



STUDENTS AS
CO-CREATORS

A Learning & Teaching Research Collaboration

Screen Futures: Stage 2

Mika Lippelt and Logan Parker

Dr Laura Stephenson

School of Media & Communication

Academic Year 2025-26

1. Executive Summary

The Screen Futures project is a participatory action-research initiative designed to widen participation in screen-arts higher education by supporting students from diverse backgrounds. Stage 1 was funded through the Westminster Sustainability Fund in 2024, the project produced a series of concise, professionally presented videos for students interested in film and television production but who may lack access to advice, networks or other forms of application support. The video resources draw on the experience of higher education admissions academics and explain the qualities associated with a strong screen-degree.

Stage 2 of the project focused on identifying effective methods for distributing these resources. Two final-year BA Film students undertook complementary research to review literature on social-media strategies for young people aged 14–18, and conducted a study of UK secondary schools, particularly those serving lower- and middle-income communities, to identify relevant careers or employability contacts within those schools. The research found that Instagram, TikTok and YouTube are the most appropriate platforms for reaching the target demographic. However, the available £400 advertising budget will be used on YouTube because it permits advance payment and delayed campaign scheduling. The campaign is therefore intended to run between mid-September and December, when students are back at school and beginning to consider university applications.

The project also identified challenges in contacting schools and locating named staff members, particularly within less socio-economically advantaged institutions. Future recommendations include face-to-face outreach, improved University payment arrangements for social-media advertising, and integration of the resources into open days, recruitment activity and departmental communications. The full impact on engagement and views is expected to become clearer during 2027.

2. Background and Aims

The Screen Futures project is a participatory action-research project aimed at increasing the diversity of the student body who typically comprise a screen-arts cohort in UK higher education. It is informed by the need for widening participation in arts degrees at UK Universities with specific regard to ethnic and class diversity. Stage 1 of the Screen Futures project was funded by the Westminster Sustainability Fund in 2024. The funds were used to create a series of short, chic online professional video resources. The videos can be found on the central hub (screenfutures.org) as well as on YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, X and LinkedIn.

The aim of the videos is to assist students who are interested in careers in film or television production but are lacking the support to proceed with a successful application to a higher education institute. The videos are based on the experiences of HE admissions academics from over a dozen institutions. They provide guidance about what makes a strong University application for screen degrees including the key elements of ambition, technical dexterity, creative flair, motivation, interpersonal skills and knowledge of industry.

Now that the videos are complete and have been uploaded to 7 online locations, stage 2 of the project is focused on distribution of the resources as widely and as effectively as possible. The SCC project uses x2 final year BA Film students to undertake research about distribution avenues for effective outreach and marketing strategies for effective sharing of the video resources.

3. Methods

The student-researchers undertook x2 studies:

1) A critical review of published scholarship regarding social media strategy for youth users. Websites which focus on social media strategy from a commercial approach may also be used, such as digitalmarketinginstitute.com which provides free resources and 'micro lessons' on best practice. Key things to look at included what time of day and day of week, use of hashtags, tagging individuals or organisations, use of emojis, labelling of clips/posts elicits the highest viewership, 'liking' and sharing of content for users between 14-18.

2) A scoping study of UK secondary schools for which these resources would be gratefully received (ie schools which value arts and humanities career pathways but perhaps lack socio-economic resources to champion this). The x2

student researchers were asked to find generic contact details for these schools and preferably contact details for dedicated careers advisers and staff members dedicated to employability.

