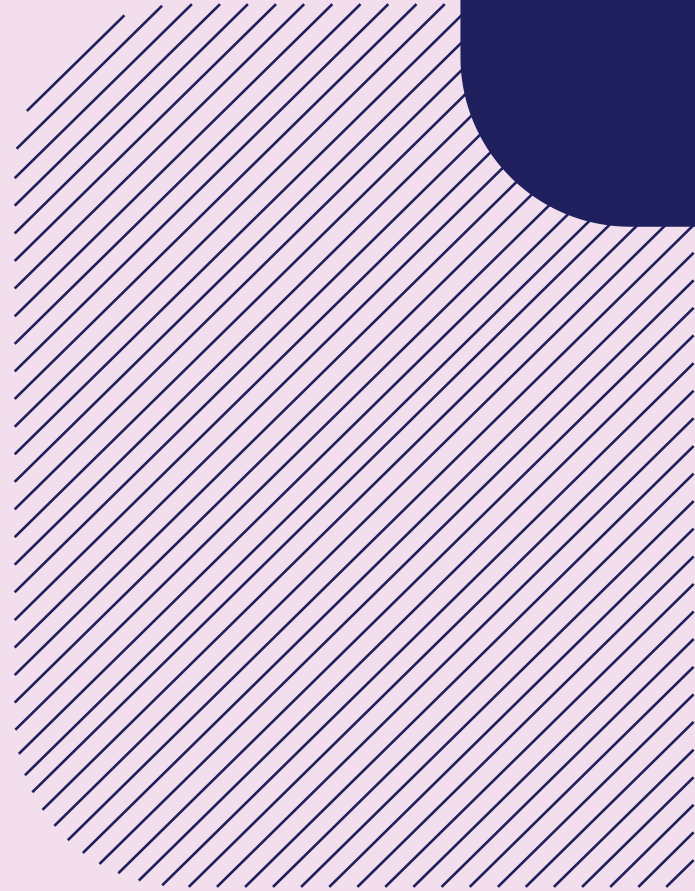# Student Sentiment

As the UK's largest online student community, we witness daily the valuable exchange of support and advice among young people. Learning from their experiences guides us in providing meaningful support.

We have the opportunity and responsibility to amplify students' voices, sharing their perspectives with those like you who aim to support them. By listening to students and collaborating across sectors, we strive to make a genuine impact on their lives.
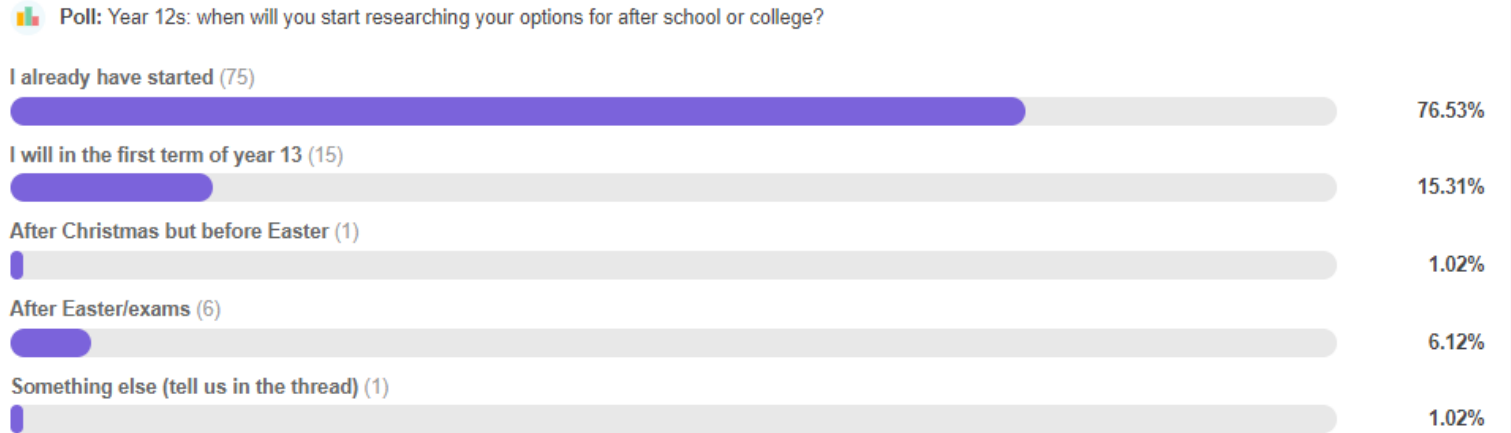
Highlights in this update …..

