

Marketing Tourism and Hospitality Courses Effectively

Get expert advice on how to market your further and higher education courses

DISCOVER INSIDE



20+ actionable ideas for promoting tourism and hospitality courses



Top tips to enhance your content and increase awareness



Marketing best practices and creative guidelines



Fáilte
Ireland

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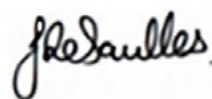
Welcome to your Tourism & Hospitality Marketing Guide for Further and Higher Education

Now more than ever, it's important to showcase the fantastic career opportunities available in the tourism and hospitality industry. Despite recent turbulent times, our sector offers a multitude of exciting roles for young people, and there is a variety of further and higher education courses to help them take their first steps toward a career in tourism and hospitality.

Recent research conducted by Fáilte Ireland and Kantar, the world's leading data, insights and consulting company, showed that lack of awareness is one of the main barriers preventing new people from considering further and higher education courses in the tourism and hospitality sector.

This guide has been developed to provide marketing strategies and best practices for promoting further and higher education tourism and hospitality courses to increase awareness and interest in the industry. Packed with actionable tips and advice, it will help you market your courses effectively, covering everything from how to communicate with your audience to creative guidelines for social media and video.

We hope that you find this guide useful and that it helps you attract top talent and prepare the next generation of leaders in the tourism and hospitality industry.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J DeSaulles".

Jenny DeSaulles,
Director of sector
Development,
Fáilte Ireland



How to use this guide

Attracting new talent is crucial for our industry. This guide will help you understand how to create a strong marketing plan that resonates with your target audience and inspires them to choose tourism and hospitality courses.

In this guide, you will find information on:

- ✓ **Developing compelling marketing messages**
- ✓ **Enhancing course page content**
- ✓ **Creative guidelines for social media and video**
- ✓ **Expanding your reach**

We recommend using this guide to help you develop and execute the marketing plan for your further and higher education tourism and hospitality courses. By following the outlined guidelines, you can effectively attract and retain a diverse and talented people for your courses, ultimately leading to increased enrolment and success.



GOOD TO KNOW

Students are often impressed and surprised by the range and breadth of tourism and hospitality courses available.

Kantar, 2022

Key findings

Fáilte Ireland conducted a broad piece of research with Kantar, looking into the appeal of further and higher education courses in tourism and hospitality and the efficacy of promotional and marketing material produced by colleges offering courses in this space. The research consisted of focus groups with target audiences and an analysis by an expert in semiotics to produce a holistic review of the material currently out there.

Review the key findings below and discover recommendations on how to positively influence perceptions of the tourism and hospitality sector through your marketing and content creation.

1 There's little to no positive conversations on social media regarding a career in tourism and hospitality.
Generate positive conversations online and share testimonials and success stories to inspire your target audience.

2 There is a general perception of uncertainty in the sector which can alienate career entrants.
Reassure people that tourism

is back on track and future-proofed, and that a qualification in tourism and hospitality is multi-dimensional.

3 There is a low awareness of the career opportunities in tourism and hospitality, from both an academic and professional perspective.
Shine a light on the breadth of future possibilities with the qualification in question; you can be your own boss, manage a team etc.

4 Experience in the industry can help to renew appeal.
Talk about the positive experiences that the sector delivers on.

5 There are strong associations with tourism and hospitality professions that are customer facing e.g. hotel management and event management.
Show the fun, lively side of a career in tourism and hospitality by using visuals of young, vibrant people interacting.

6 Most people seek courses that provide career progression and security (salary).
Highlight the opportunities for work placements, skills for life and entrepreneurial learning skills in your content.



What are the emotional triggers that connect with learners?

The emotional triggers that may connect with tourism and hospitality learners on social media vary depending on the target audience and the conveyed message. However, some commonly effective emotional triggers include:

1 A sense of adventure and excitement: Many people are drawn to careers in tourism and hospitality because of the opportunity to travel and experience new cultures and destinations. Marketing content that emphasises the exciting and adventurous aspects may be effective in connecting with this audience.

2 The opportunity to make a positive impact: Many people interested in careers in tourism and hospitality are motivated by the opportunity to make a positive difference



in the world. Marketing content that emphasises how this field can help people, communities and the environment may be effective in engaging this audience.

