



cubo AWARDS 6 JULY 2023



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Campus Experience of the Year • Creativity in Catering and Retail • Best Residence Life Experience
Innovation in Student Housing • Excellence in Sports Experience • Innovation in Student Experience
Creativity in Conferencing, Events & Hospitality • Business Partnership of the Year • Best Marketing Campaign.

About the CUBO Awards

The annual CUBO Awards promote excellence in the student and campus experience by recognising and showcasing outstanding initiatives and innovations in campus and commercial services.

Judges

Thanks to the following individuals for judging the 2023 CUBO Awards:

Richard McGloin - CUBO Honorary Member

Richard Kington - CUBO Board

Adam Calladine - Kinetic

Dee Wilkinson - Gather & Gather

James Ellerby - Russell Partnership Collection

Jenny Shaw - Unite Students

Jane Donachy - CUBO Board

David McKown MBE - The University of Sheffield

Leon McClinton - ACUHO-I

Julie Barker - AUCSO

Phil Scott - CUBO Board

Sponsors

Thanks to the following organisations for supporting the 2023 CUBO Awards



Campus Experience of the Year



Creativity in Catering and Retail



Creativity in Conferencing, Events and Hospitality



Innovation in Student Housing



Innovation in Student Experience

Welcome



Kirsty Woodward, CUBO Chair

The CUBO Awards recognize outstanding achievement in higher education campus and commercial services. In doing so, they support our mission to lead and promote excellence in the development of campus life, services and the student experience.

Every year, these awards reinforce the talent and passion that exists within our teams, and the importance of what we all do for our students, staff and visitors. They provide inspiration to other universities and they create real, positive change in the campus experience across the UK and Ireland.

I look forward to sharing with you a wonderful Awards Night at the University of Glasgow on 6th July, and to celebrating the 2023 shortlist and winners!

“These awards reinforce the talent and passion that exists within our teams, and the importance of what we all do for our students, staff and visitors”



Jane Donachy, CUBO Awards Chair

I am very proud to chair the 11th annual CUBO Awards – a showcase of innovation and best practice in HE commercial and campus services. This brochure presents the 27 shortlisted entries - stand-out examples of the fantastic work being done in our sector. I am indebted to our panel of judges, whose task in selecting this group has not been easy!

We are honoured to welcome to CUBO Awards Night Bailie Norman MacLeod, a city with seven higher education institutions, including our hosts, the University of Glasgow. Our thanks to Glasgow City Council for their generous support of tonight's celebrations.

I am also grateful to our Platinum Partners, Gather & Gather, Kinetic, Russell Partnership Collection and Unite Students, and to our strategic partner TUCO for their generous sponsorship of these awards, and to CUBO partners ASK4 and UPP for their much appreciated support.

With the inspirational JJ Chalmers as our awards host, we are set for a fabulous evening. I wish all contenders the best of luck in the 2023 CUBO Awards!

Programme

6TH JULY UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Welcome

Kirsty Woodward, *Director of Estates and Campus Services, University of Leicester, CUBO Chair*

Jane Donachy, *Associate Director Catering, Retail & Accommodation Services, University of the Arts London, CUBO Awards Chair*

Awards Host

JJ Chalmers



JJ Chalmers is a TV Presenter with a remarkable story. The career of the former Royal Marine Commando was cut short after he suffered life-changing injuries following an IED explosion in Afghanistan. After years of rehabilitation, JJ went on to compete in the 2014 Invictus Games where he captained the Trike Cycling team and took home three medals. As a spokesperson for this inaugural Invictus Games JJ got an insight into TV during the publicity rounds and seeking a new and thrilling adventure led JJ to embark on a broadcasting career.

Since 2017 JJ has anchored BBC1's coverage of the Invictus Games. He has also become a key part of the BBC's sports team with highlights including The Commonwealth Games and The London Marathon. As part of the BBC's Ceremonial coverage JJ commentates on The Lord Mayor's Show and considers himself privileged to have been involved in the D Day Memorial coverage, Trooping The Colour, The Duke of Edinburgh's and Her Majesty The Queen's funeral programming. 2020 saw JJ join the cast of Strictly Come Dancing on BBC1 dancing all the way to the Quarter Finals.

