



CLEAR & HONEST MARKETING

THE HONEST UNI EXPERIENCE

STUDENT STORIES



“Student Stories gave prospective students something traditional prospectuses never could – an unfiltered, honest window into university life. Glued captured the authentic student voice through an engaging, intuitive platform that truly helped applicants make up their own minds about studying at Reading.”

Student Experience Team, University of Reading

Context: The University of Reading recognised that prospective undergraduates wanted more than slick brochures and polished marketing copy to decide where to study. Choosing a university is a major life pivot, and applicants wanted transparent, relatable accounts of what student life is genuinely like – covering the highs, the lows, and everything in between.

The requirements: The University needed a dedicated digital platform to host real peer experiences in audio, video, and written formats. To resonate with young prospective students, the site had to feel informal, candid, and non-judgmental—steering clear of institutional preachy tone or corporate polish. Technically, it required seamless multimedia playback, full transcripts, and flexible search functionality so visitors could browse by keyword, subject, or topic.

The outputs: Glued designed and built the custom Student Stories website and supporting promotional materials:

Tactile Design & Identity: Developed a friendly visual style anchored around a corkboard and polaroid motif, giving the digital space an authentic, community-driven feel.

Multimedia Content Hub: Custom-built structured templates for audio clips, video interviews, and written articles, complete with interactive transcripts.

Clear Proposition & Messaging: Established the straight-talking core message: “No advice, no judging, no nagging. Real students, real voices, real journeys.”

Targeted Search & Navigation: Implemented keyword tag clouds and topic filters (covering subjects like accommodation, work placements, fees, and making friends) to help prospective students quickly find answers to their specific concerns.

The results The platform provided applicants with a genuine, peer-to-peer resource that directly supported their decision to choose the University of Reading. By replacing generic promotional speak with real student voices, the site built trust with prospective applicants, enhanced open-day engagement, and demonstrated Reading’s commitment to transparency and student wellbeing.

The website was live 2010-2018 while the project was live.

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student stories: Feb 25, 2010

Being Shy at Uni

Story by Holly



Photo is not of the author

It's not easy being shy at uni. Well it's not easy being shy full stop, but those wonder whether you've forgotten your lines. So I found it a lot easier to take a deep breath and give myself a few seconds to calm down and think 'Sod it, what have I got to lose!'

In summary, I would say that regardless of whether you're more cocky and

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Sam lets us in on the trials and tribulations of getting used to uni life
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- Allison talks about coping with nerves in Freshers' Week
- Anna talks about coping with social nervousness in first year
- Anthony talks about overcoming social pressures and stereotypes
- Beth talks about feeling nervous and making friends in Freshers' Week
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Audio

Abidin talks about arriving in the UK as an international student

Chapter details: Abidin describes arriving at his accommodation, meeting British flatmates and feeling intimidated by English language and culture

Subject: Economics
Student status: International Finalist from Malaysia
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Transcript:

When I first got here I landed in Heathrow. I was with my friends so I didn't actually feel anything but the next day when we started to ... someone goes off to London uni and some to Edinburgh. I come to my university. When I first settled in my accommodation, it was very, very different and I was completely shocked to see I was living with some British ... I don't know they were British, to be honest, some random foreigners and I ... 'Oh my God, I'm not in Malaysia anymore and this is where I'm going to live in a year's time.'

So that evening, the first day, that evening, I went to the kitchen and started shaking hands with people because that is the Malaysian culture and they were like, 'Why are you shaking hands with us?' It's

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- Petra talks about finding it difficult to balance her academic work and social life
- Petra talks about not always keeping up

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Transcript:

The thing is not to waste a minute, any minute really. It's ... for instance, if I'm sitting in the car waiting for my children to do their piano lesson, then I have a book with me. You know, it's that kind of always have something there, just to keep on top of whatever's going on. And it doesn't have to be a book, it can be just make some notes about the next part of the next assignment, or even just sit and think about it; if you've got 10 minutes at the bus stop ... Well I don't think I have to consciously make myself do that, you just do it. And I know the other students, certainly the other students who are a little bit older like myself, we feel that every moment that we can study is absolutely precious: 'It's my time! And you become quite guarded about letting anything eat into it really.'

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English

Enter a search keyword or words and click 'Go' - click one of the tabs below to show your results in that section.

Top search keywords:

stress tutors Economics help sport literature loneliness work placement accommodation placement year international year abroad mature students part time job making friends

Select search categories below to refine your search further:

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Abidin talks about getting to grips with the English language
Abidin describes how he developed techniques to study in English and became more confident about his language skills
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Abidin talks about his experience of drinking and British social culture
Abidin initially felt pressured to socialise and drink but then found his friends didn't mind if he opted out
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Abidin talks about making friends with British and Malaysian people
Abidin explains that he did not have many close British friends and spent a lot of time with other Malaysian students
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Stephanie gives us an ongoing insight into her first year experience
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Find out how Sylvia's finding first year ...
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ABOUT GLUED

Established in 2003, Glued is committed to clear and honest marketing and communications. We help organisations connect people – externally through brand creation and marketing campaigns, and internally through immersive team-building experiences.

Our clients want to be proud of their organisation and brand, confident in their marketing, and delighted with the results. Many feel their business could deliver more or perform better, and our process is designed to unlock that potential.

If your potential customers or team are struggling to see what's at your core, the solution lies in articulating your valuable difference in a compelling, engaging, and relevant way.

We use a three-stage process to uncover the unique essence of your business and identify your valuable difference. This is embedded internally as a foundation for staff to build on, and externally as a basis for communication through effective branding and marketing.



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To strengthen your grip on what constitutes your core values, the answer lies in both your internal and external communications. That's why we now offer 'Teams Glued', a virtual reality team-building programme that helps people work better together—boosting productivity, collaboration, and staff retention.

SERVICES WE OFFER

Brand creation and development
Business support and training
Customer research
Display
Email marketing
Literature design
PPC campaigns
Social media campaigns
Team building
Video and photography
Website design and build

Glued is a brand and marketing agency based in the Worcester, helping your brand and marketing stick – inside and out. We connect people externally through compelling branding and campaigns, and internally through our VR team-building programme, Teams Glued.



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