

Session Title:	2.5 Recruit more students or we're all F##ked!
Speaker(s):	James Kerr, Head of Student Recruitment and Admissions University of Buckingham
Chair:	Andy Jackson
Reporter:	Law Amankwah

<p>Overview/Aim of session:</p>	<p>The session covered strategies and challenges in building effective university relationships to improve student recruitment and engagement. It highlighted examples, best practices, and areas for improvement, offering insights from the speaker's 15 years of experience in higher education, marketing and recruitment.</p> <p>The session covered: Working with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academics ● Marketing teams ● Professional services ● Students Unions ● Senior leadership teams <p>Scenarios</p> <p>Q&A</p>
<p>Workshop Content</p>	<p>Effective Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working with Academic Colleagues: Avoid over-reliance on individuals. Rotate responsibilities to prevent burnout and ensure institutional knowledge is shared. ● Cross-Team Cooperation: Encourage knowledge-sharing between departments to build a wider skill set and reduce operational silos. <p>Engaging Prospective Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid outdated or irrelevant content. Tailor presentations and activities to align with student interests and school priorities. <p>Managing Stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acknowledge the challenges faced by other teams (e.g., student support, facilities, marketing) and collaborate respectfully. ● Understand the resource and budget constraints of support services, especially with increasing demands for mental health and academic support. <p>Leveraging Resources</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise passionate staff and departments (e.g., library, student unions) to enhance student experience. • Encourage student ambassadors to engage authentically but set clear expectations to avoid inappropriate representation. <p>Addressing Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be cautious of over-reliance on specific individuals or unreliable partners (e.g., student unions or inexperienced ambassadors). • Have contingency plans for events and communications to avoid last-minute issues. <p>Communication and Clarity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be explicit when requesting support from other teams, ensuring alignment with shared goals. • Provide context for requests to build trust and understanding across departments.
<p>Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applicants who come to a Psychology Applicant Day are less likely to accept their offer than those who don't. How are we working with the department to improve this? 2. Your Head of Computing insists on delivering outreach sessions at Eton. You have never received an application from them. How are we working to improve this? 3. Everyone in the Sociology department has relied on the HoD to deliver to subject session on open days for as long as anyone can remember. Now they're not available for the open day next weekend. How are we working with the department to fix this? 4. SLT member: 'Aren't UCAS exhibitions just a chance for 17-year-olds to steal pens and bags, why do you need so much budget?' How can we as a team explain the work we do?
<p>Summary Key takeaways:</p>	<p>Key takeaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build those relationships at every level; in person wherever you can • Back up with data or evidence • There'll always be those who don't get it - accept it and move on <p>Summary:</p> <p>The session emphasised the importance of collaboration, adaptability, and clear communication in fostering successful university relationships and improving recruitment outcomes.</p>