JJ is an Ambassador for both Help For Heroes and a Trustee for The Invictus Games Foundation

Civic Reception

Courtesy of The Rt Hon The Lord Provost and Glasgow City Council – Hunterian Museum

Awards Dinner

Wine sponsored by UPP

Awards Ceremony

Campus Experience of the Year - *sponsored by Russell Partnership Collection*

Creativity in Catering and Retail - *sponsored by TUCO*

Creativity in Conferencing, Events and Hospitality - *sponsored by Gather & Gather*

Excellence in Student Sport Experience

Innovation in Student Experience - *sponsored by Kinetic*

Innovation in Student Housing - *sponsored by Unite*

Business Partnership of the Year

Best Residence Life Experience

Best Marketing Campaign

Post-Awards Bar

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Campus Experience of the Year



University of Glasgow

Glasgow's commercial services function brings together a number of income-generating services with a 'one team' focus on collaborative working to developing new ideas to deliver an outstanding experience on campus.

With campus occupancy back to pre-pandemic levels, investment has included three new catering outlets, and an upgraded digital sports booking service aligned to the university's strategy to transform digital services for all.

Retail has seen great commercial success, and the university nursery secured a 'very good' report from the Care Inspectorate.

'On the day' customer experience is measured through a series of exit touchscreen devices to track people's experience for which the target is 87% excellent.

For the academic year to date, the overall average is 91% with almost 55,000 responses since August 2022. Each service can analyse its results through an online dashboard with comments providing real insight into urgent issues needing to be fixed.

Royal Holloway, University of London

Collaboration, team-working and communication between various teams and target audiences enables commercial services at Royal Holloway to deliver an excellent campus experience.

The commercial services directorate was awarded 81.4% in its recent Hospitality Assured Assessment, scoring 80% or above in all nine areas. The score makes Royal Holloway the top scoring purely commercial services directorate among universities and moves it to 'World Class' status.

New technology has provided positive benefits across many areas, such as reducing food waste and providing nutritional and allergy advice; phone enabled locks, and 'drive through' registration for sessions.

A focus on sustainability, wellbeing and community has included initiatives to make catering services more environmentally responsible, encourage reuse and recycling, and provide support for neuro diverse students.



University of Bristol

Bristol's main residential campus Badock Hall was looking tired and unloved. Students were voting with their feet with the most requests to move accommodation and the lowest satisfaction rating of all settings.

The university set about creating 'Badock-Basepoint' a 'next-generation' catered residence, where dining, social, study and mental health needs are all given equal space.

A thrifty in-house makeover incorporated inventive ways to re-use, re-purpose and re-imagine existing materials and furniture to create a lively, multi-functional and inclusive space.

Power-outlets were installed for charging laptops and a self-service area introduced to enable food and drink outside of service times. A live cookery theatre station brings a modern street food vibe.

The happiness index for Badock has risen 23% to 78% and is now amongst the happiest catered halls, with a 60% uplift in meal packages sold in the first term.

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The University Caterers' Organisation

Creativity in Catering and Retail



University of Leicester

The catering team collaborated with university departments, to create a graduation masterplan that seamlessly provided a unique hospitality offer for 18 ceremonies across six weekdays, catering for almost 7,000 students.

With three tightly scheduled ceremonies a day, there was a lot to coordinate, including a marquee with an operational kitchen for receptions of more than 2,500 people; a 3-course VIP celebration dinner; a Champagne and Prosecco bar, and live music each day.

Additional elements included VIP lunches at De Montfort Hall, refreshments stations, 14 retail outlets, a coffee van serving strawberries and cream, and outdoor drinks receptions.

The marquee was transformed into a luxurious tropical garden with flower arrangements from the University Botanical Gardens for decoration, which were replanted after the event.

Despite the challenges, including the hot summer of 2022, the smooth transition between receptions created a series of events that graduates would never forget.



University of Exeter

Exeter turned an unused bank into Forum Kitchen, a food hall with a revolving menu of global street food dishes, responding to a reported lack of cultural diversity in catering options.

This has been addressed through a roll call of local street food traders such as Pink Moon, West Country Dim Sum, Doghouse Deli and Red Panda, serving authentic Asian street food. Sustainability is also on the menu with 'eat-in' trays and cutlery.

The kitchen features three individual pods where customers can eat having ordered from digital menus outside the venue. Handheld order and payment tablets make the process seamless.

Engagement with students has been enhanced through a programme of events including open mic nights and quizzes.

