

Planning, gathering and photography guide for case studies

Planning:

- Go through the previous year's case studies and pick out any subject areas or courses which need new or refreshed case studies – these can include students, alumni, staff and industry experts.
- Liaise with university/academic partner marketing colleagues to find out if they have any new or updated case studies relevant to the subject areas or courses you've identified – this can often save you time and money, and ensures you're not duplicating work.
- If you still have missing case studies, contact Programme Leaders and lecturing staff for recommendations of students, alumni, staff or industry experts to contact. It's advisable to outline what the case studies will be used for, and to stress that case studies will need to be willing to answer questions and have their photo taken by a professional photographer.
- Throughout the year you may spot potential case studies in press releases (digitally and in print), or on social media – follow these up at time when you might be able to get text and photography already gathered, it's also easier to contact students for permission when it's in term time and before they finish their studies.
- Think about other teams within the university or academic partners who may be able to suggest potential case studies – this can include the Student development fund and alumni team, graduate school, research teams, careers and employability team, and student services teams (who award bursaries and scholarships).

Interviewing students, alumni, staff and industry experts:

- The best way to interview is in person or via telephone or video conference. This allows you to probe answers and take your own notes.
- Record an in-person conversation with the Otter app, which transcribes your conversation in real time, so it takes less time to write up later (the transcription is about 70% accurate which is a fantastic start). Remember to hit record and make sure it's working, then put your phone screen to sleep so it doesn't distract you or the interviewee! If the recording doesn't automatically show the right timestamp or a transcription, your internet connection may be poor, and it will complete syncing once you're on stable Wi-Fi/data.
- Ask the interviewee to introduce themselves and their course title at the start of your recording so it's easy for anyone to identify when going through files later.
- Don't give the interviewee the questions in advance – only a rough outline of what you'll be talking about, as they will pre-formulate answers in their head, and it won't be natural on your recording (or camera if you are filming).
- If you plan to interview and photograph your case study on the same day try to interview them first as they tend to look more relaxed and natural as they've loosened up a bit from sharing their story with you.
- Sometimes you can't meet in person, or the person you are trying to reach prefers to answer questions in their own time. Send them a relevant set of questions (examples

attached to this guide) explaining that they are prompt only and encourage them to provide as much information as they feel necessary.

- Always ensure that your case study signs a [release form](#) at the earliest opportunity – this is for photography **and** text provided. You can ask them to complete it in person or digitally (advise that a typed signature will be enough if they are completing it digitally).
- It's good practice to also write an introduction in your email and try to set a time limit of when you need their answers back.
Don't forget to make a polite call or send an email after 1-2 weeks if you've not had a reply – often people forget to reply and don't mind a gentle reminder.
- Students are often living on a tight financial budget, therefore an incentive such as a £25 Amazon voucher is often really appreciated. This can also be offered to alumni, particularly those who have recently graduated.
- If a case study questionnaire comes back with not enough information don't be afraid to send it back but clearly outline what is missing.
Once you have written up your interview notes, or have your completed questionnaires back, try to write several different quotes of varying length (for digital and print use) focussing on different angles – for example: favourite aspects of course, placements undertaken, use of student support or careers services, international or overseas students; progression to/from other courses.

Photography:

- Photography will really make your case study stand out and make it more authentic as it adds a 'face' to the text.
- Unless you have had some training on using a SLR camera it's best to enlist the services of a professional photographer – they'll also ensure that you receive high-resolution images which can be used for both digital and print.
- A word of warning – phone photos are not suitable for print due to the lower resolution quality, no matter how nice the photo is.
- Brief your photographer in advance, even if you are present at the photo-shoot, as this gives them time to think about lighting, composition, weather, equipment needed etc. Other information to tell your photographer:
 - Student/alumni/staff/industry expert contact details (if you are not going to be there – this allows them to advise each other if they are running late or have any last-minute issues)
 - Suggested location/s for photos – consider back-up indoor options for outdoor photography in case of bad weather
 - Suggested activities that the case study should be undertaking – such as pipetting in a laboratory, using the mixer desk in a recording studio, kayaking on a river or in the sea, talking with a group of students or colleagues etc.
 - Dimensions needed for photos – some useful dimensions you'll always need are portrait, landscape and letterbox (used for course banner images on your

websites). [More information on choosing the right dimensions for web is available on T4 help.](#)

- If your case study has not signed a [release form](#), ensure they sign one during the photo-shoot. You can email or send copies to the professional photographer in advance.
- If you have commissioned campus or course-specific photography it's often best to ask all students to sign a release form right at the beginning, this also gives you some time to ask a lecturer which students might be good potentials for case studies. You can then brief your photographer to take some individual shots of them and interview them on the day or follow up with a phone call or email.
- Always print more consent forms than you think you need – you might catch some students “in the wild” doing an activity or hanging out in the café that you really need shots of!
- Case study photography should only be kept for a maximum of five years before archiving them. Bear in mind that students can look very different in five years' time and may have already finished their studies. If you do want to continue to use photos of people after five years you need to re-contact them for permission.