4. Results

1: SOCIAL MEDIA STUDY

PLATFORM	IDEAL POSTING TIMES	NOTES
TikTok	Sunday: 9am, 1pm Monday: 1pm, 8am Tuesday: 6am, 10pm Wednesday: 10pm, 6am Thursday: 1pm, 10pm Friday: 6pm, 10pm Saturday: 5pm, 4pm Saturday day of overall highest consumption	Avoid posting between 12-5pm during the week 6-11pm highest traffic Ideal length: 180-600seconds as these get the most views
Facebook	Monday 9pm, 10pm Tuesday: 8am, 7pm Wednesday: 8am, 9am Thursday: 9am (best time), 8am Friday: 8am, 7am Saturday: 10pm Sunday: 9am, 10am	Avoid weekends, especially Saturday Emojis, coloured text, audio and captions help to keep users watching video content.
Instagram	The best days to post are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Generally, across most days, the evening (between 6pm and 11pm is best). The primary group of users for IG are 25-34, so they're looking at their phones in the evenings. Don't post on the weekends – these posts get significantly less engagement. Don't post in the morning 6am-11am as these don't generally get good engagement.	Recommendations for strong engagement: Turn on captions but also include audio Keep reels to 90 seconds or less Interact with the comments Be concise in the post Loop reels to keep the viewer watching Use key terms and hashtags
Twitter	Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday are the best performing days. Tuesday at 9am, and Wednesday at 10am and 11am are the best times of the best days to post. Friday and Saturday have the lowest engagement – don't post then. Generally, morning (9am-11am) is the most popular time, likely due to workers checking their feeds as they start work.	Make sure the account is curated and tidy. Comment and link to other relevant events (at a regional or global level). Post daily or multiple times per day to keep your subscribers hooked in.
Linked In	Late afternoon and evening have the highest engagement for posts (between 3pm and 8pm). The best times are Wednesday at 4pm, Friday at 3pm and Friday at 4pm. Monday and Tuesday have the lowest engagement rates on Linked In.	Carousel posts 596% more engagement than text only posts. Include a successful 'about us' page as people do engage with these on Linked In. Videos get 5x more engagement than static images. Respond to all comments and direct messages. Include links to other Westminster content on LinkedIn so the viewer gets a sense of the overall organization (ie Screen alumni page, Westminster page etc)
YouTube	Wednesdays and Thursdays are the strongest days for engaging with a British teenage audience on YouTube.	Uploading 1-3 hours before the peak time allows YouTube to index and start distributing before the crest of traffic.

	Long form videos are best posted on those days between 3pm and 5pm.	Keep titles and thumbnails 'mobile first' to hook in the phone user.
	Short form (highlights reels) are best posted on Friday – Sunday, 6pm – 9pm	Start with a simple statement (verbal and/or written) to hook the user in 3 seconds (front loading).
		Turn the captions on and make sure they're large.
		Engage with all comments.

2: SCOPING STUDY

REGION	SCHOOL	EMAIL	PRINCIPAL OR STAFF CONTACT
WALES			
Wales	Ysgol Uwchradd Tywyn (Gwynedd)	swyddfa@tywyn.ysgoliongwynedd.cymru	David Thorp
Wales	Cardiff High School (Cardiff)	OneitN6@Hwbcymru.net	S. M. Jones
Wales	Y Pant Comprehensive (Rhondda Cynon Taf)	admin@ypantcomprehensive.rctcbc.cymru	Bev Cheetham
Wales	Elfed High School (Flintshire)	beadmin@elfed-hs.flintshire.sch.uk https://careerswales.gov.wales/contact-us/contact	Alistair Stubbs <i>Career Wales sends Careers Officers to different schools, link to email form</i>
Wales	Gowerton School (Swansea)	Gowerton.School@Swansea-Edunet.gov.uk	K. Lawlor
Wales	Flint High School (Flintshire)	thmail@flint.flintshire.sch.uk heather.roberts@careers.wales.gov.uk	I. Robinson <i>Careers Wales Advisor: Heather Roberts</i>
Wales	Ysgol Greenhill School (Wrexham)	greenhill@hwbcymru.net Rachel.watson@careerswales.gov.wales	David Haynes <i>Careers Wales Advisor: Rachel Watson</i>
Wales	Connah's Quay High School (Flintshire)	cqmail@connahsquayhs.org.uk Jackie.catterall@careerswales.gov.wales	James Forber <i>Careers Wales Advisor: Jackie Catterall</i>
Wales	Ysgol Brynhyfryd (Denbighshi)	Ysgol.brynhyfryd@denbighshire.gov.uk	Trefor Jones
Wales	Lliswerry High School (Newport)	admin@lliswerryhigh.org Heidi.Purnell@careerswales.gov.wales	Julia Fitzgerald <i>Careers Wales Advisor: Heidi Purnell</i>

