

A Guide to University Events

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With over 160 universities in the UK, there will be countless events available for you to attend before you apply and enrol to university. Navigating these options can feel daunting, so we've outlined the different events you can expect when researching opportunities.

Open Days and Applicant Days

A university Open Day is usually designed for students who have **not yet applied**. An Applicant Day is tailored for students who have **applied and received a university offer**. An Experience Day is an alternative name for an Applicant Day, but this can vary – don't hesitate to reach out to the university if you're unsure whether the event is for you!

An Open Day is about first impressions: you will hear about what your course entails, how it is taught, and general information related to your degree of interest and the university. At an Applicant Day you'll experience academic taster sessions (which we've explained below) and the university will invite you once the UCAS deadline has passed and you've been made an offer.

University talks, presentations and workshops

Degree information sessions give you an overview of a course, such as modules included, assessment methods and graduate outcomes. **Academic taster** sessions give you the chance to experience a workshop that would typically be delivered to first year students. These might be delivered as a one-off session or part of a **masterclass day**, where you'll experience a series of workshops specific to the subject you're interested in.

As well as taster sessions, universities offer information, advice, and guidance (IAG) sessions designed to help you figure out if university is right for you. These sessions might include how to choose the right course, write a fantastic university application, and navigate the student finance system. These can take place at a university or at your school or college.

We recommend taking notes, which you can revisit later. These will highlight the key things you've learnt in the session and can be used as academic evidence in your university application!

Higher Education fairs

Your school or college may take you to a UCAS, UK University Search or a similar exhibition. These events are large with universities from across the UK in attendance. You can ask university advisers what courses they offer, what their entry requirements are, and get an initial impression as to whether their university could be for you.

Your school or college may also run a Higher Education Fair or Careers Fair. These are hosted on a smaller scale, and it is common for current students or Student Ambassadors to represent the university at their stands.

They will likely hand you a prospectus or some form of marketing material - this is good reading! These materials outline the top-level information about the university, and you can compare the details with the other prospectuses you collect on the day.

Before a fair, research which universities you want to chat with beforehand. Once you've spoken to them, you can walk around and see if any other institutions may be of interest. These events are your chance to 'shop around'.

Finally...

If you're concerned that you cannot attend a university event, make sure to email the university to see if they can make alternative arrangements or suggestions. You can likewise research whether online or virtual options are taking place. University event organisers are there to help if you're stuck – just drop them an email or phone call!

Our final top tip: if you attend an on-campus university event, make a day out of it! Explore the local area you might be studying in. If you're planning on commuting to university, you should try to travel to an event via the means of transport you would use from home. This is a good test to see if the journey is feasible.

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