

The strength of an effective Official Rep during Results and Clearing

21st June 2022



Presented by...

Grace Etheridge

Community Engagement Manager

- Joined The Student Room in Jan 2019
- Works with our student community daily to support them to make informed decisions and peer to peer connections
- Help universities understand how best to interact with students, especially on The Student Room

Oscar Larsen

Client Success Advisor

- Joined The Student Room in Dec 2019
- Works with our clients to ensure success in all areas of their campaigns
- Trains, manages and supports our Official Reps! Oscar helps you to make the most out of the tool

Overview

- **How are students feeling right now?**
- **Recap of Clearing 2021**
 - a look back at Official Rep activity
- **Training and recommendations for Results Day 2022**
- **Key takeaways**
 - Food for thought for Clearing 2022
- **Questions, comments and feedback**



How are students feeling?

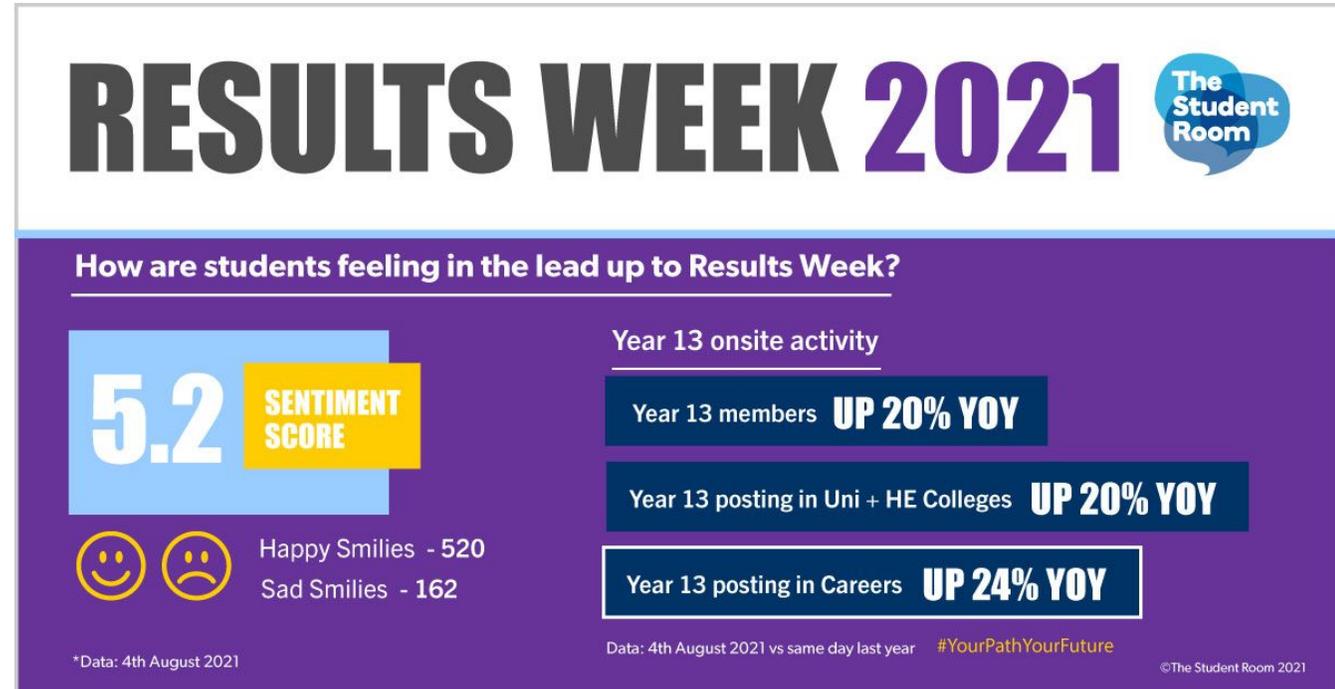


Student sentiment 2021

- Students were concerned about the impact of TAG's on their grades, something which will not be the case this year
- How they were going to receive their results (in-person or remotely), again unlikely to be a popular topic this year

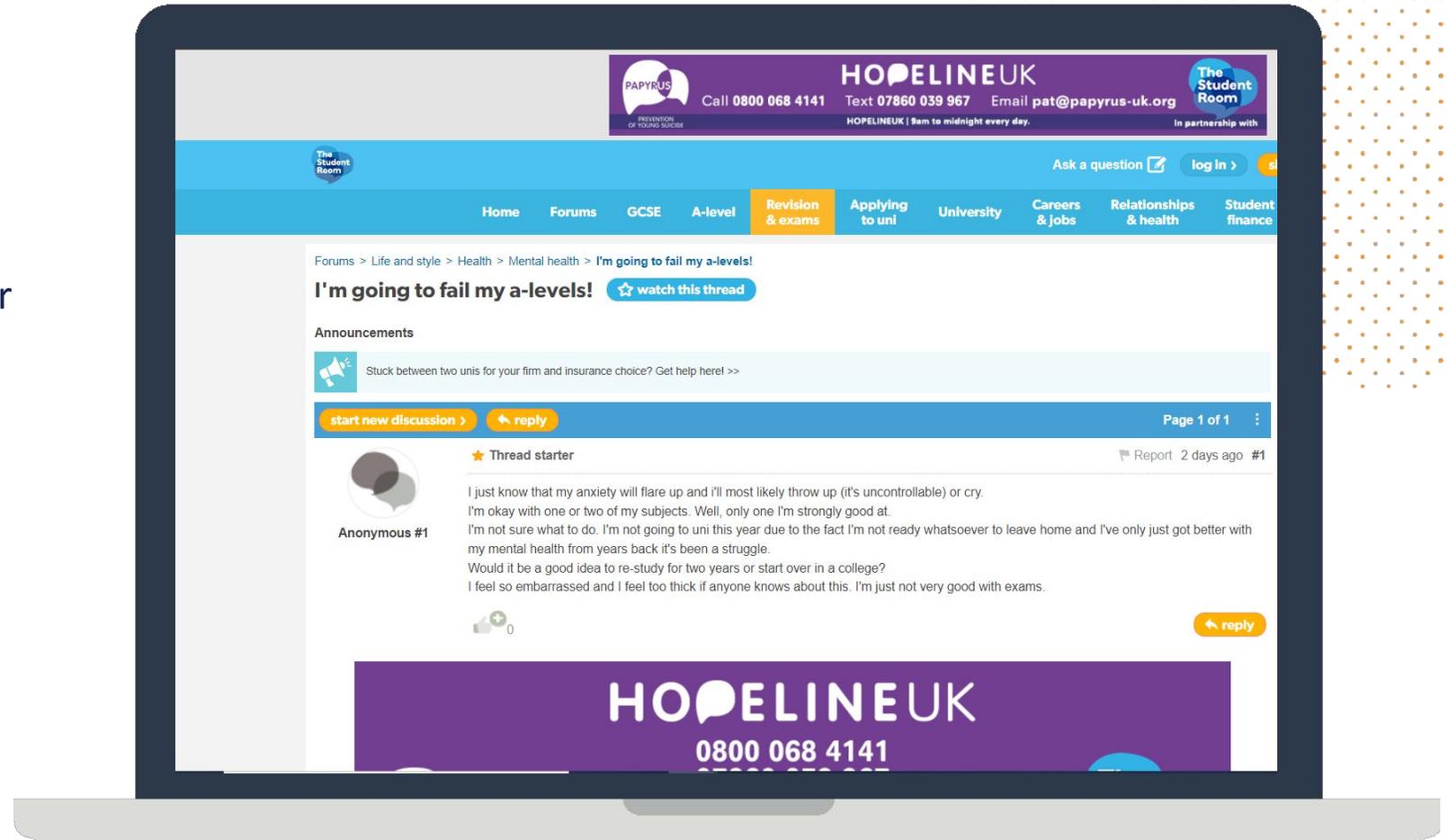
Always popular results day topics are:

- What time are results released?
- When will I find out if I got into my firm choice?
- General nerves and worries
- Grade boundaries and their impact



How are students feeling right now?