- We look at what stage Year 12 students were at in early August in researching post FE options

- Pre-results day, 59.33% of respondents said the main reason they would use Clearing would be to find a different course because they expect not to meet their grades.

- In August naturally polls towards the end of the month were around reactions to grades from both Year 11 and 13 students – we share these in this months deck.

- We asked prospective UGs what words they liked, and what words might put them off a university. The term **outstanding** appealed to the majority (89%) when used to describe universities. The terms **ambitious**, **immersive**, and **exciting** also had broad appeal.

Year 12s: when will you start researching your options for after school or college?

The results of this poll reveal a large majority of year 12 students taking positive steps towards researching universities with 76.5% of votes (75/98 respondents), reflecting a generally proactive and positive approach to planning their future.

A further 15.3% have plans to start their research in the first term of year 13 prior to the equal consideration deadline. The least voted for option (1.02%) say they will start after Christmas but before Easter with 6.1% opting to begin after Easter and the exam season, perhaps indicating their preference to focus on their studies before looking into their options.

Overall, these results suggest that most students are highly aware of the importance of early preparation with a small fraction opting to focus on their immediate academic responsibilities and balancing with longer term goals.

Poll: Year 12s: when will you start researching your options for after school or college?

I already have started (75)
76.53%

I will in the first term of year 13 (15)
15.31%

After Christmas but before Easter (1)
1.02%

After Easter/exams (6)
6.12%

Something else (tell us in the thread) (1)
1.02%

98 Votes – 02/08 - 09/08/2024

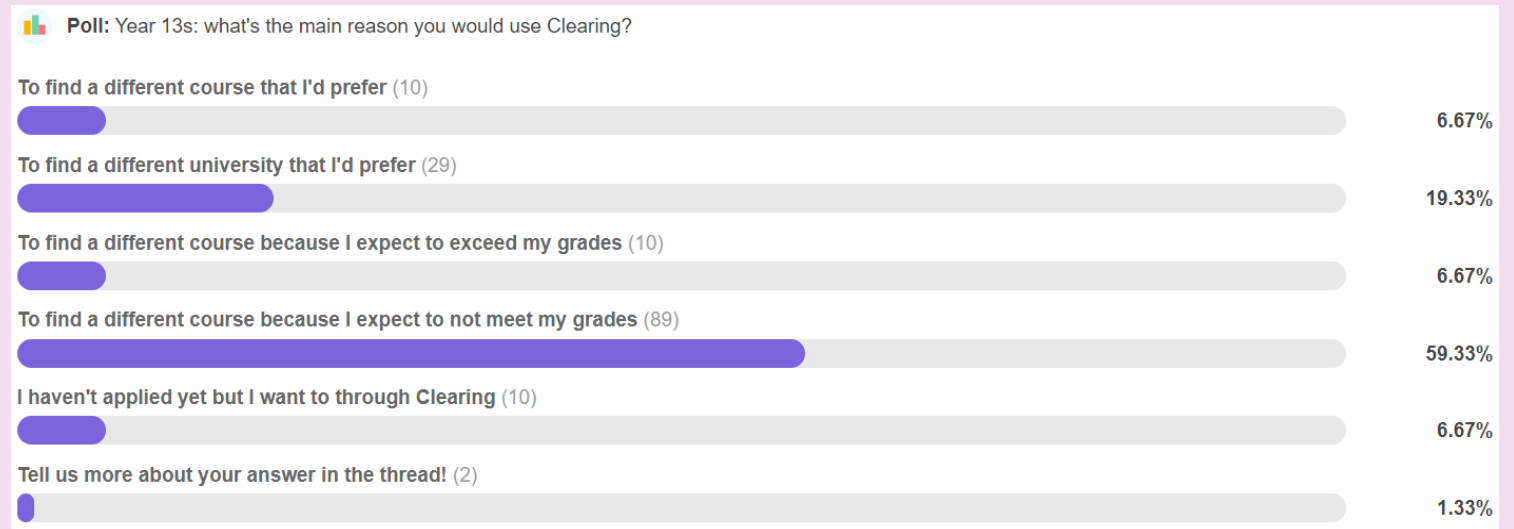# Year 13s: what's the main reason you would use Clearing?