Wales	Denbigh High School (Denbighshire)	rhian.wynne.edwards@grfacymru.llyw.cymru (careers guidance, I believe) ourschool@denbighhighschool.co.uk (generic school email)	Rhian Wynne Edwards is the name of the careers guidance officer. I found her email via google at https://ysgolglanclwyd.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Careers-Wales-2025-26.pdf , double check for veracity
Wales	Ysgol Glan Clwyd (Denbighshire)	ysgol.glanclwyd@sirddinbych.gov.uk (generic email) rhian.wynne.edwards@grfacymru.llyw.cymru (careers guidance)	When I followed the careers section, I came to the same hyperlink as I did for Denbigh High School, so I believe they have the same careers officer.
Wales	Prestatyn High School (Denbighshire)	info@prestatynhigh.co.uk (generic school email)	They have a 'contact your adviser' section under careers, but no email address present. When the link is followed, it takes you to the Careers Wales website.
Wales	Ysgol Dinas Brân (Denbighshire)	SnaithC6@Hwbcymru.net (assistant head teacher) dinas.bran@denbighshire.gov.uk (generic email address)	Mrs C. Snaith is the assistant head teacher – the school doesn't have a careers officer, but the provided email address isn't generic and will get the right person's attention.
Wales	Rhyl High School (Denbighshire)	HeadofMediaStudies@rhyhigh.co.uk (head of media studies) rhyt.high@denbighshire.gov.uk (generic email address)	Again, not a careers officer, but as head of media studies, Mrs S. Devoreux-Williams might be able to do something with it.
Wales	Brynmawr Foundation School (Blaenau Gwent)	Rhianne.williams@careerswales.gov.wales (careers guidance) bfs@bgcbcschools.wales (generic school email)	Rhianne Williams is the careers guidance officer. The school ends at 16 (no A-level students) but informing students at a younger age might be useful.
Wales	Newport High School (Newport)	info@newporthigh.co.uk (generic school email)	They do have careers guidance, but no listed person or email address.
Wales	Bedwas High School (Caerphilly)	sarah.piper@careerswales.gov.wales (careers adviser) bedwashigh@sch.caerphilly.gov.uk (generic school email)	Sarah Piper is the careers adviser but is only in 2-3 days/week so might be difficult to reach.
Wales	Cyfarthfa Hight School (Merthyr Tydfil)	timothy.williams@careerswales.gov.wales (careers adviser)	Tim Williams is the careers adviser from Careers Wales. No generic email. Again, doesn't serve A-levels.
Wales	Ysgol Brynteg School	christine.hopes@careerswales.gov.wales (careers adviser) admin@bryntegschool.bridgend.cymru (generic school email)	Christine Hopes is the careers adviser from Careers Wales.

ENGLAND			
England	Clacton Coastal Academy (Clacton)	contactus@liftclacton.org	Cologne, M
England	Sigma Sixth (Tendring)	sixthform@cchs.school	Sarah McKarry <i>Head of Local Governance Committee: Kieron Moir</i>
England	Co-op Academy North Manchester (Manchester)	Noma-enquiries@coopacademies.co.uk	Tabitha Sloper-Russell
England	The East Manchester Academy (Manchester)	admin@temac.co.uk careers@temac.co.uk	J. Bowen <i>Careers Lead and Assistant Headteacher: Miss Lonsdale (no first name given)</i>
England	Buile Hill Academy (Salford)	builehill.enquiries@northerneducationtrust.org (Different disadvantaged schools across the north of England are included in the northern education trust) s.thomas@northerneducationtrust.org	Rebecca Hogarth (general inquiries) Buile Hill Academy Careers Leader: Sarah Thomas

England	Manor Community Academy (Hartlepool)	manor.enquiries@northerneducationtrust.org mca-careers@northerneducationtrust.org	Alfie Bailey <i>Manor Community Academy Careers Leader: A. Richards</i>
England	Westhoughton High School (Bolton)	info@westhoughton-high.org	A. Hodson (<i>general inquiries</i>)
England	Sirius Academy West (Hull)	info@siriusacademy.org.uk kmilner@siriusacademy.org.uk kfaulkner@siriusacademy.org.uk	Gemma Ransom <i>Careers Leader: K. Milner</i> <i>Careers Advisor: K. Faulkner</i>
England	The Royal Sutton School (Birmingham)	enquiry@trss.bham.sch.uk Emma.Balnaves@trss.bham.sch.uk Sarah.Evans@trss.bham.sch.uk	N. Gould <i>Head of Creative Arts: Emma Balnaves</i> <i>Head of Performing and Creative Arts Faculty: Sarah Evans</i>
England	Middlebrough College (Middlesbrough)	adult&communitylearning@mbro.ac.uk	<i>General inquiries on website, community learning a potential point of contact</i>
England	Lister Community School	enquiries@lister.ncltrust.net (generic email) helen.pallet@lister.ncltrust.net (assistant head teacher and SENDCO head)	Doesn't have a recognised careers councillor, but the school is based in the most deprived part of London.