3 The potential for personal and professional growth: Tourism and hospitality careers can

provide individuals with opportunities for personal and professional growth, as well as the chance to learn new skills and gain experience in a dynamic and exciting industry. Marketing content assets that highlight these opportunities will engage potential students.

How to build excitement with your content

✔ **Use vivid, engaging language:** Language is a powerful tool for creating excitement and energy in marketing content. Use action verbs and vivid adjectives to describe the experiences, destinations and opportunities available in the tourism and hospitality industry.

✔ **Include stunning visuals:** Visual images are key to creating excitement in tourism and

hospitality content. Use high-quality images and videos of beautiful destinations, exciting activities and satisfied customers to capture the audience's attention.

✔ **Emphasise the benefits and rewards:** Focus on tourism and hospitality as a career, not just a job. Hone in on the potential for personal and professional growth, as well as the opportunity to make a positive impact.

✔ **Share success stories and testimonials:** Hearing from others who have pursued careers in tourism and hospitality can be a powerful way to build engagement and trust. Share success stories and testimonials from people who have achieved their major goals to inspire and motivate.



How to convey practical information in an engaging way

To convey practical information in an engaging way, it's important to focus on content hierarchy, messaging and calls to action. This can be achieved through the following steps:

1 Identify the key points and messages you want to convey and organise this information into a clear hierarchy e.g. the most important information should feature first, and secondary and tertiary information should follow. This will help to ensure that users can easily navigate your content.

2 Be clear and concise in your messaging and avoid using jargon or complex language that may be difficult to

understand. This will help your audience to easily grasp the information you're presenting.

3 Use visual elements, such as images, videos and graphics, to support and enhance your messages. These elements can help to make your content more engaging and interesting.

4 Include calls to action throughout your content to encourage your audience and prospective students

to take the next step. This will help to ensure that your content is actionable and that potential students are motivated to engage with your courses.

Overall, by focusing on content hierarchy, messaging and calls to action, you can convey practical information in an engaging way that will resonate with your audience and encourage them to take the next step.



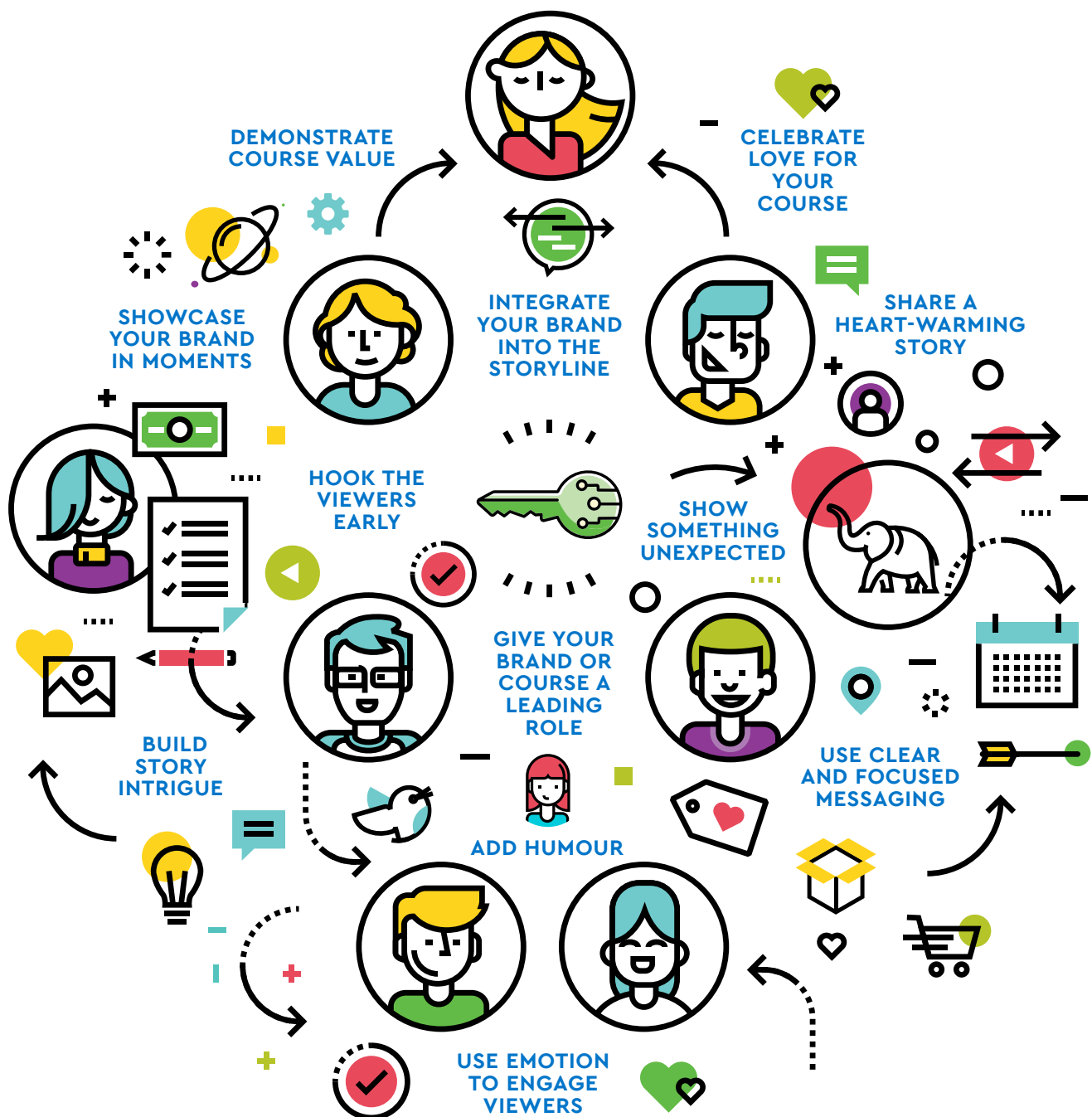
Best practice in digital communications – The hooks