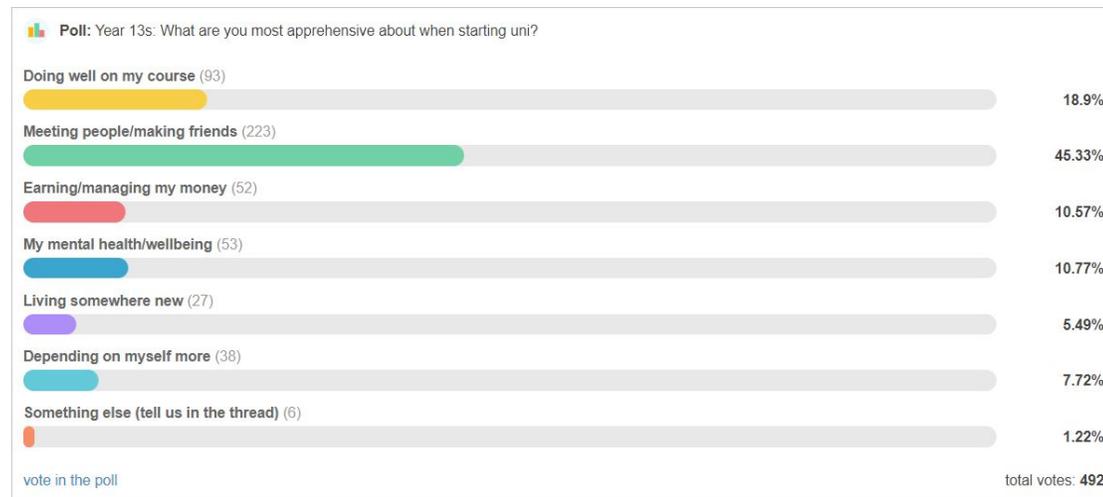
- A lot of worry!
- Stressed about exams, late university application decisions, worry around grade boundaries and on top of all that, concern for cost of living when they get to university.
- Building up for a stressful and busy day on the 18th August.
- We want to support students as best we can, and help you to find the students who need your support as well.



Results Day and beyond

There are some additional pressures this year surrounding finances and cost of living, negative press around student loans, anxiety and a huge one being the loneliness epidemic amongst students - the list goes on.

Students may have concerns they wish to speak to you about, or you may wish to preempt these.



Key communication techniques to remember:

- A personalised communication plan, which shows a pre-empting of concerns
- Cohesive communications from across the university, not too often/too little
- Highlighting how to access support services, and if possible proactive initial conversation starters to take away stigma or insecurity
- Human communication; if there is limited capacity, see if it is possible to point in the direction of external support

What do students need from you right now?

- Clear and timely communication
- Supportive tone
- Superb signposting and quick answers
- Help with making back up plans
- Up to date Clearing information
- Calming, empathetic presence

Forums > University and university courses > Applications, Clearing and UCAS > What should Year 13s do over the summer to prepare for Results?

What should Year 13s do over the summer to prepare for Results? [watch this thread](#)

Announcements

[No university offers? Chat with other students about Ucas extra here >>](#)



[Find your A-Level exam threads now! >>](#)



Poll: How confident are you that you'll achieve the grades you need to get into your firm uni?

I think I've exceeded the grades for my university offer (54)

12.16%

I think I've met the grades for my university offer (148)

33.33%

I think I've missed the grades for my university offer (214)

48.2%

Something else (tell us in the thread) (28)

6.31%

[vote in the poll](#)

total votes: 444

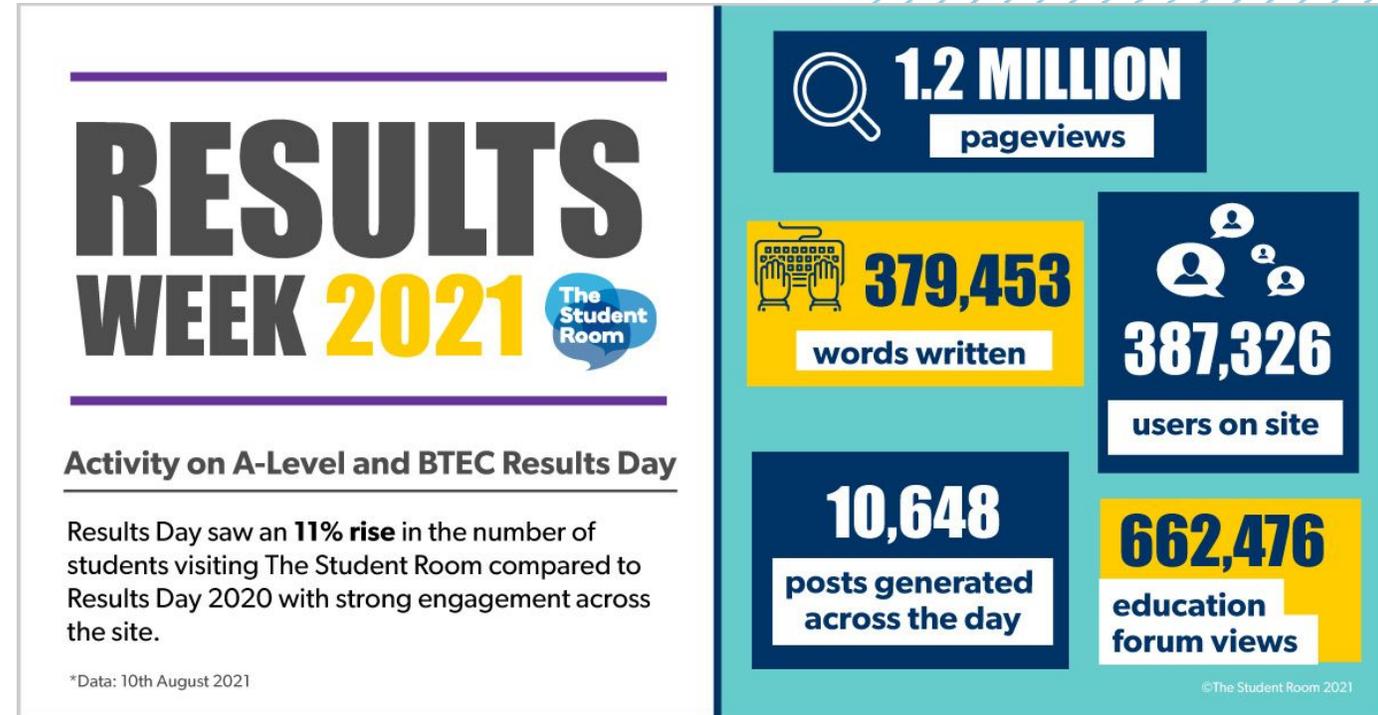


Recap of Clearing 2021



Recap of Clearing 2021

- Exams cancelled again in Jan 2021
- Teacher Assessed Grades introduced and worries surrounding these (grade unfairness, higher percentage of top grades)
- Confusion around appeals process
- Oversubscription for medicine applicants, place swaps
- Students using TSR to search for contact details and discuss options are disappointment/change of heart



Recap of Clearing 2021

Where is the data coming from?

1 Jul - 31

Aug

2021



Recap of Clearing 2021

TSR in numbers - Clearing 2021

**16
million**
sessions

**1.3
million**
Views of posts
made by
Official Reps

320k
Posts

573
Posts made by
Official Reps

How can you make the most out of the Official Rep?