	(Newham, London)	paul.mcguire@lister.ncltrust.net (music and drama head) alexander.barton@lister.ncltrust.net (English and media head)	Also provided the addresses for the heads of drama and media as they have the students who might be most interested.
England	Hodge Hill College (Birmingham)	careers@hodgehill.bham.sch.uk (Mr J Broadrick, head of careers) enquiry@hodgehill.bham.sch.uk (generic school email)	Not clear if careers applies to students or prospective teachers, Mrs T. Abdul Karim is the assistant head with a focus on Literacy, Equality, and Diversity but doesn't have a registered email address so generic address provided.
England	Clacton County High School (Clacton-On-Sea)	admin@cchs.school (generic school email)	Sarah McKarry is the head of sixth form, but no email address provided despite search.
England	Dixons Trinity Academy (Bradford)	charris@dixonsta.com (career pioneer) careers@dixonsta.com info@dixonsta.com (generic school email)	Natasha Lloyd (no email address) is their external careers practitioner and Chloe Harris is the career pioneer who organises all the career-based work in the school. Second address is for anyone looking to help out the careers program, could be relevant for us.
England	Skegness Academy (Skegness)	lt Tyler@skegnessacademy.org (Miss L Tyler, careers lead) adminsk@skegnessacademy.org (generic school email)	Careers lead is Miss L Tyler, though Mrs K Bloodworth is the senior leader for careers (difference not apparent) but no email address provided.
England	Brinsworth Academy (Rotherham)	a.hunt@nclt.ac.uk (careers lead, ON MAT LEAVE) CWI@nclt.ac.uk (careers lead, mat cover) c.walters@nclt.ac.uk (careers adviser) bri-office@nclt.ac.uk (generic school email)	Claire Thomas is the careers governor but has no linked email address. The careers lead is C. Wilkins, who is currently covering Alice Hunt's maternity leave. Cerise Walters is the careers adviser.
England	East Sussex College (Hastings)	Hastings.Careers@escg.ac.uk (careers guidance of Hastings campus) hastings.info@escg.ac.uk (generic school email)	Have to stick to the Hastings campus, as it was Hastings which came up earlier on the poverty index.
England	Macmillan Academy (Middlesbrough)	c.cook@macademy.org.uk (careers practitioner) e.turner@macademy.org.uk (head of careers) office@macademy.org.uk (generic school email)	Mrs Turner is the head of post-16 education (sixth form) and is the careers practitioner, and Ms Cook is the head of careers.
England	Blackburn College (Blackburn)	careers@blackburn.ac.uk (careers department) thehub@blackburn.ac.uk (generic email address)	No listed individual for careers advice, just the department.
England	Sandwell Academy (Sandwell, West Bromwich)	cpackham@sandwellacademy.com (Director of Careers) info@sandwellacademy.com (generic school email)	Only email address I found was for Mr Chris Packham (Director of Careers), but through him can reach Miss Cara Lycett (Apprentice Employability Practitioner) Ms Claudette Mclean (Work Experience Officer), and Mrs Karen Soulsby (Careers Adviser)

NORTHERN IRELAND			
Northern Ireland	City of Armagh High School (Armagh)	info@armaghigh.armagh.ni.sch.uk	K. Mulholland