In the week leading up to results day, 59.33% of respondents said the main reason they would use Clearing would be to find a different course because they expect not to meet their grades.

It was by far the most popular response and it indicates that students were preparing a back-up plan in case they didn't meet their firm and/or insurance choices.

Following that, 19.33% said they would use Clearing to find a different university that they'd prefer. This suggests that Clearing could be a useful option if they got higher grades than expected - or that they had changed their mind about their original offers.

An equal number of respondents (6.67%) said they would use Clearing to find a different course they'd prefer, a different course because they expected to exceed their grades or to go through Clearing because they hadn't applied to university yet.

Overall, Clearing was an option for multiple reasons but it was mostly considered as an alternative way to get into university if voters didn't get the grades they needed. The timing of the poll could reflect the pressure or uncertainty that respondents were feeling in the week before results day.

Poll: Year 13s: what's the main reason you would use Clearing?

To find a different course that I'd prefer (10)
6.67%

To find a different university that I'd prefer (29)
19.33%

To find a different course because I expect to exceed my grades (10)
6.67%

To find a different course because I expect to not meet my grades (89)
59.33%

I haven't applied yet but I want to through Clearing (10)
6.67%

Tell us more about your answer in the thread! (2)
1.33%

150 votes. **Promoted 9 August 2024 - 15 August 2024**

Year 11s: how are you feeling now you've got your GCSE results?

The results of this poll show how respondents were feeling after getting their GCSE results. There was a varied response, but 36.14% exceeded their expectations.

Around a quarter (25.04%) didn't get everything they expected, while 22.41% got what they expected.

Unfortunately, 14.22% didn't get any of the grades they wanted.

These responses shows the mixed feelings that come with results day - and this highlights the need for different kinds of support both on the day and during the period afterwards.
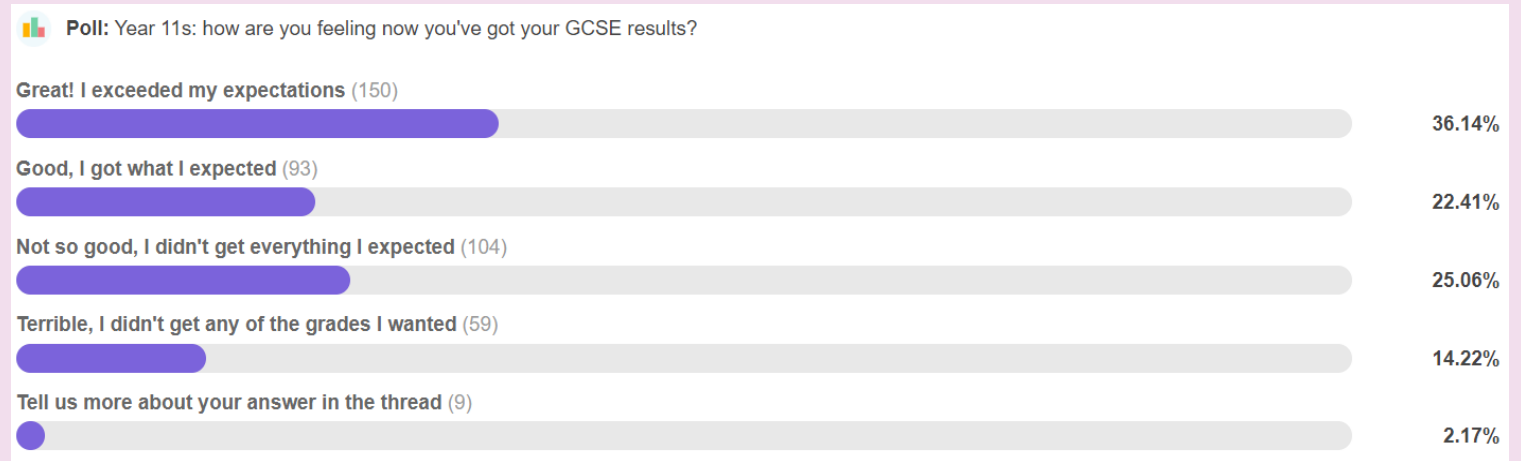
"It was weird. I got everything I needed but I didn't do as well in the places I expected myself to and did exceptionally well in unexpected places. Overall, quite happy! I'm lucky that despite everything, I'm not held back by any subjects I didn't pass."