Overview

- Best practice for your Official Rep account when posting on site over Clearing
- Monitoring your forum
- Getting involved in conversation across the rest of the site
- Example posts from Official Reps
- How you can best support students this year during Clearing



What to expect on site

- More conversations about applications and results
- Students exploring their options, contingency planning, and looking for advice or reassurance
- Questions or concerns about the Clearing and application process in general, plus specific queries about accommodation/ living in a different city/ changing course

We recommend:

- ❑ Increase your presence on the site from now
- ❑ Be a supportive and authoritative voice



Your Forum

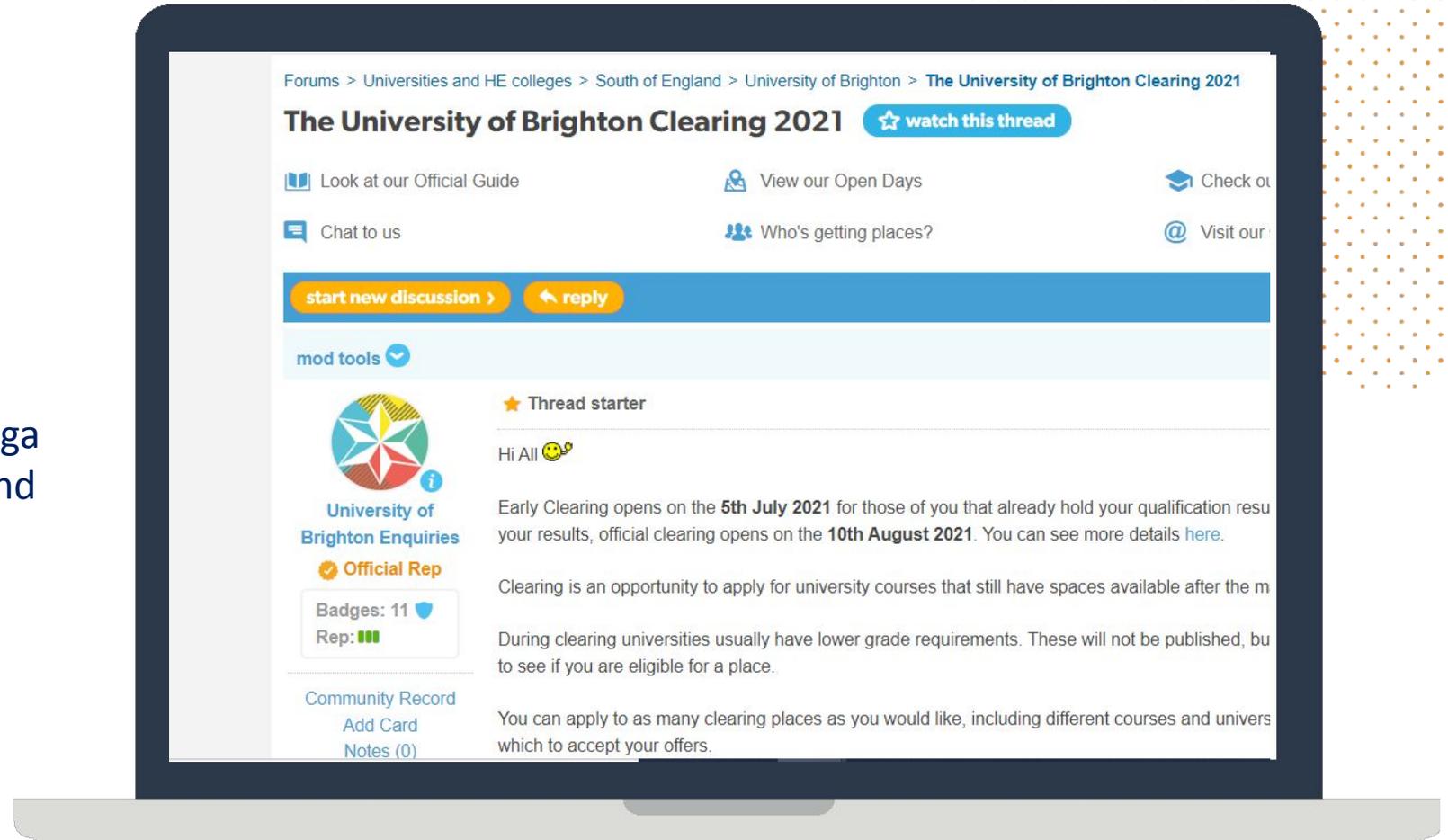
- Update and monitor your sticky threads
- Answer all questions that are posted
- Examples: FAQ's, ask a current student, accommodation options, wellbeing tips, revision tips
- Congratulate those who have said they've applied or received an offer
- Why? To build and maintain your community- create a positive perception of your university and encourage discussion
- Dedicate time to responding to 2023 applicants as well



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Clearing opportunities

- Create a thread in your forum
- Informative
- Provide contact details
- Make it clear you're happy to answer questions about the process online
- We'll add this to a Clearing 'mega thread' for students to easily find



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Clearing 2022 thread discussion

- Understanding that it's a stressful time
- Human response
- Genuine communication with an applicant
- Reassures others' reading this thread too

Report 10 months ago #29

 Lancaster Student Ambassador
Official Rep
Badges: 13
Rep: █████

“ (Original post by Manlikeytu) ”
Still no response from clearing..

I'm sorry for your wait but unfortunately there's not a lot I can do at the moment. I know our phone line isn't so busy anymore and so more people are working on giving offers, and I know there's a team of people currently working on giving offers out. No news just means your application is still being considered and I know it's a stressful time but there's nothing more I can do for you at the moment - I'm sorry I wish there was more I could do!
Charlotte 😊

0

quote reply

Find all the info you need:
Lancaster University guide »

Lancaster University 

Report 10 months ago #30

 Manlikeytu
Badges: 12
Rep: █

“ (Original post by Lancaster Student Ambassador) ”
I'm sorry for your wait but unfortunately there's not a lot I can do at the moment. I know our phone line isn't so busy anymore and so more people are working on giving offers, and I know there's a team of people currently working on giving offers out. No news just means your application is still being considered and I know it's a stressful time but there's nothing more I can do for you at the moment...show more ▾

yeahh sorry for being pushy just a bit stressed right now 😊

0

quote reply

Report 10 months ago #31

 Lancaster Student Ambassador
Official Rep
Badges: 13
Rep: █████

“ (Original post by Manlikeytu) ”
yeahh sorry for being pushy just a bit stressed right now 😊

Yeah this is completely understandable! Today is a difficult day in lots of ways and I hope you hear from us soon.
Charlotte 😊

0

quote reply



Getting involved in conversation across the site

Poll 1: How would you respond?

I have just finished my mocks and have received my results in June, In computer science i have achieved an A overall, in maths and physics i have achieved Cs which are poor for me. Is there any way for me to increase my predicted grades before i apply to uni, and if there isnt what good unis could i apply and get accepted to with around an A*CC (I am eligible for contextual offers).*

1

Hey, are there any uni's you're particularly interested in and what are you thinking of studying?

It may be a good idea to look at the entry requirements and talk to the admissions teams to see what they potentially may accept. Also, speak to your teachers! They may let you resit your mocks, or offer extra activities and work which could help you get your grades up if that's what you want.

There are still plenty of unis and courses that would accept these grades, but if you do end up getting better final grades, you can have a look at other options in Clearing to 'trade up' - you can read more about that [here](#). Hope this helps and let me know if you have any questions!

2

Hi X, hope you're well!

Don't be disheartened by your predicted grades, at X University we offer X for computer science if that's what you're thinking of studying.

Personally I love studying here because X,X,X and let me know if you have any questions about my uni!