Filming:

This guide has been created to help plan, gather and photograph case studies but you may also want to film –[check out our handy blog from Web Officer Llewelyn Bailey.](#)

Current undergraduate student questionnaire

Your feedback as a current student is invaluable as you can provide prospective students with an insight into studying with us. The questions below are here as a guide but please feel welcome to provide any additional information which you think is of relevance. Please include any highlights or things that have been particularly beneficial to your studies, but you can also talk about challenges you have encountered and any useful tips on how to overcome them.

The questionnaire, along with a recent photograph of yourself, may be used for both our undergraduate prospectus and future marketing materials providing we have your consent. We enclose a release form for you to complete along with this questionnaire.

General contact information	
Name:	
Age:	
Email address:	
Telephone number (we will always try to contact you via email in the first instance):	
Course information	
Title of course you are studying?	
Year of study:	
Type of study - full-time or part-time basis:	
Which campus you are based at?	
What is your home-time location? If it is different to your term-time location did you relocate specifically to study with us?	
Did you consider other universities when you were deciding to study? If so, why did you choose us?	
Why was this right course for you?	

Support services and extra-curriculum activities	
What do you think about the style of teaching and the support you receive from tutors and lecturers?	
Have you been involved in any sports, social or cultural clubs or activities whilst at the university?	
Have you undertaken any student placements? If so, please tell us more:	
Have you contacted our Careers and Employability team for any help with advice; placements; or onward career or study options?	
Future plans and directions	
What career direction would you like to take after studying?	
How do you feel your studies will help you in your career progression?	
What advice would you give to those considering studying?	
And finally...	
What are your favourite things about the university?	
Best thing about living in the Highlands and Islands (if applicable)?	
Anything else you feel like telling us about your experience at the university?	

Thank you for completing the survey!

Please note that we may need to edit the information you supply to fit into the final publication, but we will ensure that we honour the intent of the words you have provided here. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with jill.mcnicol@uhi.ac.uk

Current postgraduate student questionnaire

Your feedback as a current student is invaluable as you can provide prospective students with an insight into studying with us. The questions below are here as a guide but please feel welcome to provide any additional information which you think is of relevance. Please include any highlights or things that have been particularly beneficial to your studies, but you can also talk about challenges you have encountered and any useful tips on how to overcome them.

The questionnaire, along with a recent photograph of yourself, may be used for both our postgraduate prospectus and future marketing materials providing we have your consent. We enclose a release form for you to complete along with this questionnaire.

General contact information	
Name:	
Age:	
Email address:	
Telephone number (we will always try to contact you via email in the first instance):	
Course information	
Title of postgraduate course you are studying?	
Year of study:	
Type of study - full-time or part-time basis:	
Which of our campuses are you enrolled at?	
Where you are currently based whilst you study with us?	
Prior to studying with us where did you live?	
What made you choose the postgraduate course you are studying?	
What are your favourite aspects of the course so far?	
Support services and extra-curriculum activities	
What do you think about the level of interaction with your lecturers at the university?	

Please describe what other opportunities have been made available by the university that you have taken advantage of that you feel are improving your student experience. This might include membership of clubs or societies, volunteering, class representative's activities or engagement with other university departments.	
Have you accessed our Careers and Employability team's services to help you with advice, placements or onward career or study options? If so, how did they help?	
Future plans and directions	
When you started your postgraduate course, did you have a clear idea of the career path you wanted to follow after university?	
Upon completing your course, do you plan to find a new job related to your postgraduate study, begin your own business, or gain a promotion in an existing role? If so, can you tell us a bit about it?	
How do you feel your studies will help you in your career progression?	
What advice would you give to those considering postgraduate study?	
And finally...	
What are your favourite things about the university?	
Best thing about living in the Highlands and Islands (if applicable)?	
Anything else you feel like telling us about your experience at the university?	

Thank you for completing the survey!

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Graduate questionnaire (undergraduate level)

Your feedback as a graduate is invaluable as you can provide prospective students with an insight into studying with us. The questions below are here as a guide but please feel welcome to provide any additional information which you think is of relevance. Please include any highlights or things that have been particularly beneficial to your studies, but you can also talk about challenges you have encountered and any useful tips on how to overcome them.

The questionnaire, along with a recent photograph of yourself, may be used for both our undergraduate prospectus and future marketing materials providing we have your consent. We enclose a release form for you to complete along with this questionnaire.