- 1 Engage the audience early:** To capture the attention of your audience and keep them engaged, it's important to start building excitement and interest as early as possible in your digital communication. This may involve using eye-catching images or headlines to grab your audience's attention and draw them in.
- 2 Keep your brand central to the creative:** To maintain a consistent brand image, remember to keep your brand at the centre of your digital communication. This may involve using your brand colours, fonts and logo consistently throughout the content, as well as incorporating your brand's values and message into the creative.
- 3 Use emotion to connect with your audience:** Emotion is a powerful tool for building a relationship with your audience. Use emotional language and images to create a strong emotional response and to motivate people to engage with your content.
- 4 Be clear and direct with your messaging:** To effectively communicate your ideas to students, ensure that you are clear with your messaging. Avoid using jargon or complex language, and instead, use simple, straightforward wording that is easy to understand and act on.

By engaging the audience early, keeping your brand central to the creative, using emotion, and being clear and direct with your messaging, you can create effective digital communication that connects with your audience and encourages them to engage with your content.

Key points to consider in your digital communications

Keep these key points in mind when you are creating content that focuses on sharing the experiences of current students as part of your digital communications.



Tips for your course page content

When a potential student visits a tourism and hospitality course page, they want to be inspired, excited and motivated by the prospects of a career in the industry. To do this, your content should focus on emotionally engaging students from the onset and highlight the wealth of opportunities that a course, and a career, in tourism and hospitality can bring.

Here are some actionable tips to help you to optimise your content and ensure your audience is engaged and remains on the course page for longer.

01



TITLE

- ✓ Keep the title engaging while also short and simple
- ✓ Titles including the terms 'management', 'event management' and 'tourism and business' have proven to be compelling

02



COURSE CONTENT

- ✓ Highlight the opportunities to study abroad
- ✓ Include information on work placements
- ✓ Showcase real-world experiences, such as working on real-life projects
- ✓ Highlight learned lifelong skills, such as communication, teamwork and customer service
- ✓ Course content that mentions areas like social media management and entrepreneur or business management catches more attention

03



INFORMATION

- ✓ Highlight career opportunities or companies that they could work for after completing the course
- ✓ Share practical information, such as entry requirements, duration of the course, location, fees and contact details
- ✓ Include a breakdown of the course content by year (with links to learn more)
- ✓ Share the salary range for relevant careers
- ✓ Include a sample weekly timetable
- ✓ Include data on the number of people employed in the industry

04



LANGUAGE

- ✓ Choose simple English
- ✓ Use informative but not overly descriptive language
- ✓ Be clear and concise
- ✓ Break up lengthy paragraphs with bullet points



Design tips for your course page content

While a course page needs to be informative, it should also be visually appealing. If used effectively, visuals can be a powerful tool for engaging your target audience. Use high-quality images and videos and be mindful of their size and placement on the course page. Here are some top tips to enhance the design of your course page.