Finding conversations on The Student Room

[Applications, Clearing & UCAS](#)

[A-level forum](#)

[BTEC forum](#)

[University life](#)

[Results Day 2022 FAQ](#)

[Clearing Plus FAQ](#)

[Coronavirus – impact on schools and exams](#)

[Uni courses forum](#)

[All forum list here](#)

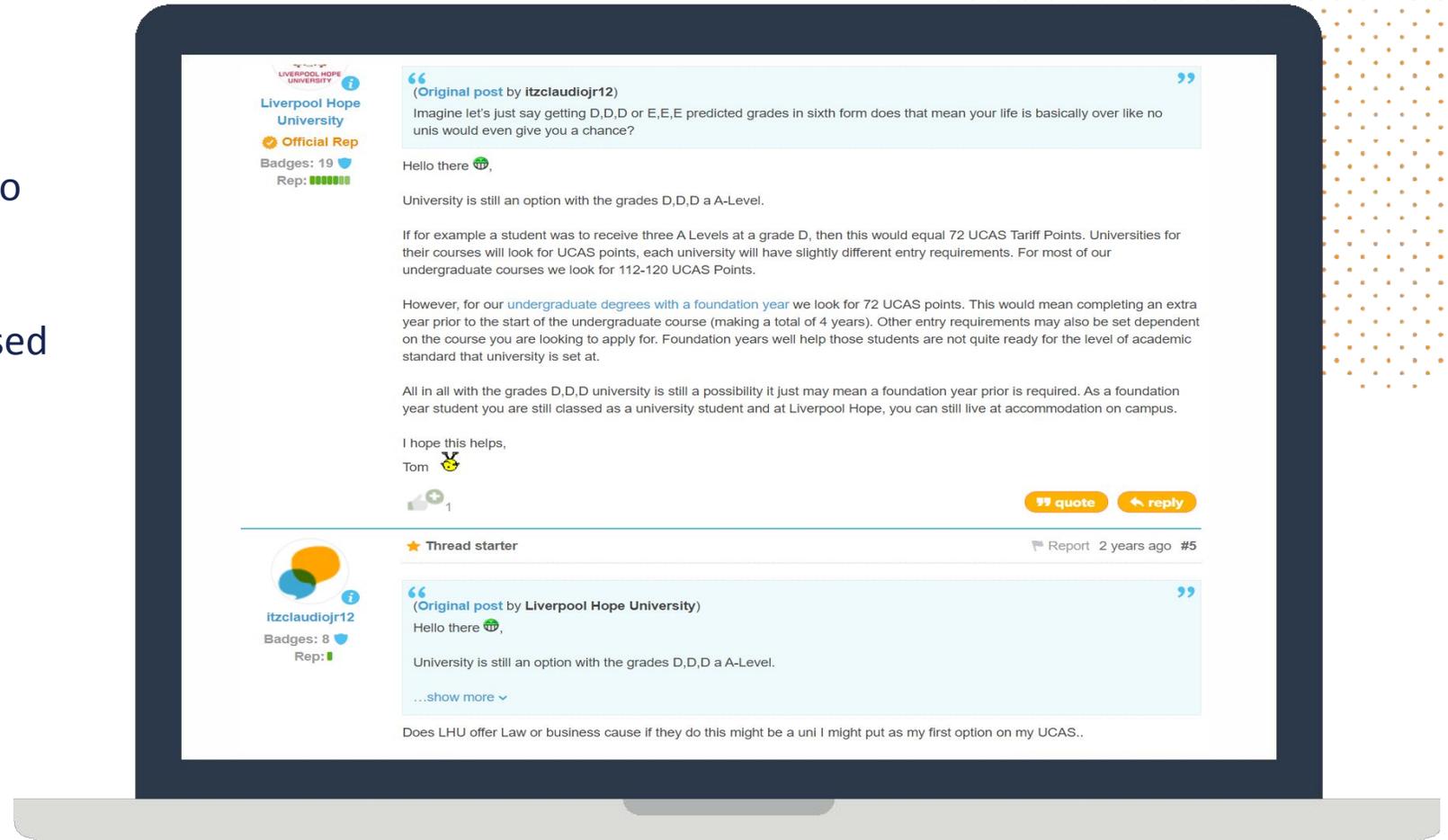
You will be able to download these slides to access these links later!



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Helping a student understand their options

- Provides information relevant to what the student is wanting to know
- Continues the conversation based on what the student asks



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Changing courses in Clearing

- Honest
- Confirms it's likely there won't be places
- Provides contact details

Report 10 months ago #6

Loughborough University
Official Rep
Badges: 14
Rep: ██████

Community Record
Add Card
Notes (0)
IP Address

“
(Original post by joyoustele)
Is it too late to change course? I have been offered a place in civil engineering, which I am most grateful for, but I was wondering if I could change to computer science, How could I do that?”

Hi joyoustele,

In terms of changing course, it may be a little late. Only given that all of the computer science Clearing vacancies were filled up yesterday. I'd suggest emailing admissions and seeing if there is anything they can do for you (I'm not sure how likely it is that they will be able to offer you a space.) Just bear in mind that they'll be quite busy this time of year so it may take a while to get a response.

Here are their contact details:

Email: admissions@lboro.ac.uk
Telephone: 01509 223522

If you have any more questions, I'd be happy to help.

