audience and building rapport	Facebook Instagram	YouTube Facebook Instagram	Easy
Video – explainer animation	Animation showing how a process works / Replaces long descriptive text	Quickly describing complex processes	Digital Screens Facebook Instagram	As per distribution	Medium to Difficult
Video – diary/blog	Regularly updated series describing an experience / Shows passage of time and builds rapport with audience	Building an audience	Instagram Story Union Website	Instagram YouTube	Easy
Case studies	Collection of real-life case studies all related to a similar theme / Provides evidence to explain an experience	Demonstrating an experience	Facebook Twitter Newsletter Print	Union Website	Easy
News article – announcements	Short description of a change or new initiative / Provides quotable text for other news outlets	Outlining factual information	Facebook Twitter Newsletters	Union Website	Easy
News article - response	Reactive news article stating a position on an issue / Provides clarification and quotable text	Confirming the Union's position	Facebook Twitter Newsletters	Union Website	Easy

News article – breaking news	Quick and short reactive statement / Used to quickly confirm information in reaction to an event	Confirming the Union's position	Facebook Twitter Newsletters	Union Website	Easy
Long form article	Detailed news article giving factual information about an issue, event or change / Used to summarise a complex change about something which is time-bound	Providing evidence and links to other sources, becomes the 'single version of the truth'	Facebook Twitter Newsletters	Union Website	Medium
Student media article	News article hosted on a third-party website, usually with an editorial slant / Gives a more objective view of an issue	Reaching audiences that don't usually engage with Union content	n/a	External website	Medium
Blog – Union hosted	Provides personal account of an experience / Expresses personality of the author, no explicit marketing slant	Building the profile of the author	Facebook Print Newsletters	Union website	Easy
Blog – externally hosted	Provides personal account of an experience / Can be used to talk more candidly than on a union platform	Reaching an audience unlikely to engage with 'Union' content	Facebook Twitter	External website	Easy
How to guides	Explains a process in easy to follow steps, this can position the Union as a trusted source of advice	Building trust	Facebook Print Newsletters	Union website Print	Medium
Reports / research	Research conducted by the Union on issues that affect students. Often summarised with an announcement style news article / Forms part of a change campaign	Positioning ourselves as experts / reaching an audience already engaged in an issue	Union website Newsletters Print	Union website	Difficult
Research comments / reactions	Usually a news article responding to research reported by a third party Provides the Union view on new evidence	Adding our voice to a topical news story	Facebook	Union website	Medium
Reviews	First-hand account of an event or product Can provide factual information to our audience	Discussing something our audience are interested in	Facebook Newsletters	Union website	Easy
Quizzes	Engaging way to gather data or direct users to relevant information Informally educates audience	Can work well on social media when combined with a 'comment below' request	Facebook Newsletters	Union website Buzzfeed etc.	Easy
Checklists / to do lists	Easy to digest content related to a specific activity i.e moving to university Provides factual information, with opportunity to promote Union services	Breaking up other long-form content around a theme	Facebook Union website Print	Union website Print	Easy

ContentTypes

Games / competitions	Engaging was to communicate a project/service / Can be used to build an audience and grow reach	Increasing reach on social media / encouraging students to participate	Facebook Instagram	Union website	Easy
Infographics	Visual way to show data and data interaction / Used to demonstrate impact, scale an information contained in reports	Highlighting key information	Facebook Union website	As per distribution	Medium
Flow Charts	Visual version of an online quiz, encourages audience to answer questions and can subtly teach them about a subject / Explains process and gives answers to questions	Allowing audience to learn about a topic	Facebook	Facebook	Medium
Photos / photo albums	Post-event photo albums / Professionally shot photo albums encourage followers to search for themselves/friends	Reaching audience engaged in activity, online	Facebook	Facebook	Medium
Live reporting	Live video broadcast or Instagram story from an event, can be referred back to a later date / Highlights importance of major events	Engaging audience already interested Not accessible when shared post event	YouTube Facebook Instagram Union website	YouTube Facebook Instagram	Medium
Re-sharable third-party content	Articles from other publications, such as trusted news organisations / Engage an audience who don't usually interact with Union content	Aligning our brand with other brands that share our values	Facebook Twitter Newsletter	External website	Easy
GIFS	Sharable visual advert / Easy was to add humour to elaborate a social media post	Providing tone to a written post	Facebook Twitter	As per distribution	Medium
Social Media Takeovers	A defined period where a named individual runs an organisation account / Can be used for Q&A sessions, or for live coverage/ blogging	Raising profile of person taking over, breaking repetitiveness of usual posts	Instagram	Instagram	Easy
Social Media post	No call to action (i.e read more), just a statement made on a social media platform / Less formal than a news article, can be used to make a comment on an issue	Provides a quotable statement	Facebook	Facebook	Easy