Poll: Year 11s: how are you feeling now you've got your GCSE results?

Great! I exceeded my expectations (150)
36.14%

Good, I got what I expected (93)
22.41%

Not so good, I didn't get everything I expected (104)
25.06%

Terrible, I didn't get any of the grades I wanted (59)
14.22%

Tell us more about your answer in the thread (9)
2.17%

415 votes. Promoted 22 August 2024 - 30 August 2024

"Good enough. I'm appealing one 8 hopefully to a 9 but the other 8 is just disappointing (I botched the creative writing section on Eng lang). It was expected basically but still annoying considering how many people I know did better than me."

"I did horrible. I was struggling with mental health and self hate during the GCSEs and flopped my GCSEs and lost all my school friends too from an argument."

Year 13s: how are you feeling now that you've got your results?

On A-level results day we asked Year 13s receiving their results how they're feeling, with poll results revealing a mixed bag of emotions amongst the 856 respondents.

Out of those 856 respondents, 21.8% said they felt great, having exceeded their expectations. A slightly larger group, 28.8% felt good, receiving the grades that they expected/or needed. However, a nearly equal proportion 28.5% were disappointed with their results after not receiving all the grades that they had hoped for and a smaller 19.6% felt terrible after not receiving any of the required grades.

The close split between positive and negative sentiments highlights a diverse range of experiences. Many expressing that although they did not receive all their required grades, they still made it into uni with others expressing feelings of disappointment and distress even if they have missed out on only one grade.

Check out our round-up of activity on site in the week following results day here!

Great! I exceeded my expectations (183)
21.38%

Good, I got what I needed/expected (247)
28.86%

Not so good, I didn't get everything I expected (244)
28.5%

Terrible, I didn't get any of the grades I needed (168)
19.63%

Tell us more about your answer in the thread (14)
1.64%

856 Votes – 15/08/2024 - 22/08/2024

"I did worse than expected but my firm still accepted me so happy days"