Priya 😊

👍 +1

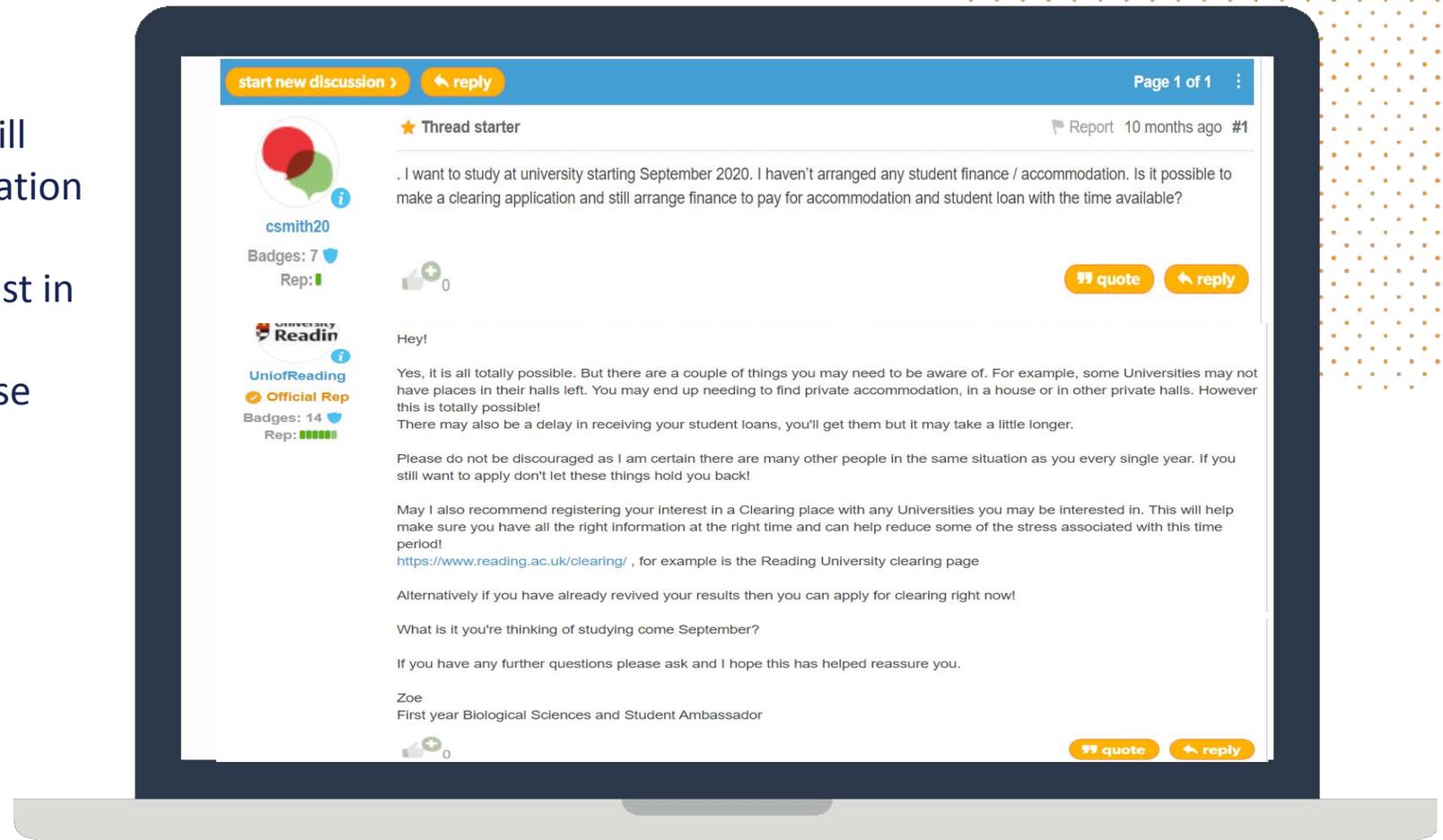
Edit quote reply

More about Loughborough University

Helping applicants make informed decisions

Helping students with the process

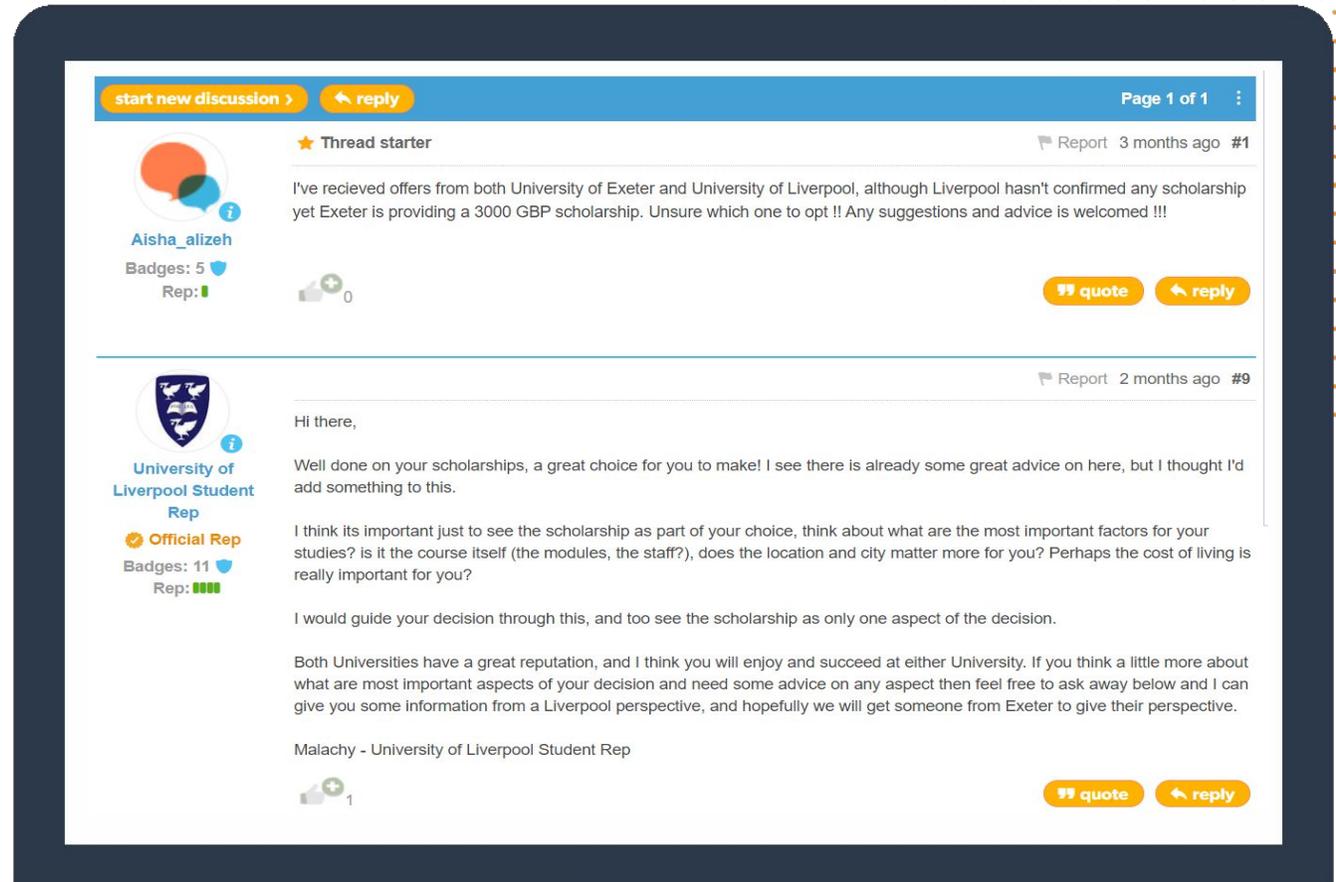
- Reassures a student that it is still possible to arrange accommodation and finance
- Recommends registering interest in Clearing
- Asks a question in their response
- Signs off with their name



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Comparison thread

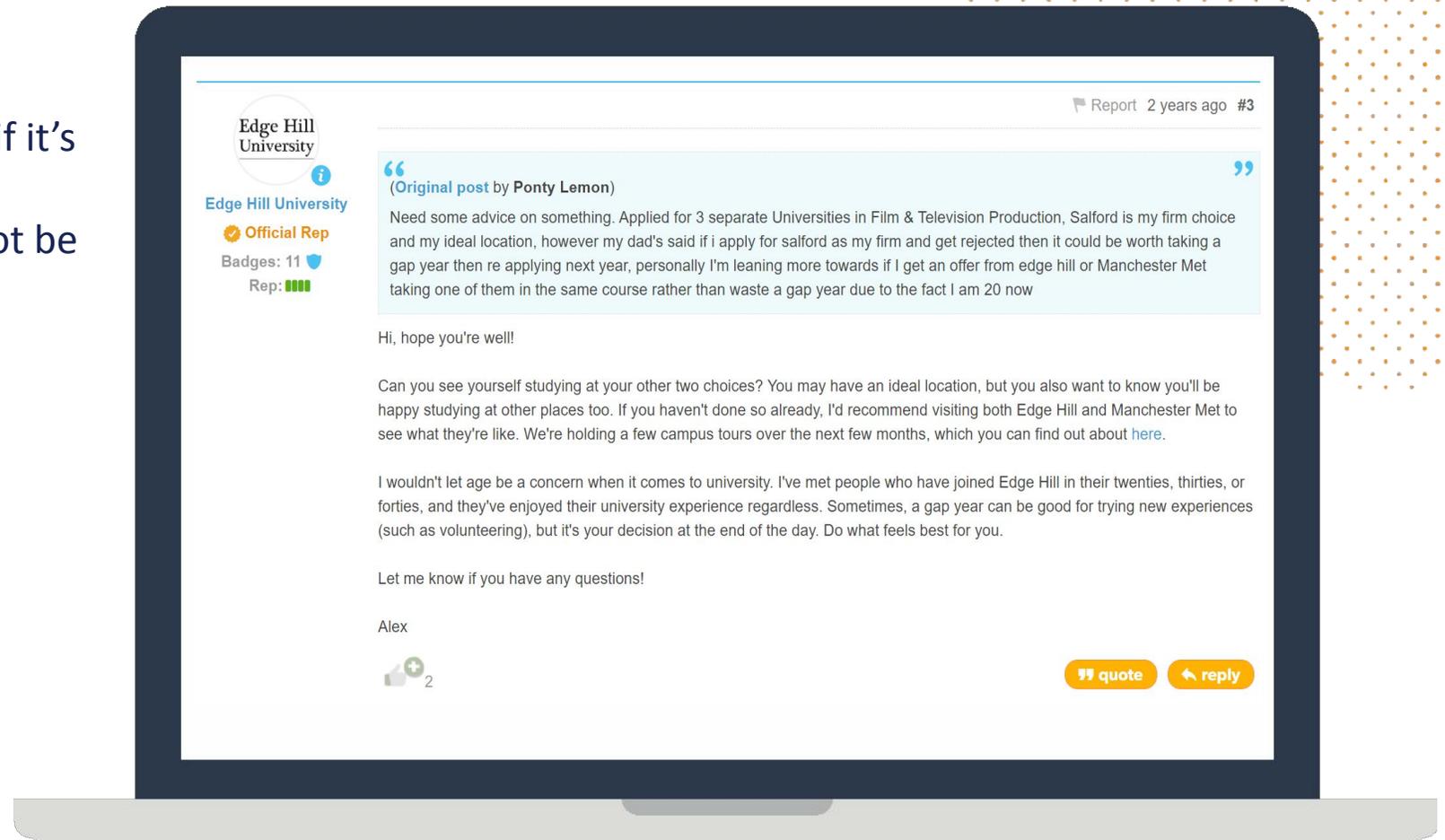
- Gives the students other factors to consider
- Refers to advice already given in the thread – part of the community
- Helps them make a balanced decision
- Offers the opportunity to ask questions