Since opening in May 2021, there have been over 61,000 transactions and possible future developments include event hire to build revenue.



University of York

As part of its focus on sustainability, York introduced 'Shop, save and sustain' in September 2021 offering a 50% discount on items that would become waste.

The initiative is available 15 minutes before university restaurants or cafes close with the discount applied to packaged items such as sandwiches, cakes and drinks with expiry dates. It is also applied to hot food.

As the meals are half price and the best value hot counters are priced as low as £3.95, students are able to purchase a hot meal for under £2.

Since the launch in 2021 the scheme has saved more than 14,624 items or meals from going to waste, worth more than £25,000 in discounts to students and staff.

Best Residence Life Experience



University of Arts, London

More than 250 events for students were delivered across 13 halls of accommodation by the University of Arts' social programme team and student reps.

A wide variety of initiatives aimed to create a sense of community, help with the issues that students face while living at university, and create fun times for students.

Events included a welcome festival headlined by singer-songwriter Alfie Templeman to create a community across halls and signpost student support.

With the cost of living being a massive issue, the team organised giveaways for free period products through a 'Take what you Need' campaign. It also promoted sustainability and healthy eating with a 'Zero Waste Tuck Shop' providing free healthy dried ingredients, while a Swap Shop encouraged reuse and repair of clothes.

Other events focused on education, tackling taboo issues, and building links with the local community.



University of Nottingham

The residential experience team, accommodation team and University of Nottingham Sport combined to introduce a sport, health and wellbeing package to help drive a sense of belonging and increase engagement in physical activity.

All 3,851 students living in halls of residence receive the package as part of their accommodation fees. This provides access to fitness suites, more than 150 weekly classes, swimming, climbing and the popular Just Play programme, as well as a series of exclusive events.

Students with a disability are offered bespoke support from an inclusive sport team, and the university has made a significant investment into its skilled workforce.

In total, 83% of students engaged with physical activity and 73% of these are exercising at least once a week.

More than 96% of students surveyed reported that they felt a sense of increased belonging to the university and their halls thanks to the package.



Queen's University Belfast

The Treehouse is the main social space for students at Queen's Elms BT9 accommodation village, bringing together a range of facilities where residents can collaborate, get support and advice, and feel at home.

A friendly coffee bar is staffed by residential assistants who dispense free tea and coffee, as well as advice and help on all aspects of university life.

A comfortable cinema room offers the opportunity to watch a variety of movies, and there is also a Karaoke and gaming room. The computer lounge provides printing, and computer facilities for study.

Residents can show off their culinary skills in the fully equipped kitchens or BBQ area where the res life team also hold cooking demonstrations. A community fridge reduces food waste, while supporting those in need.

Outside, an allotment and orchard offers an opportunity to enjoy sustainable gardening, or residents can shoot hoops on the basketball court.

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Excellence in Sports Experience



University of Essex

Post-Covid, sport was identified as a means of bringing the campus back to life and boosting the student experience.

Essex's 'Fan Engagement Project', featured a range of student-centred fan engagement initiatives to make spectating attractive, help students make friends, and build a sense of belonging.

The 'Tribe' student supporters club has attracted 800 members who proudly wear their club T-shirts to games and get involved in a range of social occasions.

It has also made a wider difference to other issues students care about such as the cost-of-living crisis, with free-food promotions, and gamedays supporting 26 student jobs.

A total of 10,906 spectators' attendances were recorded as of March 23, with an average of 283 student spectators per week.

The pinnacle of the season was the recent International Women's Day special when 1,505 spectators watched the university's team, the Essex Rebels, setting a record attendance for the professional league.

University of Surrey

Surrey's approach to sport is summed up in its 'Move | Play | Perform' motto which spans the pathway from participation to performance.

The 'Move' component provides a free app for all students to earn points for physical activity and challenges they complete. Points can be exchanged for sporty and non-sporty rewards, and 3,239 students participate. An access fund also provides financial support of £250 to help disadvantaged students.

'Play' encourages student engagement through a workforce development programme that offers various sports leader qualifications and certifications for student activators and volunteers who help at flagship events and manage teams.

At the 'Perform' level, 45 sports are available, and this year's introduction of performance squads has led to improvements in particular sports, including basketball, rowing, squash, and rugby.

The 2022-23, student survey experience scores have increased by 9% (to 88%) with 33% more students engaged with sport than previously.