General contact information	
Name:	
Age:	
Email address:	
Telephone number (we will always try to contact you via email in the first instance):	
Course information	
What was the title of the course you studied with us?	
Did you study full-time or part-time?	
In what year did you complete your studies?	
Which campus were you based at?	
What was your home-time location? If it was different to your term-time location did you relocate specifically to study with the university?	
Did you consider other universities when you were deciding to study? If so, why did you choose us?	
Why was this right course for you?	
Support services and extra-curriculum activities	

<p>How did you find the mode of teaching on the course and the support you received from your tutors and lecturers?</p>	
<p>Please describe in your own words and as fully as possible, what knowledge, skills and experience you gained from your course that have helped you since leaving university? This can include anything as part of the curriculum including work placements, lectures, partnerships with industry, volunteering, class representative duties, field-trips, competitions, additional modules etc.</p>	
<p>Did you undertake a placement or any work experience whilst at university?</p>	
<p>Did you access our Careers and Employability team to help you with advice, guidance, support or onward career or further study options?</p>	
<p>Future plans and directions</p>	
<p>Upon starting your course, did you have a clear idea of the career path you wanted to follow after university?</p>	
<p>Are you currently employed? If so, can you tell us who your current employer is, what you are currently doing and what does your work involve?</p>	
<p>How do you feel your studies have helped you with your career? Was there anything you did whilst at university that you think helped you secure your job?</p>	
<p>What were the steps you took from graduation to your current role?</p>	
<p>Where would you like to go with your career in the future?</p>	

What advice would you give to those considering studying in terms of careers and employment?	
And finally...	
What were the highlights of your time studying at the university?	
Best thing about living in the Highlands and Islands (if applicable)?	
Anything else you feel like telling us about your experience at the university?	

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Graduate student questionnaire (postgraduate level)

Your feedback as a graduate is invaluable as you can provide prospective students with an insight into studying with us. The questions below are here as a guide but please feel welcome to provide any additional information which you think is of relevance. Please include any highlights or things that have been particularly beneficial to your studies, but you can also talk about challenges you have encountered and any useful tips on how to overcome them.

The questionnaire, along with a recent photograph of yourself, may be used for both our postgraduate prospectus and future marketing materials providing we have your consent. We enclose a release form for you to complete along with this questionnaire.

General contact information	
Name:	
Age:	
Email address:	
Telephone number (we will always try to contact you via email in the first instance):	
Course information	
What was the title of the postgraduate course you studied with us?	
Did you study full-time or part-time?	
In what year did you complete your studies?	
Which campus were you based at?	
Prior to studying with us where did you live? Did you relocate specifically to study with the university?	
Did you consider other universities when you were deciding to study? If so, why did you choose us?	
Why was this right course for you?	
What were your favourite aspects of the course?	

Support services and extra-curriculum activities

How did you find the mode of teaching on the course and the support you received from your tutors and lecturers?

Please describe in your own words and as fully as possible, what knowledge, skills and experience you gained from your course that have helped you since leaving university? This can include anything as part of the curriculum including work placements, lectures, partnerships with industry, volunteering, class representative duties, fieldtrips, competitions, additional modules etc.

Did you undertake a placement or any work experience whilst at university?

Did you access our Careers and Employability team to help you with advice, guidance, support or onward career or further study options?

Future plans and directions

Upon starting your postgraduate course, did you have a clear idea of the career path you wanted to follow afterwards?

Are you currently employed, running your own business, or have you gained promotion in an existing role? If so, can you tell us who your current employer is, what you are currently doing and what does your work involves?

How do you feel your studies have helped you with your career? Was there anything you did whilst at university that you think helped you secure your job?

Where would you like to go with your career in the future?	
What advice would you give to those considering postgraduate study in terms of careers and employment?	
And finally...	
What were the highlights of your time studying at the university?	
Best thing about living in the Highlands and Islands (if applicable)?	
Anything else you feel like telling us about your experience at the university?	

Thank you for completing the survey!

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Staff case studies for the undergraduate and postgraduate prospectuses

Staff profiles are now included in our postgraduate and undergraduate prospectuses along with current student and graduate profiles. This enhances the information that we give a prospective student when considering their options for studying and it is also an opportunity for staff to highlight the unique aspects of the courses they are involved in and discuss what makes these courses relevant to today's jobs market. Prospective students are also influenced by research undertaken at universities - as many of our academic staff members are involved in key areas of research related to the course they deliver and/or teach on we want to highlight this in marketing materials such as the prospectuses.

It would be beneficial if you could provide some information about yourself and the course/courses you are directly involved in which you would like to be considered for inclusion in the prospectuses. We only require 150 words along with a photograph of yourself, please ensure the photograph is of print quality (minimum 300dpi) or alternatively we can arrange a photographer if we include you as a staff profile.

Whilst we may not be able to include all staff profiles in the prospectuses there is ample space on the course pages on the university website which we can utilise. We also produce digital and printed marketing materials throughout the year which are used for various recruitment campaigns so your contribution would be greatly appreciated in ensuring we have relevant staff profiles to include where we can.

Thank you very much for your time and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with jill.mcnicol@uhi.ac.uk