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Deciding whether to take a gap year

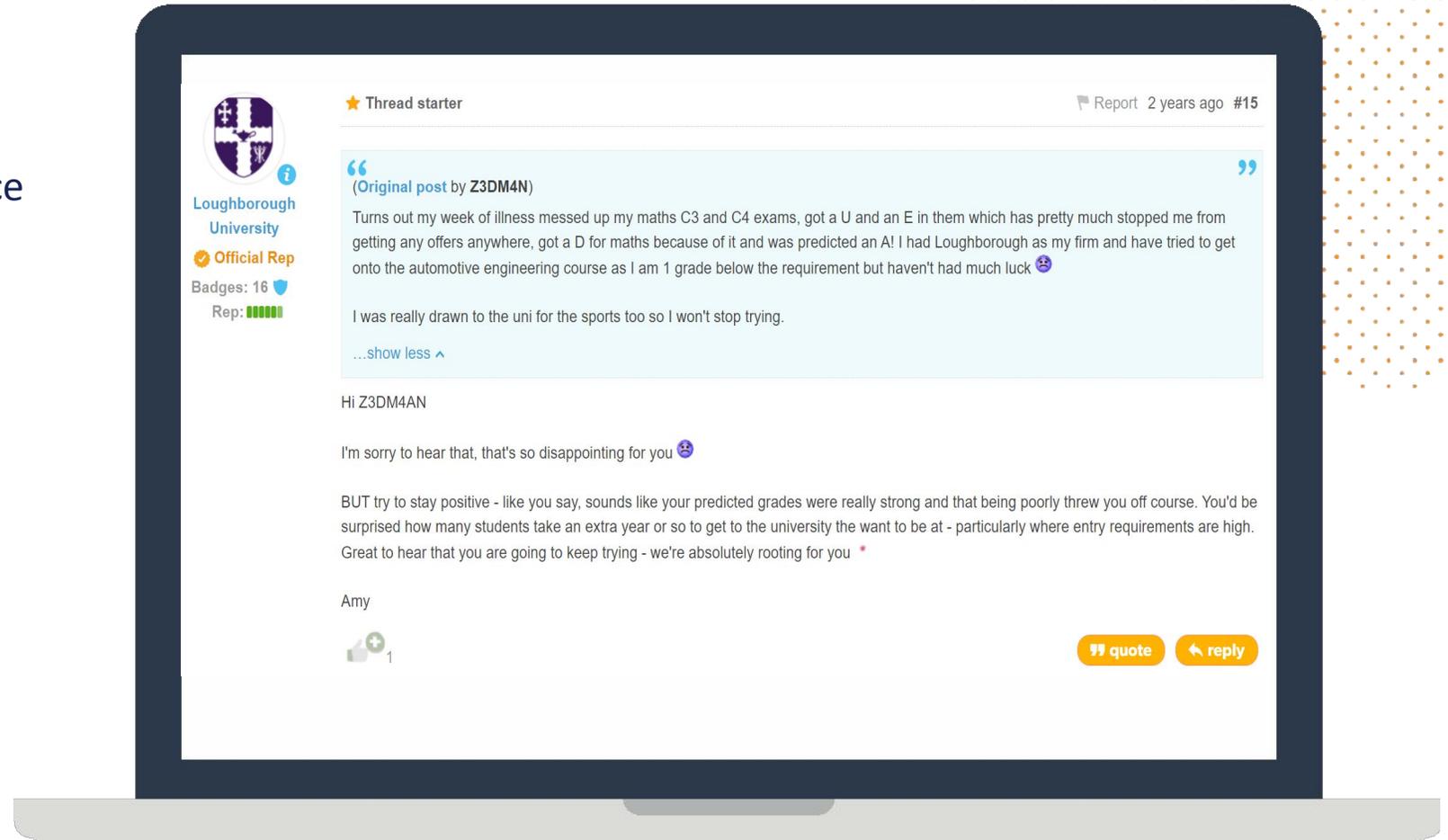
- Helping the student figure out if it's the right choice for them
- Reassurance that age should not be a concern
- Not trying to convince them of anything



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Compassionate and supportive

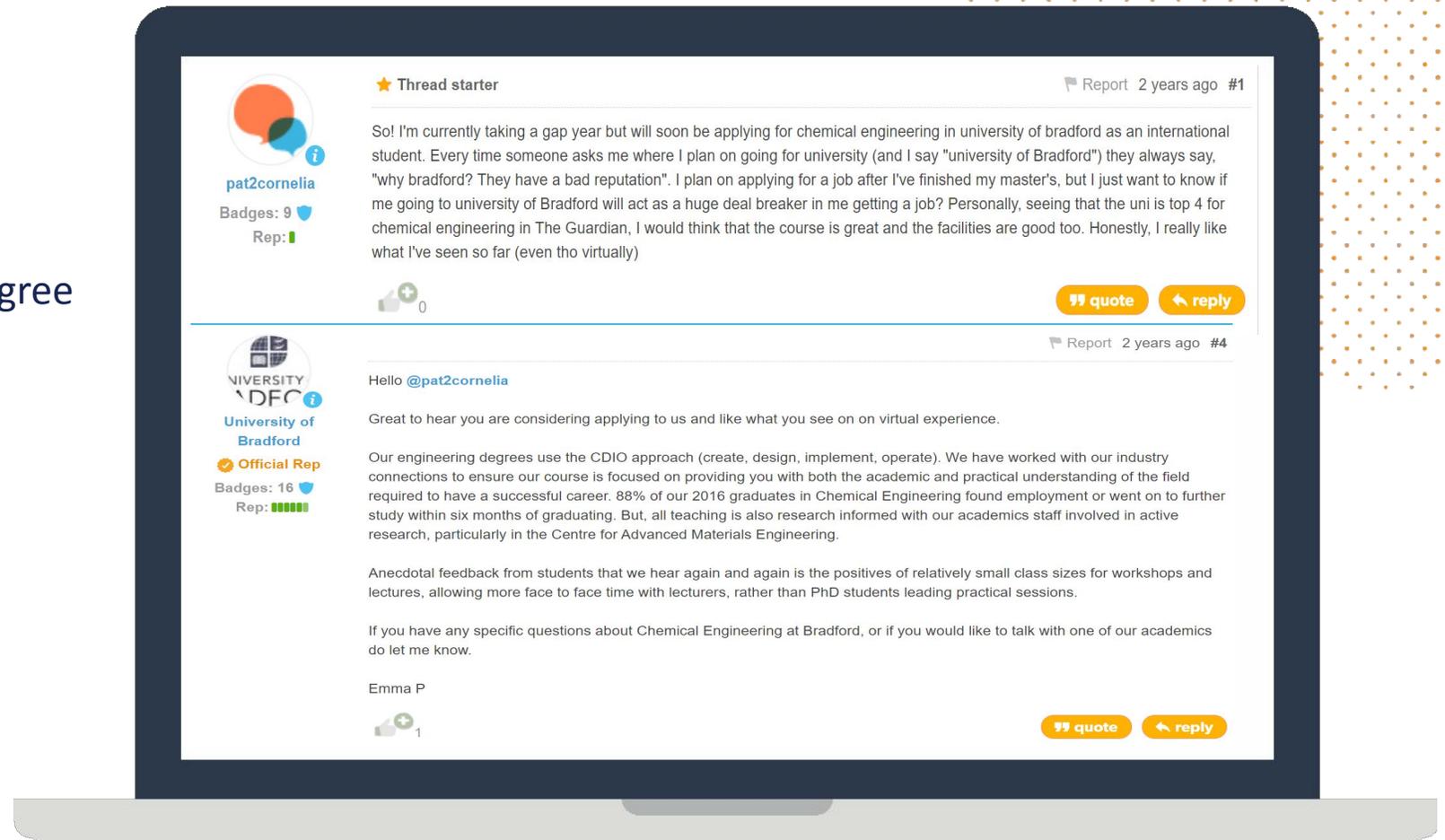
- Empathises with applicant
- Normalises student's experience
- Encouraging
- Really supportive