University of Exeter

Exeter has evolved its social sport programme significantly with initiatives offering a diverse variety of activities specifically for international students, females, and those with mental health difficulties.

After success last year targeting less-active females, it has developed further with a Get 'INTO' Sport campaign, a wellness referral programme and EmpowHer sessions, encouraging commitment free physical activity.

This has also resulted in a significant improvement in the diversity of students involved in sport from 22% BAME participants to 36%.

The Pitch up and Play format runs outside of term time providing opportunities to international students who are unable to return home.

Meanwhile, quiet hours in the gym with music and screens turned off and lights dimmed have made it more accessible to neurodivergent students.

A plethora of physical activity opportunities can provide structure and help build a student's confidence, wellbeing and progress into more competitive sport or a structured club environment.



Innovation in Student Housing



University of Limerick

UL Accommodation launched Rainbow Housing in 2019-20, for LGBTQ+ students who wish to live together. It was Ireland's first university to offer such a space.

It gives students access to a supportive base in which to launch themselves confidently, proudly, and assertively into campus life. Rainbow Housing also provides visibility for the community on campus.

Concerns about 'self-segregation' leading to targeted behaviour from others, or false applications from those looking to secure a campus room were tackled by the allocation system that houses those who have selected these options together across all university buildings. This creates a scattering of Rainbow Houses across the campus.

Demand for Rainbow Housing has grown year-on-year hitting 33% in 2022/23.

Feedback has been largely positive, particularly from those deciding on where to attend university.

Further thematic options are being explored under the same model for other residents such as a consideration for sensory-friendly improvements.



Lancaster University

Changing work practices post-Covid presented an opportunity for Lancaster to reimagine existing space in a way that saved on the carbon footprint of a new build.

An oversupply of office space in the Furness College building enabled the space to be reconfigured into 60 modern bedrooms in seven clusters, saving 87% of embedded carbon (784 tonnes).

It also better integrated residents with the social and welfare facilities on offer on the ground floor of the building such as the bar, TV lounge and common room, bringing life into the setting.

Residents who were due to be decanted from an existing accommodation block midway through the year were involved in selecting the furnishings for common areas to give them a sense of ownership.

A finishing touch was historic prints of the Furness peninsula featuring local landmarks such as the dock cranes that are in the college logo.



University of the Arts London

UAL's Archwood site is designed to build networks between local Southwark businesses and students.

Its building saw an apprenticeship and local employment scheme providing 22 jobs for unemployed locals.

Students were involved in the design, including choosing colour schemes, interiors and even the name 'Archwood', combining 'architecture' from MA Interior and Spatial Design and 'wood' acknowledging the site's heritage as a timber wharf.

Archwood's Digital Hub sees students live, learn and work alongside Peckham residents to share ideas, explore creative technologies, develop skills and launch businesses.

The site has 393 bedrooms from en-suites to studios, with fun living spaces that support student wellbeing.

Environmental sustainability was critical and the building includes features such as photovoltaic panels to provide zero carbon electricity.

Archwood continues to play its part in driving innovation in social and economic transformation for this part of southeast London.

Innovation in Student Experience



University of Essex

Social isolation related to a lack of campus activities during the pandemic has affected student wellbeing, something that Essex wanted to tackle.

Its 'Fan Engagement Project' featured a range of student-centred fan engagement initiatives to make spectating sport events attractive, help students make friends, and build a sense of belonging.

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University of Leeds

Evidence suggest that good quality natural spaces and conservation activities can help promote and achieve positive mental health.

Leeds' residential services implemented three innovative activities to help students achieve better levels of wellbeing, by connecting them with the natural environment.

Student sustainability architects mapped site habitats at student residences to identify opportunities to enhance biodiversity through improvements such as tree and wildflower planting, and hedging.

Improvements to outdoor environments have created more welcoming spaces such as a sensory garden for those who have mobility or visual impairments. A welcoming wood was also created from two overgrown tennis courts.

Wild Work Day events organised by residential services have brought students and external partners together to undertake environmental improvement works such as maintaining wildflower meadows and removing scrub.



Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh

Thank Goodness It's Thursday (TGIT) brings students together for free hot meals, food supplies and social activities in a warm, sociable and supportive environment, at a time of spiralling food and heating costs. It also helps counter student loneliness and isolation which QMU research identified as an issue.