Instagram Stories	Instagram posts which disappear after 24 hours, multiple posts make up a story. This is a quick way to reach and engage a larger audience on Instagram / Share information that's time sensitive, e.g coverage of an event / something happening 'now'	Reaching large audience quickly	Instagram	Instagram	Easy
FAQ's	Useful information structured with question headings to allow readers to jump to the relevant answer / Demonstrates our usefulness on complex topics	Accompanying other content which is likely to raise question i.e policy changes	Union website Facebook Newsletter	Union website	Medium
Opinion polls	Single question, quick opinion gathering tool. Used to make binary decisions / Important to refer back to when closing the loop with other content types	Demonstrating being student-driven	Instagram Facebook Union website Twitter	As per distribution	Easy
Online surveys	Expanded version of online polls, surveys can support research aims or demonstrate a commitment to improving quality e.g. outlet surveys / Get a deeper understanding of an issue, ideally with demographic data	Forming part of a wider communications plan	Newsletters Facebook Twitter	Union website	Easy
Installations / art / exhibitions	Commissioned artwork around a relevant theme. Could be digital, interactive or print / Creates a focal point for a project to support other communication	Gives a focal point to a project around which other communication can be structured	n/a Online	n/a	Difficult
Advice Service guides	Used to triage common issues with simple and clear advice and signposting / Demonstrates our understanding of an issue whilst communicating the Advice Service	Providing advice and the first level of support to members	Union website Print Facebook Newsletters	Union website	Medium
Events	e.g Guest Speakers, workshops, social events – creates a focal point for a project and the opportunity to create further content / Bring supporters together	Gives a focal point to a project around which other communication can be structured	n/a Online	n/a	Medium
Surgeries / drop-ins	Defined time to talk to a subject expert (advisor, elected rep etc.) promoted online as a way to raise the profile of the role	Introducing front facing staff and officers	n/a Online	n/a	Medium
On campus surveying	Talking to students about a single issue to gather opinion, opinions recorded and used in later communication / Meet and interact with students around an issue	Communicating with small numbers of students to gauge opinion	Face-to-face Instagram	n/a	Medium

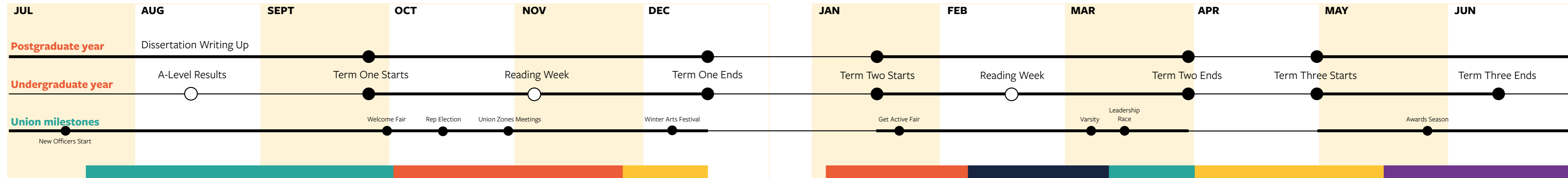
Distribution Channels

Below is a table of the channels which are accessible to the Union's marketing team that we use for sharing content.

Channel	Sub-channel	Owner	Notes
Instagram	StudentsUnionUCL main grid	Marketing	High quality images with accompanying text, tagged with location / people
	StudentsUnionUCL stories	Marketing	Short 'live' advertising and reportage style posts
	Volunteering Service main grid	Volunteering	High quality images with accompanying text, tagged with location / people
	Volunteering Service stories	Volunteering	Short 'live' advertising and reportage style postS
	Bars main grid	Bars	High quality images with accompanying text, tagged with location / people
	Bars stories	Bars	Short 'live' advertising and reportage style posts
Facebook	TeamUCL and Project Active main grid	TeamUCL	High quality images with accompanying text, tagged with location / people
	TeamUCL and Project Active main stories	TeamUCL	Short 'live' advertising and reportage style posts
	Students' Union UCL	Marketing	Sharing relevant content pieces with a clear CTA, no urgent news/content, 1 or 2 posts daily
Twitter	TeamUCL	TeamUCL	Sharing relevant content pieces with a clear CTA, no urgent news/content, 1 or 2 posts daily
	UCL Volunteering Service	Volunteering	Sharing relevant content pieces with a clear CTA, no urgent news/content, 1 or 2 posts daily
	UCL Postgraduates	PSO, Marketing	Sharing relevant content pieces with a clear CTA, no urgent news/content, 1 or 2 posts daily
	London Varsity	KCLSU / Marketing	Sharing relevant content pieces with a clear CTA, no urgent news/content, 1 or 2 posts daily
Websites	TheUnionUCL	Marketing	Sharing relevant links to content and tagging UCL departments
	Volunteering Service	Volunteering	Sharing relevant links to content
	Officer accounts	Officers	
Student Media	Union Website	Marketing, Union departments	Publishing platform for majority of digital content
	New to UCL	UCL	Used in the lead up to Welcome, targeted towards new students
Events	Pi Media	Pi Media	News and investigations
	Cheesegrater	Cheesegrater	Satirical news and investigations
	RareFM	RareFM	Radio station / audio recording
	Film and TV	Film and TV	Film making