Northern Ireland	North Coast Integrated College (Coleraine)	info@ncic.coleraine.ni.sch.uk apassmore636@c2ken.net	A. Passmore
Northern Ireland	Blackwater Integrated College (Downpatrick)	info@blackwateric.downpatrick.ni.sch.uk	Stephen Taylor <i>Careers Advisor (no email): Elizabeth Stott</i>
Northern Ireland	Dunclug College (Ballymena)	info@dunclugcollege.ballymena.ni.sch.uk	N/A
Northern Ireland	Malone Integrated College (Belfast)	info@malonecollege.org.uk	Aine Leslie
Northern Ireland	Coláiste Feirste (Belfast)	info@colaistefeirste.belfast.ni.sch.uk	Mícheál Mac Giolla Ghunna
Northern Ireland	St. Ciaran's College (County Tyrone)	bmcmanus823@c2kni.net (head of careers) info@stciarans.ballygawley.ni.sch.uk (generic school email)	Mr B. McManus is the head of careers, seemingly for both GCSE and A-level students.
Northern Ireland	Belfast High School (Belfast)	info@belfasthigh.newtownabbey.ni.sch.uk (generic school email)	Miss A McNeill is the head of the careers department, and Mr D Coyles the Work Experience co-ordinator. No corresponding email addresses, but potentially reachable through the generic school email.
SCOTLAND			
Scotland	Port Glasgow High School (Inverclyde)	office@portglasgow.inverclyde.sch.uk Nicol.Rhodes@sds.co.uk (Similar system to Wales, Skills Development Scotland employs careers advisers across different schools, email form: https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/contact-sds)	G. Carroll <i>School Careers Adviser: Nicol Rhodes</i>
Scotland	Baldrone Academy (Dundee)	Leona.hutton@sds.co.uk Ben.myles@sds.co.uk Debbie.johnston@sds.co.uk	<i>School Career Advisers: Leona Hutton and Ben Myles</i> <i>School and Post-School Careers Advisor: Debbie Johnston</i>
Scotland	Notre Dame High School (Greenock)	office@notredame.inverclyde.sch.uk (generic school email)	I couldn't find any information about a careers department, but it is one of two secondary schools I could find in the most deprived area of Scotland, so they should be contacted.
Scotland	Hillhead High School (Glasgow)	gw16mcfarlanekyle@glow.ea.glasgow.sch.uk	Not explicitly careers guidance advisers, but Mr Sean O'Neill is the Developing Young Workforce Coordinator, and Ms Eileen McLeod is the MCR Pathways representative, a charity mentoring disadvantaged non-adults in Scotland. I couldn't find an email for either. Mr McFarlane is who to speak to about college and careers, but I'm not sure University applies. No generic email.
Scotland	Harris Academy (Dundee)	harrisparentcarervoice@gmail.com – email address is only one I can find, but it is supposed to be used by parents for their children.	I couldn't find a dedicated careers department email, but Leslie McCallum, Julie McAndrew, and Tes Mahmood work with the school for Skills Development Scotland.

5. Discussion

Although we looked at several social media platforms (TikTok, Instagram, X/Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, LinkedIn), and will use all of them for uploading Screen Futures content, the research revealed that some are more effective than others for reaching the target demographic (British teens 14-18 years old). For instance, LinkedIn is a heavily used network (approximately 45 million UK users) for professional adults, and while we may reach screen educators through this network, the vast majority of British teenagers don't have a LinkedIn account. Similarly, Twitter/X and Facebook still maintain many millions of users, but are not a hugely popular platform for younger age groups.

TikTok and Instagram are most highly used by teenagers. However, although they are suitable platforms for uploading the Screen Futures resources, the marketing funds allocated to this project will not be used on these platforms for additional advertising, but rather on YouTube. The reasoning behind this is a finding in itself: Although Instagram, TikTok and YouTube allow an account holder to purchase 'advertising credits', only YouTube allows for a delayed advertising release date and lumpsum, upfront payment. Because the SCC finished in July, at the end of the school year and start of summer holidays, an advertising campaign at this point in the calendar would likely fail to capture the interest of teens who are winding down from the school year. A more effective time to run the campaign is between September 15th (when students have been back at school for 1-2 weeks and are still 'fresh') and December 1st (when senior students are starting to put together UCAS applications for the late January deadline, or to think about which subjects they will take the following year). Therefore, YouTube (which also has strong viewership from young people) is the platform on which £400 of advertising credit will be used to market the videos as strategic times.

In the process of the scoping study the student researchers found that there are many schools around the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland which meet the criteria of being lower or middle-income demographic. As anticipated particular regions, such as the Welsh valley's and districts within London, host multiple schools which score poorly on the IMD (Index of Multiple Deprivation). This being said, although the internet has made huge gains in making institutional data accessible to the public, they also discovered it is still difficult to find details of which staff members oversee careers and employability tasks within schools, and to retrieve dedicated email addresses, rather than generic ones. Resultantly, the range of schools retrieved by the student researchers for this part of the study, are schools which meet the initial criteria of being 'not socio-economically privileged', but of also providing enough online data for the school to be contactable about the Screen Futures resources.