Free hot meals and weekend meal packs with recipes are provided by volunteer academic staff in the university's food court. The involvement of staff also helps to strengthen staff-student bonds.

Fun themed activities such as meal voucher raffles, quizzes, crafts, games, bingo and stretch classes encourage social interaction, improve mental wellbeing, and strengthen community spirit.

The programme was initially a six-week pilot but rising weekly uptake (250-300 students) confirmed the need for and success of TGIT, so it was extended to run throughout the 2022-23 academic year. By May 2023 TGIT will have provided 4,500 hot meals, 200 meal kits and £500 of vouchers.

Creativity in Conferencing, Events and Hospitality

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Keele University Events & Conferencing

Keele University has supported its drive to be carbon neutral with a range of initiatives.

The catering team embraced locally sourced, low-carbon suppliers and launched a 'green delegate package' which allowed menus to be carbon calculated to help clients measure their carbon footprint.

The approach helped the university clinch the three-day TUCO Summer Conference 2022, with the gala dinner being completely net zero. Its profit margin of just under 20%, showing that sustainably-led events make business sense.

Keele has also opened its Low Carbon Energy Generation Park generating half of the campus' electricity needs.

A new self-serve online tool for Christmas party bookings and menu choices has enhanced the customer journey, relieved administrators, and enabled a new revenue stream for events.

Due to such creative and innovative ways of working, KUE&C surpassed volume targets for March to July 2021-22 and delivered 26% more income than forecast.



De Montfort University

Following the pandemic, the conference and catering team at De Montfort University was tasked with generating additional income to aid the university's financial recovery plan.

A review of missed opportunities identified enquiries for premium meeting rooms to accommodate up to 40 delegates which the room portfolio lacked.

An underutilised building, 1 Richmond Street, was refurbished on a budget making minimal structural changes and repurposing equipment and furniture from elsewhere in the university.

This reduced the carbon footprint of the project and contributed to the sustainability goals of the university without compromising quality. Artwork for the centre was sourced from the existing university art archives.

Each conference room is fitted with advanced technology, enabling clients to conduct virtual and hybrid events, meeting the growing demand for sustainable events.



University of Leicester

Leicester Conferences, the event arm of the university, used creativity to bounce back from the effects of the pandemic.

It expanded over the past year, organising larger and more innovative conferences with the catering option developing from boxed breakfasts and lunches to hot and cold buffets, waitress-served meals, gala dinners, canapé options.

Leicester has used Expedia to boost its customer base, improving bed and breakfast sales and visibility as a conference and hotel location.

It has also adapted to hybrid facilities rapidly, delivering successful events, such as the launch of five new research institutes from the University of Leicester, which has opened the door to a different kind of event.

Business is looking good with 332 conferences already secured at an early stage of 2023. In total, it secured 464 conferences in 2022 and 60 conferences in 2021, both of which were affected by the pandemic.

Business Partnership of the Year



The University of Manchester

In 11 years as supplier of branded merchandise and apparel, Infinity Inc has shown a proactive approach to business opportunities.

In 2017, it refitted a gift shop providing next-day delivery and in-store embellishment with no outlay for the university.

Since opening, sales have increased by 263%, with more than 52,000 visitors in 2022 and an average conversion rate of over 46%.

Online sales also increased through a bespoke web shop which ships to alumni all over the world.

Staff also have a direct line of communication for quotes on branded items for their faculty or event, knowing items ordered will be on-brand.

A twice a year pop-up graduation stall sells merchandise and garments which are personalised and on demand to take home on the day. In 2022 this sold more than 900 garments in two weeks, worth in excess of £29,000.

Merchandise is also increasingly sustainable with 80% eco-friendly.



University of Leicester

University of Leicester partnered with Equans, a developer and supplier of technical facilities management, to build its new 1,164-room Freeman's Common residence.

Facilities management is shared between both teams across a site which features adaptable rooms for specific requirements, as well as facilities including a cinema, music rooms, a kitchen, and bar.

A special purpose vehicle (SPV) was established to deliver the project through a design, build, finance, maintain & operate (DBFMO) contract.

Sustainable technologies have been used to help the university move towards its net zero plus goals.

A 50-year hard FM contract provides technical services, estates management, exterior cleaning, and Wi-Fi.

The university focuses on providing residential services such as res life team in support of students including wellbeing issues and events.