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Dealing with perceptions of your university

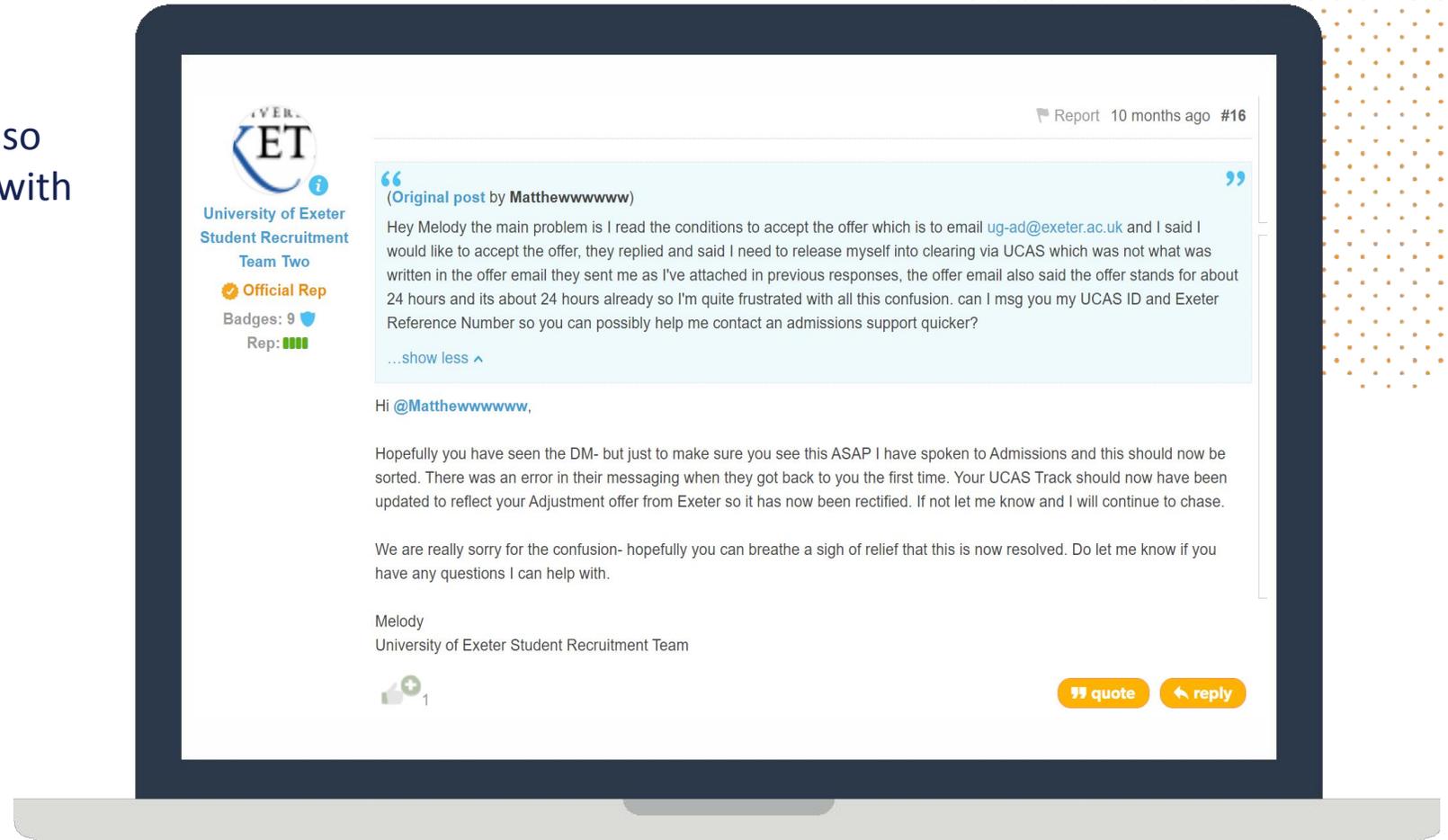
- Provides positive anecdotal feedback
- Gives more detail about the degree the student is interested in
- Offers the opportunity to ask questions



Helping applicants make informed decisions

Being honest about mistakes

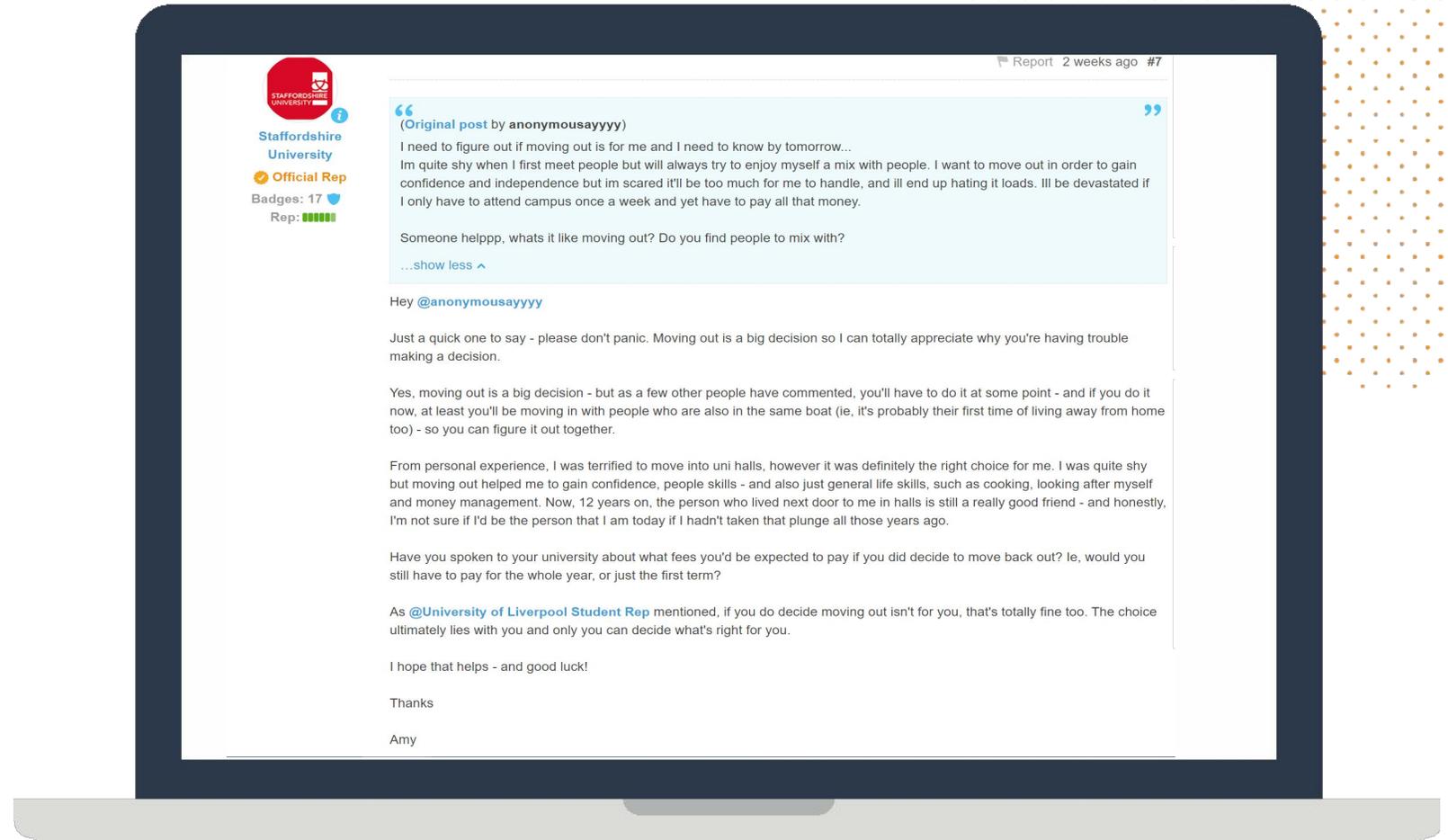
- Addresses the mistake publicly so others' know it has been dealt with