Missed my firm by 13 marks (circumstances beyond my control), but silver lining as I'd meet their (lowered) grade requirements if I took a foundation year and reapplied. Might end up not bothering and taking my insurance anyway since it looks far more appealing to me now. Other than that, grades were pretty fine. Happy days all around 😁
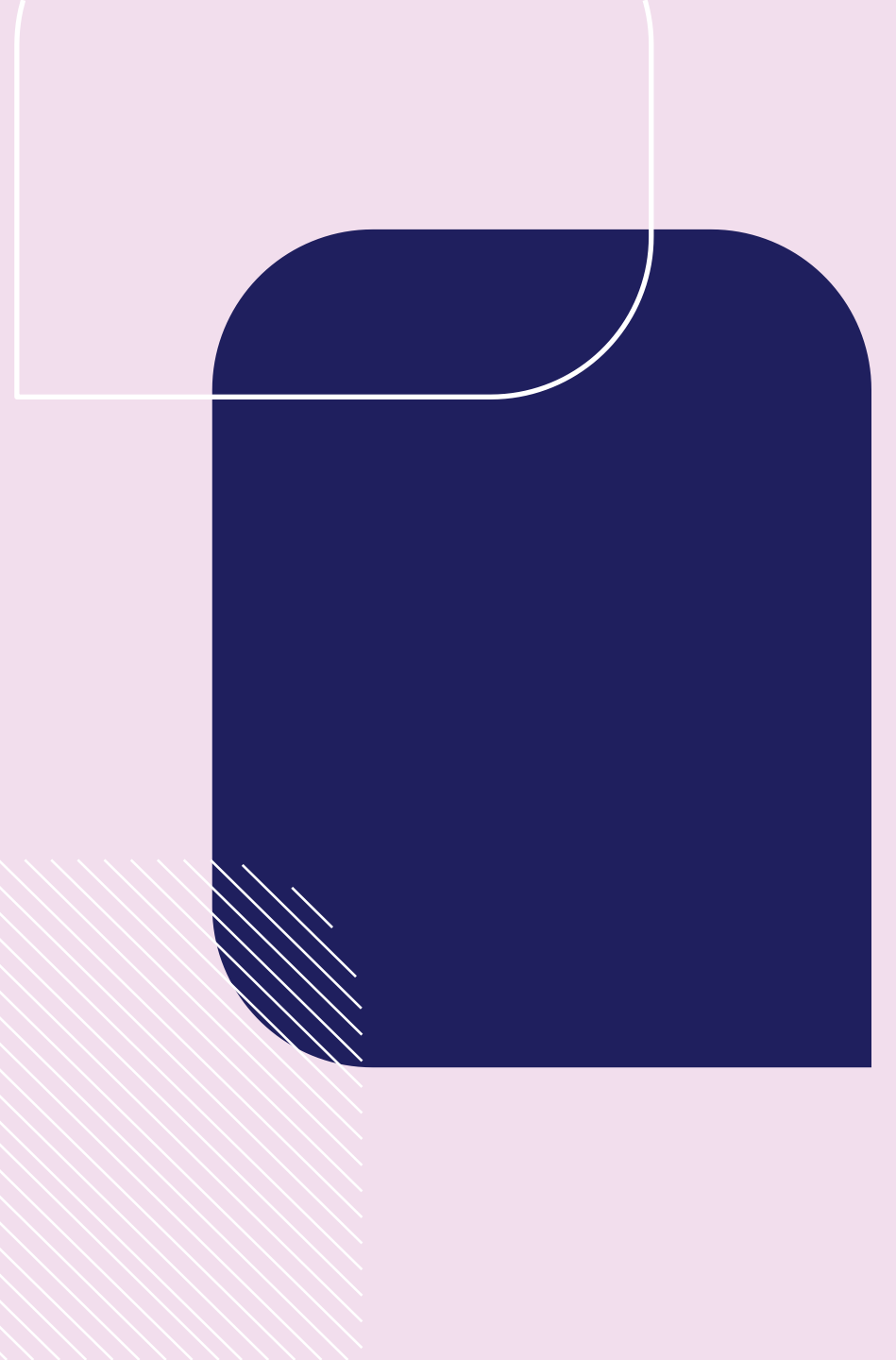
I did better than I expected, but considering what I had to go through on that course I'm not sure if it was worth it. 😃

Summaries

What words do prospective students find appealing and unappealing when considering universities
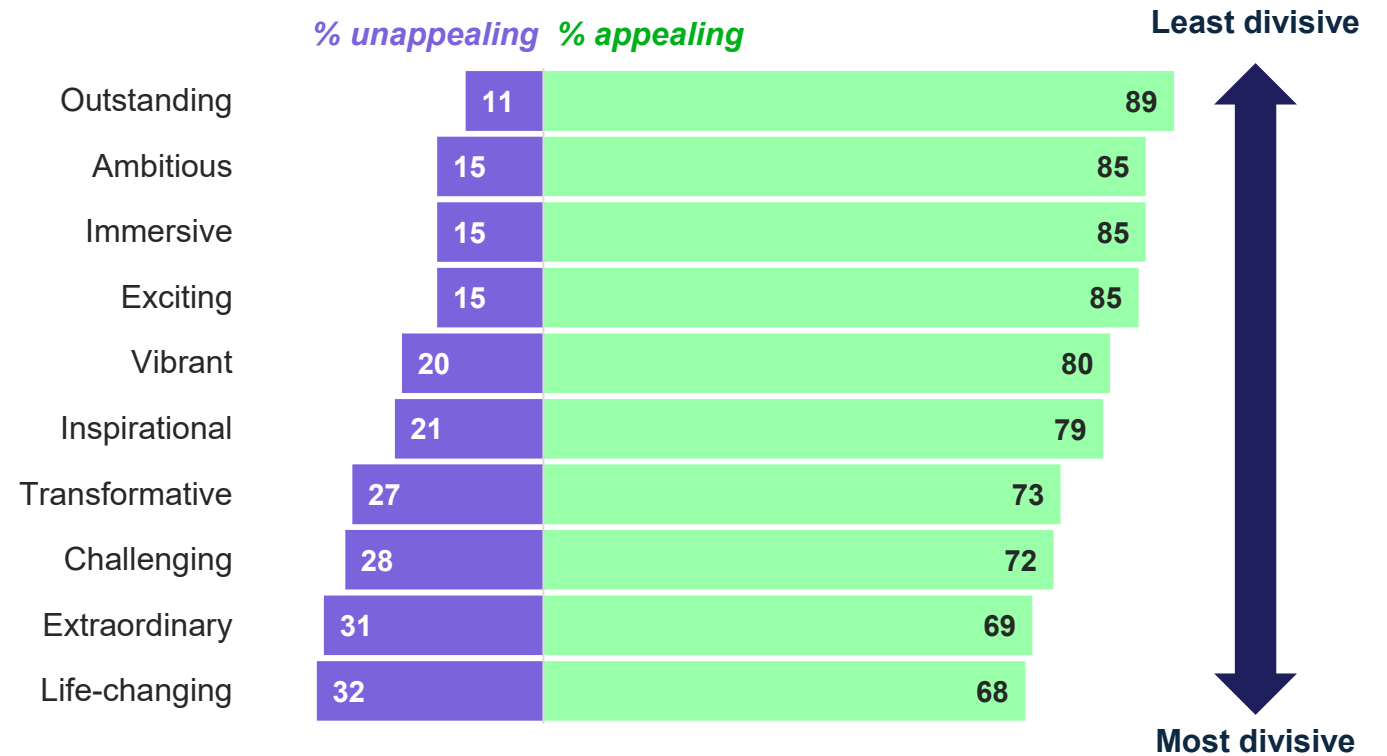
We asked prospective UGs what words they liked, and what words might put them off a university. The term **outstanding** appealed to the majority (89%) when used to describe universities. The terms **ambitious**, **immersive**, and **exciting** also had broad appeal (selected as appealing by 85% each).