WEBPAGE DESIGN

- ✓ Use a clear, easy-to-read font
- ✓ Make the page interactive with clickable links
- ✓ Avoid adding too much text
- ✓ Use headings to create clearly signposted topics



IMAGES

- ✓ Highlight the fun factor with youth-focused images
- ✓ Use a wide variety of images and bright colours to catch the eye
- ✓ Use automatic revolving slideshows
- ✓ Showcase pictures of the campus and people studying



MEDIA

- ✓ Place videos at the top of the page
- ✓ Keep videos no longer than 2-3 minutes
- ✓ Ensure high quality
- ✓ Keep the content meaningful, engaging and fun
- ✓ Tell current and past student stories and share professional testimonials

Creative guidelines for social media

Social media is an important tool for attracting new learners, and tourism and hospitality courses lend themselves well to daily content for platforms like Instagram, Twitter and TikTok.

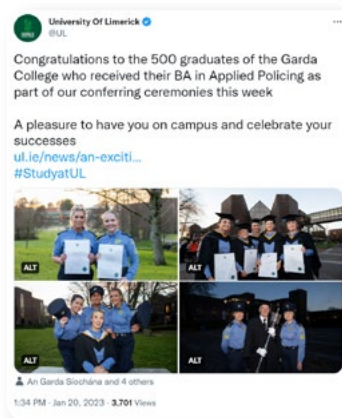
When creating social media content, the goal is to engage your target audience and showcase the unique value of the tourism and hospitality sector.

Try to incorporate elements of creativity and personality into your posts while also making sure to clearly communicate the important information.

✓ **Make it visual.** In the world of social media, a picture is worth a thousand words. Visually appealing content like images and videos can help to engage and grab your target audience's attention. You can include images of a class in progress or even potential tourism and hospitality job prospects.

✓ **Share a story.** Storytelling is a powerful tool and can be used to showcase tourism and hospitality courses in a more exciting way. Rather than just listing the course details, share success stories or testimonials from alumni to give a sense of what your target audience can expect from the course.

✓ **Mind the tone.** The way you convey the message is often as important as the message itself. Use a tone that is friendly and welcoming.



✓ **Keep it short.** With social media, less is often more. Use short, punchy headlines and keep your posts concise and to the point.



✓ **Engage with followers.** Social media is all about engagement and interaction, so it's important to not just post content but also engage with followers. Encourage interaction and engagement by asking questions, running polls and responding to comments and messages. This also helps to create a sense of community.