University of Leeds

Since 2019, in partnership with Unipol, the University of Leeds has delivered a unique residence life programme for students with young families.

The university has one of the largest portfolios of student family accommodation in the UK, home to 747 individuals, enabling student parents to forge relationships with others like them.

Support for this often-neglected group focuses on mental, financial, and health and emotional aspects of being a student parent.

Since 2019, the programme has created dedicated residence life staff who deliver the programme, placing the needs of parents and their children first with many activities at weekends and during school holidays for convenience.

The programme now offers opportunities every month of the year and there has been an increase in student parent satisfaction since the establishment of the partnership, with 80% of ticketed events sold out and 35% of families booked for one or more event.

Best Marketing Campaign



University of Nottingham Sport

University of Nottingham's student-athletes teamed up to raise funds and awareness of men's health issues for charity Movember.

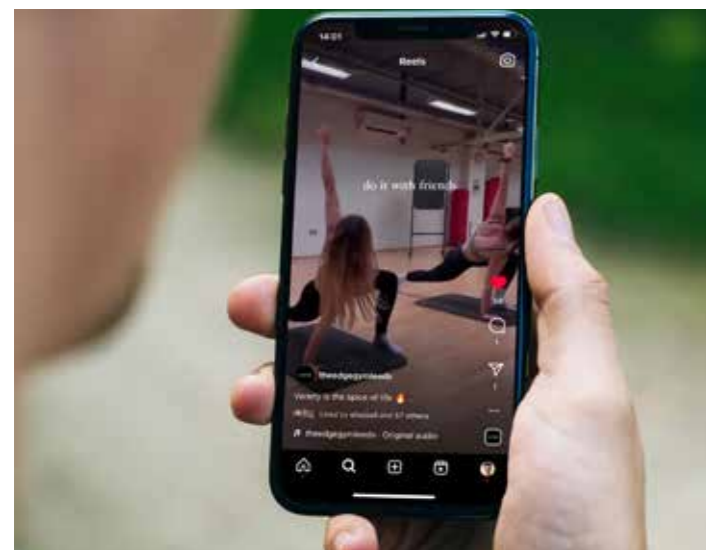
In solidarity with men with mental health conditions whose lives feel drained of colour, Nottingham's sport Instagram channel went black and white for a month, and received more than 200,000 views.

Mental health was foregrounded at major events, such as the headliner series with Red Bull, and a 'Let's Talk' series saw athletes and coaches sharing their experiences of mental health, encouraging everyone to talk about them.

A hard to miss 45m moustache was painted on the flagship rugby pitch, to spread the message.

Physical challenges were also added to the Moves+ app and more than 250 took part to emphasise the importance of exercise in improving mental health.

Nottingham raised more than £85,000 taking its total for the charity to £350,000.



University of Essex

Following a decrease in new student applications, the University of Essex needed to increase revenue from accommodation by increasing the number of rooms allocated to returning students.

Audience research determined the underlying reasons students used, or did not use, university accommodation, and shaped the marketing plan, activities and media choices.

A range of marketing activities raised awareness and promoted the benefits to students, such as redesigning the accommodation website to improve the user journey; use of live events, and targeted digital and non-digital media.

The campaign differentiated the university accommodation offering from the competition by adding personality and building trust.

Essex introduced a scheme which encouraged early bird bookings with a higher cashback than for those who waited, resulting in a 315% YoY increase in bookings.

The campaign achieved 160% of the returning student application target with 1,949 applications (against a target 1,200), and a cost per student of £8.51.



University of Leeds, Sales and Marketing

Following Covid, membership at University of Leeds' health club The Edge plummeted from 16,000 to 3,000. The club had to overhaul its marketing approach to respond to changed consumption of health and fitness, working patterns, spending power and leisure habits.

Research showed that potential users wanted different things from the gym but all wanted targeted digital content built for them, with communications from third party sources, peers and influencers.

Leeds recruited seven influencers with different personas to get a range of content that showcased the variety of facilities and programmes on offer at The Edge.

Influencers were trained and began posting during the first week of term and promoting The Edge across YouTube, Instagram and TikTok.

A target for membership sales of £1.89 million was exceeded at £2.009 million. Seven months into the campaign membership sales were outselling the same period in 2019.

Notes

A series of horizontal lines for taking notes on the right side of the page.



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