However, terms such as **life-changing** and **extraordinary** were perhaps more divisive.

You can read more in our university dealbreakers summary, available to download here.

Q: The following words are sometimes used to describe universities or courses – In this context, please select whether these words are appealing or unappealing to you
(% responses shown)

% unappealing *% appealing*

Least divisive

Word	% unappealing	% appealing
Outstanding	11	89
Ambitious	15	85
Immersive	15	85
Exciting	15	85
Vibrant	20	80
Inspirational	21	79
Transformative	27	73
Challenging	28	72
Extraordinary	31	69
Life-changing	32	68

Most divisive

The Student Room
Insight

TSR updates

The Student Room

August registrations on site

3,924
Year 11

4,129
Year 12

6,281
Year 13

"It's been an eye-opening experience to discover conversations about applications unfolding in real-time. It was particularly rewarding on A Level Results Day to hone in on the stressed messages, providing support and changing minds. I was able to push people into a new awareness of things like foundation years and courses which accept their grades.

The conversations that we're monitoring on The Student Room show just how much movement there is in this crucial point for entry in September 2025. It's given me a better understanding of their mindset, anxieties, and when they want to know about specific areas in the UCAS cycle. Their conversations inform us, which enables us as a university to better advise them through tailored content."

Official Rep/UPP Unlimited feedback (August 2024)

"Reliable first party data and audience data - great products which can be delivered at scale - amazing client service – innovative"

Feedback via NPS Survey (August 2024)

Holistic campaigns to drive open day performance

A TSR survey with Year 13 students *(April 2024)* positioned open days as **the most useful information source** behind Ucas and your own website.

Our new Direct Response solution gives you **guaranteed performance** and will amplify your brand awareness in the application window and drive sign-ups for your open days.

Our approach utilises multiple channels of advertising, email, SMS and (coming soon) push notifications, alongside enhanced audience targeting and optimisation tools, to maximise engagement with your open day campaign.

Native ads

Email

SMS

Push notifications
(coming soon)

We recognise that all universities are different and brand recognition can differ from institution to institution. That's why we'll 'warm up' audiences based on their awareness level of your university, then deliver key event messaging at the time that's right for them.

Audience 1: highly engaged with uni

Build awareness

Direct response

| Intro concept | Sign-up drive | | Sign-up drive |

Audience 2: no current awareness

Build awareness

Direct response

| Intro concept | Awareness building | Awareness building | Sign-up drive | Sign-up drive |