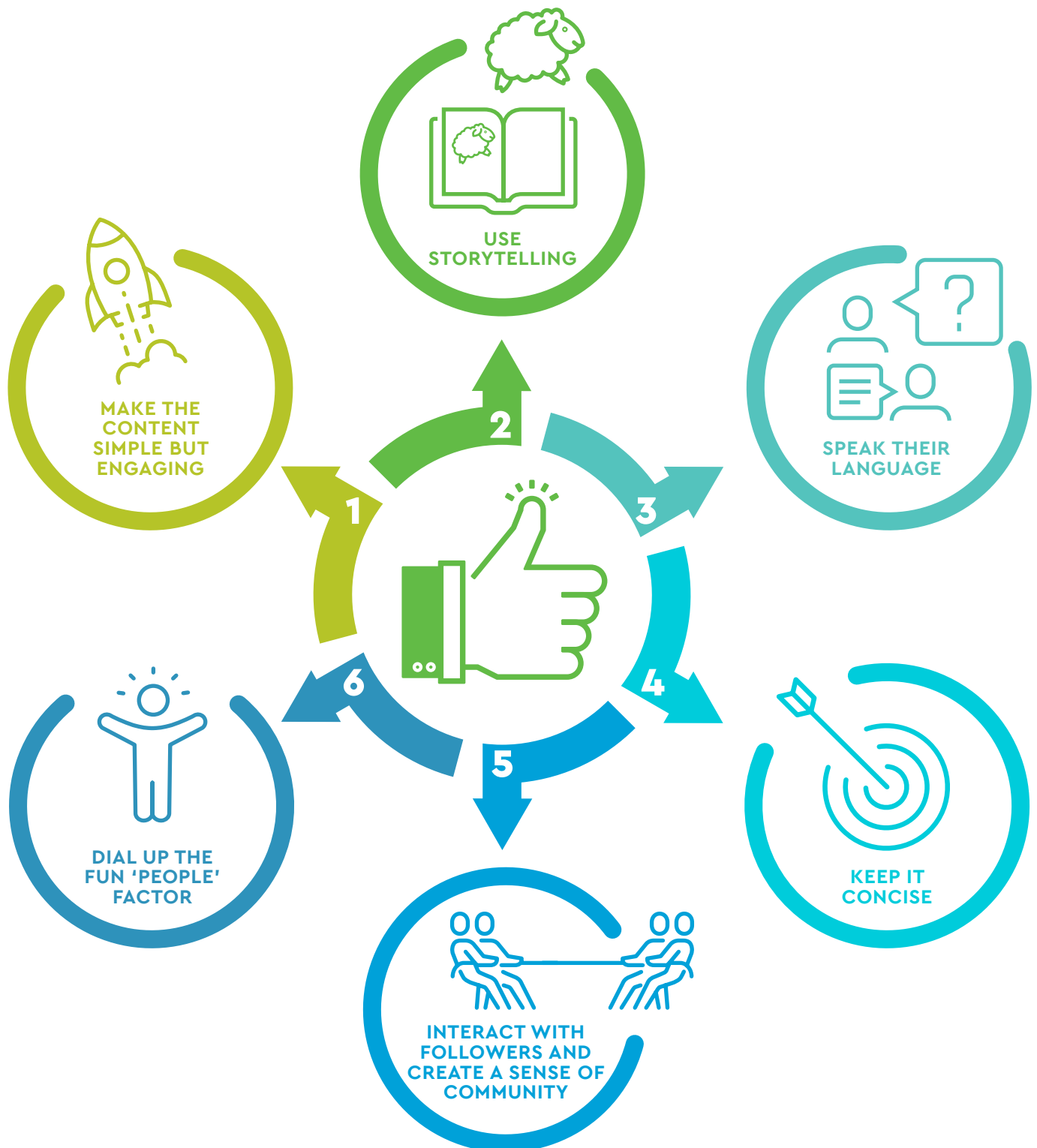
✓ **Keep it exciting.** Create excitement by sharing behind-the-scenes content showcasing a day in the life of a student, college nightlife, extracurricular activities or opportunities for studying abroad. Encourage current students to share their own content (user-generated content). Set guidelines for them to follow to ensure the content meets the mark.



TOP TIP

If you're unsure what social media channels are best for your target audience, speak with your marketing department for guidance, tips and trends.

6 key points to consider when posting on social media



Creative guidelines for websites

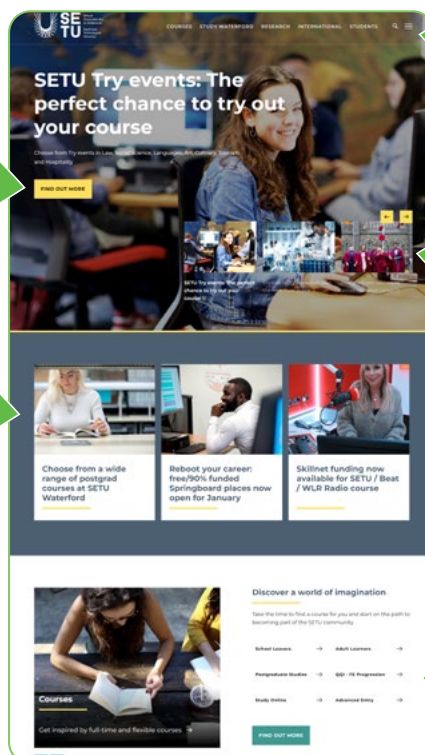
Website design can have a big impact on how a course is perceived by your target audience. A well-designed website can convey a professional image and make it easy for your audience to navigate and find the information they need. On the other hand, a poorly designed website can create a negative impression and make it difficult for your audience to see the available opportunities, which could discourage them from considering a course, and a career, in tourism and hospitality.