	Kinesis	Kinesis	Science and Technology journalism - long form
	Savage	Savage	Arts journalism - long form and reviews
	The Tab	The Tab	Tabloid style news
Newsletters	Weekly Union	Marketing	Sent to approx. 33,000 students, collated information about the week ahead. Average 50% open rate
	Postgraduate	PSO, Marketing	Sent to approx. 16,000 students, content specific to PG students, average 50% open rate, sent every other week.
	Clubs and Society Committee	Clubs and Societies	Sent to approx. 500 students who run clubs and societies. Useful information and notices, sent every other week
	Volunteering	Volunteering	Collated volunteering opportunities and other relevant content, sent weekly
	TeamUCL	TeamUCL	Sent to all members of sports teams. Useful information and notices, sent every other week
	The Week @ UCL	UCL	Sent to UCL staff weekly
	MyUCL	UCL	Sent to UCL students weekly, collection of news and events aimed at all students
	New to UCL	UCL	Sent to news students personal email addresses in the lead up to Welcome
	One-off	Marketing	As required, single issue emails to specific groups or all students
Apps	New to UCL	UCL	Listing all events and content relevant to new students
	TOTUM	Marketing	Accompanying app for the TOTUM card, showing discounts and events
Print	Posters	Marketing	Used to advertise an activity
	Banners	Marketing	Used to advertise an activity
	Flyers	Marketing	Used to advertise an activity
	Guides	Marketing	Provides useful / practical information
	Reports	Marketing	
	Merchandise	Marketing	Raises brand awareness of a project or service
Digital Screens	Packaging	Marketing	
	Advertising Portrait Screens	Marketing	Animation, short video or static image advertising an activity
	Mega Screen	Marketing	Animation or video used to signpost or build brand recognition
	Landscape Screens	Marketing	Animation, short video or static image advertising an activity
Events	Multiple formats	Event lead	

An Academic Year



Communication Priorities

Welcome

Main aims:

- » To introduce new students to the Union and to the Sabbatical officers.
- » Help new students meet one another and support them to form friendships in the first few weeks.
- » To welcome new students into our spaces, identify our spaces as their home from home and different from UCL's.
- » To demonstrate that we're the trusted voice of students.
- » To reassure new students who might be anxious about starting.
- » To demonstrate that we're here to help you start life at UCL.

Relevant Guiding Principles:

- » Understand and value the role of the Students' Union.
- » Be inspired.

Activate your membership

Main aims:

- » Inspire students to join clubs and societies.
- » Inspire students to stand for election.
- » Inspire students to find a volunteering opportunity.
- » Inspire students to participate in Union democracy and decision making.

Relevant Guiding Principles:

- » Participate
- » Be inspired
- » Use our services and facilities

We're here to help

Main aims:

- » Provide support and guidance to students as deadlines start to arrive.

Relevant Guiding Principles:

- » Feel supported and at home.
- » Trust and believe us.
- » Use our services and facilities.

It's not too late

Main aims:

- » Show that it's not too late to join clubs and societies or find a volunteering opportunity.

Relevant Guiding Principles:

- » Participate.
- » Use our services and facilities.

Leadership and change

Main aims:

- » Demonstrate the impact of sabbatical officers.
- » Inspire students to participate in our elections.

Relevant Guiding Principles:

- » Participate.
- » Understand and value the role of the Students' Union.

UCL pride

Main aims:

- » Encourage students to support TeamUCL.
- » Celebrate Academic Reps and excellent teaching.
- » Recognise people who've made big contributions.
- » Wrap up the major impacts of the year so far.

Relevant Guiding Principles:

- » Be inspired.
- » Participate.
- » Understand and value the role of the Students' Union.

We're here to help

Main aims:

- » Promote our support services.
- » Provide advice and guidance to students taking exams.

Relevant Guiding Principles:

- » Feel supported and at home.
- » Trust and believe us.
- » Use our services and facilities.

That's a wrap

Main aims:

- » Highlight the impact made throughout the year.
- » Help students find jobs and summer volunteering opportunities.
- » Promote the things happening on campus and in London during the summer.

Relevant Guiding Principles:

- » Be inspired.
- » Use our services and facilities.



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