As with the funding allocated to marketing of the videos (£400 of advertising credit), I have concluded it would be ineffective to contact schools and individuals at this point (mid-summer) when the majority of school staff are on leave. Better engagement will be achieved by emailing the identified schools/individuals at the start of term (September). Resultantly, we won't know how truly effective this research is (in terms of increased views) until spring or summer of 2027.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

- The findings from the social media platform research were a combination of expected results and unforeseen insights; British youth use a variety of platforms but are most active on Instagram, Tiktok and YouTube (this much might have been guessed beforehand). Afterschool and early evenings on weekdays are the best times to post content for that demographic as they are unlikely to check in the early mornings before school, and some won't be allowed to use or check mobile phones during school hours (9am-3pm) (this also seems logical). However, it was surprising to learn that weekend posts are not heavily engaged with by this group (and therefore not advisable for posting), and that turning the captions on increases engagement overall as many individuals are watching content with the sound very low or muted (such as in public spaces – buses, cafes etc). I'll be using those research findings as marketing tactics for both the paid content (YouTube) and the regular unpaid content.
- Although the internet has enabled schools to have an online presence, data which reveals the stratification of assigned staff duties within those schools, remains difficult to find. Some schools have spent considerable effort on profiling their key staff and maintain visible records of contact details, but these schools tend not to be in the lower-socio economic category. Hampstead School and South Hampstead Girls School, for instance, have publicly visible staff directories and 'meet the team' pages, but both sit within an affluent London suburb where access to arts curricular and extra-curricular activities is already championed. In conclusion, the best way of getting access to less privileged schools (and particular staff within those schools) may be face-to-face outreach, but within the confines of this research this was not possible.
- Finally, the most heavily used social media platforms *currently* used by British youth in secondary school are Instagram and TikTok, with YouTube coming in behind. However, only one of these platforms has a pre-paid, lump sum marketing system with a delayed-date function (YouTube), and this means TikTok and Instagram weren't

feasible options for use of the marketing funds from this particular funding source (SCC). A social media campaign which targets British teenagers at the opportune moment in the calendar (September – December) should *ideally* be using TikTok and/or Instagram to reach the target demographic, and this requires a payment system through the University, rather than through an individual lecturer (who then seeks reimbursement), as the campaign is running (September-December) (rather than paid in advance).

7. Dissemination

These findings are relevant for several teams and individuals within the University of Westminster:

1. Individuals responsible for social media accounts for individual degree schemes or Departments or Schools would likely benefit from the findings about best time and day to post content to target teenagers, and best practice for engagement (ie using captions as well as audio).
2. The University marketing team, and executive faculty members involved in recruitment and admissions may be interested to know that TikTok and Instagram don't have delayed-release functions, so content which needs to be paid for by the end of the academic year in July, can't be paid for then and released at a more strategic point on the calendar year – this was certainly new information for me.
3. There is a new Course Lead for the BA Film degree (Tansy Simpson replacing Laura Stephenson), and a new Outreach Facilitator for the School of Media and Communications (Eleanor Roseblade replacing Alex Sergeant), and updating these two individuals with the Screen Futures campaign through YouTube would be advisable; at Open Days and other recruitment events Tansy and Eleanor can promote Screen Futures resources with a particular focus on directing viewers to YouTube.

8. Research Team Reflection

The Screen Futures project has made good progress by completing a series of accessible, professionally produced videos across seven online platforms and a central hub website. This broad digital presence creates multiple opportunities to reach prospective students interested in film and television production, particularly those who may lack traditional forms of guidance or support.

The Stage 2 research compared six social-media platforms and identified Instagram, TikTok and YouTube as the most relevant channels for reaching British teenagers aged 14–18. It also produced useful, practical insights about engagement, including the value of posting after school and in the early evening, avoiding weekends, and using captions for viewers who watch content with the sound muted. A particularly valuable finding was that YouTube's delayed-release and pre-paid advertising system made it possible to use the £400 budget at a more appropriate time of year, rather than during the summer holidays. The school scoping exercise also identified potential institutions in areas with lower levels of socio-economic advantage.

The main problems concerned timing, access and platform limitations. Launching paid advertising in July would probably have reduced engagement because students were beginning their holidays, while contacting schools during the summer meant that many relevant staff were unavailable. It was also difficult to locate named careers staff and direct email addresses, especially in less privileged schools.

These challenges were overcome by adapting the dissemination strategy. The campaign was postponed until September–December, when students would be back at school and considering university applications. YouTube was selected for paid promotion, while other platforms would continue to support unpaid distribution. The researchers also documented the limitations of online school directories and recommended future face-to-face outreach and a more flexible University payment system.