Incorporate the following design tips to optimise your website and course page design.

- ✓ Insert visually appealing design elements, such as vivid colours and high-quality images and videos, to showcase the exciting career opportunities in tourism and hospitality. Videos and slideshows work well at the top of the page to catch the attention of your audience from the onset.
- ✓ Use a clear, easy-to-read font and make information easy to find.
- ✓ Include interactive elements, such as polls and personality tests, to engage and interact with your audience.
- ✓ Add social media integrations, such as links to Instagram or TikTok, to connect with your audience and provide additional resources and information.
- ✓ Choose responsive design to ensure that the website is accessible and easy to use on a variety of devices, including smartphones and tablets.
- ✓ Use clear and concise language, avoiding industry jargon and technical terms that may be confusing to your audience.
- ✓ Add bullet points, headings, icons and dropdown menus to break up large sections of text that students can find off-putting and difficult to read.
- ✓ Provide a contact form or email address for potential students to get in touch with questions or enquiries about the course.

Prominent call-to-action button

Diverse selection of high-quality images

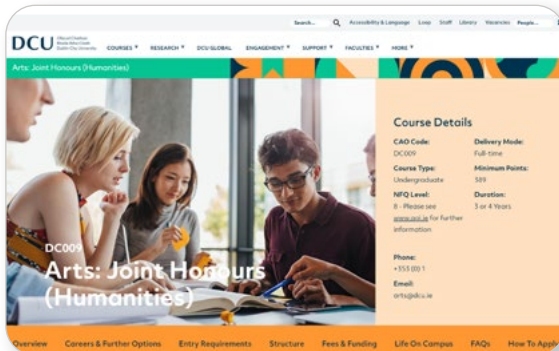


Easy-to-navigate menu

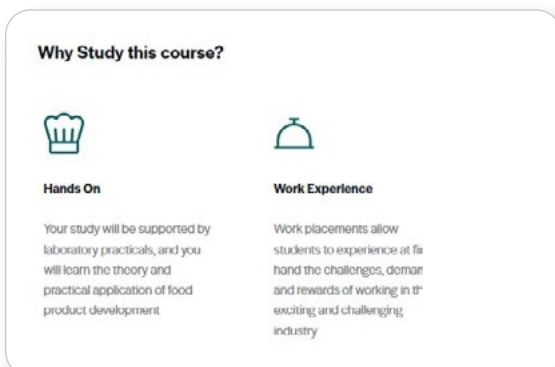
Automatic revolving slideshow

Clearly labelled information

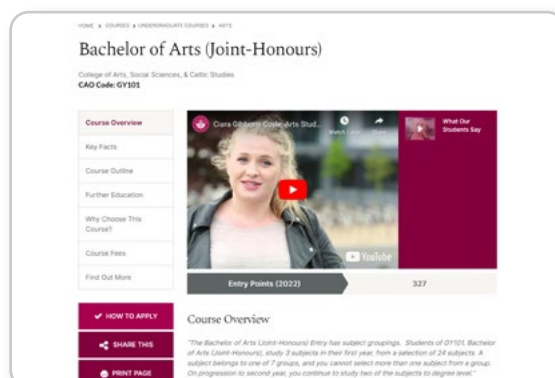
Examples of good design



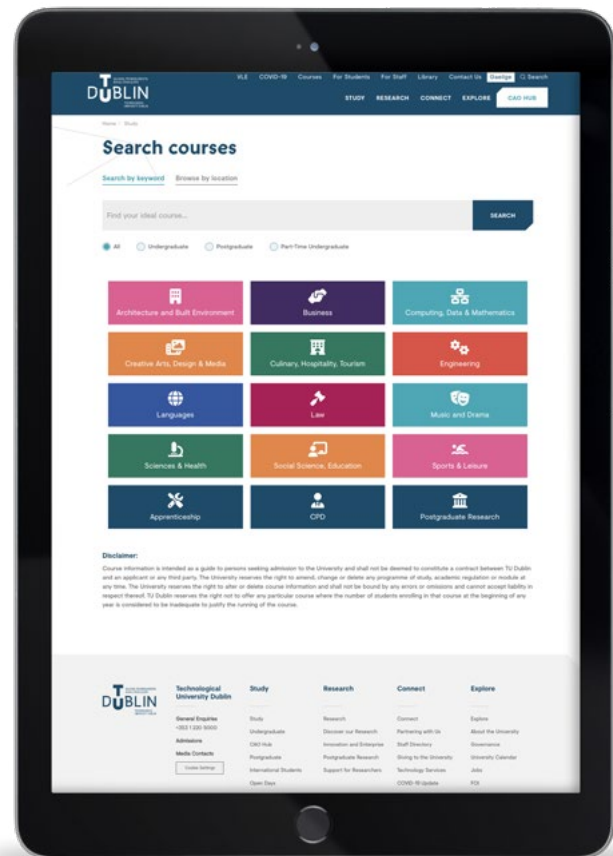
- 1 Highlighting key details at the top of the page ensures important information isn't missed.



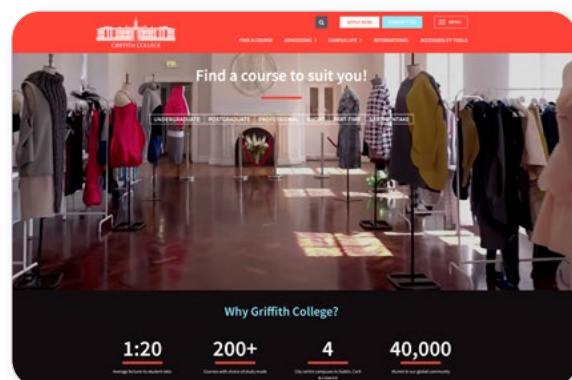
- 2 Using icons is a great way to break the monotony of the texts.



- 4 Videos at the top of the course page generate excitement and catch users' attention from the onset.



- 3 Bright colours have a high attraction power. They call attention to the site and invite users to explore.



- 5 Moving images can create a strong impact.