Continue to get involved in site wide conversation

Uni Life

- Reassures the student
- Shares personal experience where appropriate/dependent on channel
- More examples like this in the Wednesday sessions



What not to do

- X Advertise only what you have available
- X Ignore the struggle of students
- X Post communications that read like ads
- X Post a thread in a random forum with no context

Here are some bad examples...



What not to do

Responses to student posts



I am currently undecided between X and X

We may be a little biased, but we can't deny that X is absolutely brilliant!

I am holding an insurance offer for mathematics + computer science and can't decide..

We're currently X in the Y League Table 2021 and have an X in student satisfaction rating.

I have a Clearing offer for X to study X

I graduated from X a month ago having studied X for X years. There are so many fun events held here throughout the year, such as...

This year things were not perfect but there were no distractions, and I worked my best but still failed.

Have you considered doing a foundation year instead? You could give our Clearing Hotline a call on X...



Poll 2: How would you respond?

When do I get to know what universities are available through Clearing?

1

X University is now available to help if you are interested call X or visit our website.

2

Hi! Hope you're feeling proud of the hard work you put into your studies. If you'd like to check out the courses we have in Clearing please click here, call here, or apply online here.

3

Hello! We are officially open for Clearing!

We'd like to take this opportunity to say that we're thinking of students during this difficult time. If you're nervous and want to check whether you're eligible for one of our courses, give our friendly team a call on X.

4

Hi @user. You can find all vacancies for Clearing here: <https://digital.ucas.com/search>.

If there's a particular university/course you are interested in, I'd recommend giving them a call as soon as possible.

What are you looking to study and what kind of universities have you looked into already? Happy to help with any questions you may have!



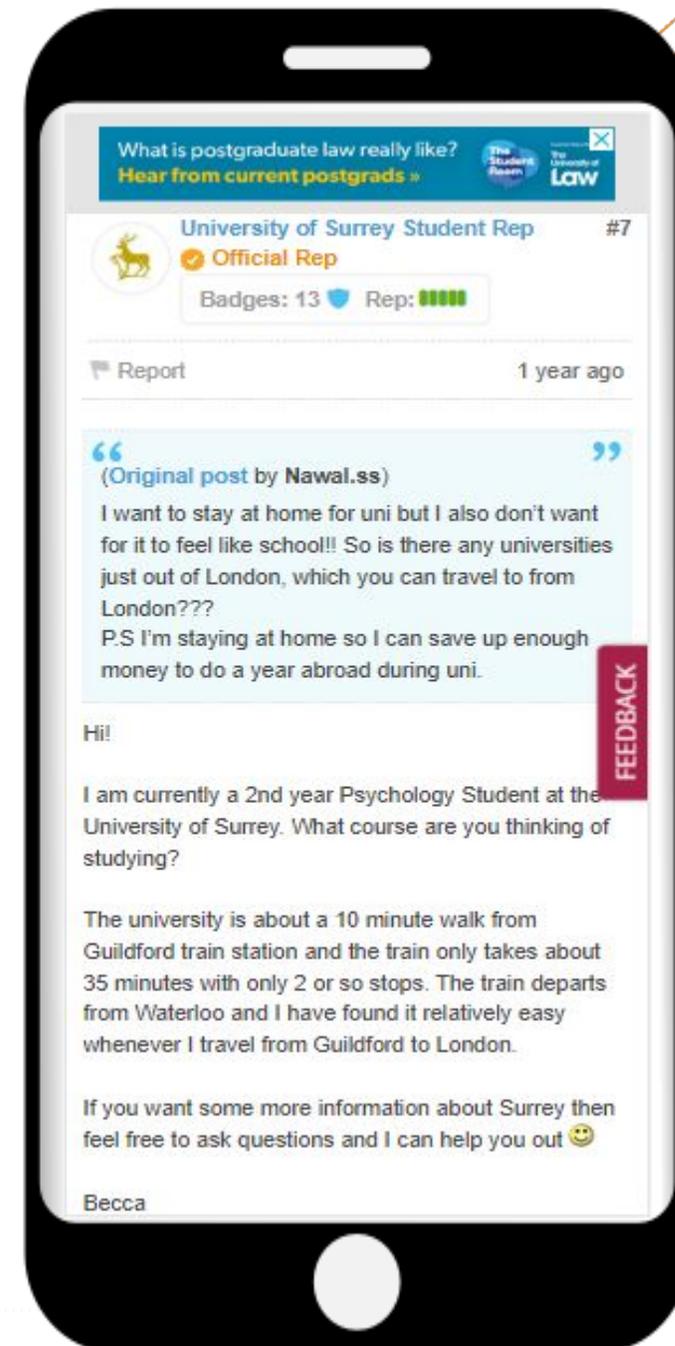
Response Checklist

DO

- ✓ Friendly tone of voice
- ✓ Empathise - it's a stressful time for them
- ✓ Check you understand/have directly answered the question
- ✓ Ask a question in return
- ✓ Sign off with your name
- ✓ Read the post back to yourself

DON'T

- ✗ Include unnecessary/irrelevant links
- ✗ Copy/paste the same response to multiple users



Supporting Official Reps

Questions/Advice about posts on site

- Official Rep Lounge and Official Rep Feedback thread (tag @snowprincess7, @StrawberryDreams)

Sticking threads/Keyword alerts/Log in queries

- Email Client Services

Best practice on site reminders

- [Resources on TSR Matters](#)
- Bespoke training/advice

Monitoring Engagement

- UPP report and discussions with Account Manager



Key takeaways



**Create a Clearing 2022
thread on 5th July for
questions and encouraging
discussion**



Make sure you have a presence on site - congratulate every student that mentions you and answer any questions



**Help students to make a
balanced decision and
support them in their
choices**





The quality of your response can really impact applicant engagement – read your post back to yourself and go through the response checklist

**Contact us if you need
additional advice or
support**



**Any questions,
comments or
feedback?**



Thank you!

Join us again: tsrmatters.com/webinars

And stay in touch:

Grace.Etheridge@thestudentroom.com

Oscar.Larsen@thestudentroom.com

and you can also find us on **LinkedIn**