Creative guidelines for video

In today's digital world, video content is king. To create successful content that drives consideration, videos should be short, sharp, visually engaging and speak your target audience's language. Try to incorporate the following points when creating video content for your courses.

- ✓ Choose visually appealing locations and settings, such as beautiful beaches, stunning hotels and breathtaking landscapes, to showcase the exciting career opportunities available in tourism and hospitality.

- ✓ Include interview snippets with industry professionals, such as restaurant managers, tour guides and marketing executives, to give viewers a glimpse into the diverse available career paths.

- ✓ Showcase past student success stories, highlighting their experiences and achievements while studying in the field.

- ✓ Insert engaging and dynamic visuals, such as animation or

graphics, to illustrate key concepts and career opportunities. You can use a free tool like Canva to add simple graphics to your video content.

- ✓ Add a lively and upbeat soundtrack to set the video tone and keep viewers interested.

- ✓ In a digital environment where users quickly lose interest, it's important to keep your videos short (no longer than 2-3 minutes) and to the point. Be clear on the purpose of your video and what objectives you hope to achieve. Focus on key points and benefits of taking the courses.

- ✓ Use captions or subtitles to make the video accessible to a

wider audience. Platforms like YouTube, Instagram and TikTok can automatically generate captions for you.

- ✓ Promote the course and its benefits at the end of the video with a clear call-to-action. Provide information on how to apply and encourage viewers to take the next step towards a rewarding career in tourism and hospitality.



TOP TIP

Check out the videos below for inspiration. See **page 17** for more tips on how to create effective video content on a smaller budget.





GOOD TO KNOW

Canva is a free-to-use online graphic design tool. Use it to create videos, add logos, graphics and more on a budget.

Best practice example for video

Good video content is a valuable tool for attracting a new audience. It can be used across your website and social media channels. This [video](#) from an international hotel management school is a great example of a student testimonial that can be easily replicated and used to market any tourism and hospitality course in Ireland.

Watch the video then check out the tips below to find out why it's a best practice example and how you can create something similar for your course, no matter your budget.

Visually appealing background:

The background is eye-catching and helps to showcase the exciting career opportunities available in tourism and hospitality. Even if you use a mobile phone to record your video content, a beautiful local landscape can enhance the quality and make your video more appealing to watch from start to finish.

Highlights course/career benefits:

Kayleigh's story gives a sense of what prospective can expect from the course as well as the skills learned and available career paths.

Fun factor: The video contains snippets of students laughing and having fun on campus. Make sure to capture footage of students at your next open day or on a course trip. This will ensure you have a bank of footage saved for multiple video use in the future.

Simple graphics: The graphics and animations add an extra dimension of interest to the video, helping

to grab the viewer's attention and keep them engaged. You can use Instagram or TikTok to add animations or text to your own video content.

Short and sweet: The video is under 3 minutes. Content like this can also be cut to create even shorter videos that are optimal for social media. You can use a free tool like Canva to easily trim or cut a video into shorter segments.

8 steps to creating engaging video content that users won't skip



How to expand your reach

If you have utilised the best practice tips shared on previous pages to enhance your own website, social media and video content, the next step is to expand your reach. Follow these tips to reach a wider audience and help build the appeal of your course offerings.

1 Post engaging and informative content related to your course on social media. Always include a link back to your course page to encourage more traffic.

2 Tag relevant industry partners on social media such as [@careersportal.ie](https://www.careersportal.ie) and [@IHfcomms](https://www.ihfcomms.com) so that they might see and share your content with their audiences.

3 Utilise SEO (search engine optimisation) to help your content appear higher in Google search results. Today, people often use

search engines like Google to find courses they're interested in. By improving your SEO, you can help increase your visibility to your target audience. [Learn more about SEO](#) on Fáilte Ireland's free online course.

4 Host online events such as webinars and Instagram Lives to reach a wider audience. Partner with other institutions, invite industry experts and course lecturers to speak and provide opportunities for people to ask questions.

5 Send out regular email newsletters to current students, alumni and potential students, highlighting course updates and events. Encourage recipients to share the content with their network.

6 TourismCareers.ie is a great additional step for promoting your further or higher education course. The brand regularly shares content promoting third-level tourism and hospitality courses on its website and social media accounts. Send your content



ideas to Eimear Sinnott esinnott@careersportal.ie for inclusion on [TourismCareers.ie](https://www.tourismcareers.ie), and check out a recent Instagram Q&A session with further and higher education institutions to promote tourism and hospitality courses across Ireland.



Your content checklist

Checklist

To help you create the best possible content for your further and higher education courses, we have put together a list of the top tips from this guide that you should follow when updating or developing new material.

	Use student and professional voices to showcase real-life experiences and advice. This can include interviews and testimonials from current or past students who have pursued a career in tourism and hospitality. For example, a day in the life of a student on your course.
	Focus on the future opportunities available in the sector, highlighting trends and emerging roles that your audience can consider pursuing after completing your course.
	Provide information on job prospects , including availability and locations, job descriptions and average salaries. This can help your audience understand the potential career paths available to them.
	Share success stories from past students who have entered the sector, including their experiences, challenges and achievements. This can help inspire and motivate your audience.
	Include data on the number of people employed in the tourism and hospitality sector, along with the top companies to work for. This can help your audience understand the size and scope of the industry and the opportunities available.
	Use a variety of content formats , such as videos and images, to keep the content engaging and inspiring. This can help your audience feel more connected to the course material and motivated to pursue a career in the sector.
	Share your optimised content on social media and with TourismCareers.ie to help expand your reach.



TOP TIP

Make the most of Fáilte Ireland's content on your website and social media channels. Fáilte Ireland has created lots of best practice marketing content for [TourismCareers.ie](https://www.tourismcareers.ie) which is also free for you to use to help tell your story. Check out this [great example of a video](#) that was created to promote women in tourism. You can contact michelle.donovan@failteireland.ie to access more profile videos and images shot at locations across Ireland.

