Prospective undergraduate student user personas

Simon – Scottish student
Emily – rest of UK student
Abby – International student
Bruno – Non-native English speaker
Danny – direct entrant to 2nd year
Juno - incoming year abroad student
Sally – prospective undergraduate student with disabilities

Simon – Scottish student
Age: 17-years old
Location: Edinburgh, Scotland

Background information

Simon is a prospective undergraduate looking into studying Chemistry at the University of St Andrews.

Simon wishes to remain in Scotland to study, so is interested in comparing Chemistry undergraduate courses offered by Scottish universities. After graduating, he would like to work as a Chemical Engineer so is particularly interested in career prospects, links with industry and testimonials from former students. In addition to this, he is also interested in accommodation options, price of living and extra-curricular activities, and how these compare to other Scottish universities.

Technical competence

Simon is a very confident user of technology. The majority of his internet use is via smartphone or tablet.

Communication

Simon would rather communicate via email. He is researching his options and contacting lots of different universities so likes to keep a paper trail of all correspondence. However, he would also like the opportunity to make a phone call if he has specific questions to ask.
Goals

Simon wants to study Chemistry in Scotland with the long-term aim of becoming a Chemical Engineer. He wants to find the course that is going to provide him with the best opportunities in his chosen field.

Information required

- Career prospects
- Links with industry
- Department facilities
- Entrance requirements
- Accommodation options
- Price of living
- Extra-curricular activities

Emily – English student

Age: 17-years old
Location: Surrey, England

Background information

Emily is a prospective undergraduate looking into studying Modern Languages at the University of St Andrews.

As an English student, Emily is liable for tuition fees so she would like information on these in order to compare other institutions. She would also be interested in knowing if she is eligible for any scholarships too. Of the Universities she is considering, St Andrews is the farthest from her home so Emily would like information on transport links and getting to/from the town.

Emily is interested in studying Modern Languages primarily for the study abroad options associated with these degrees. She is not sure what languages she wants to study though, so would like to know the different combinations that she can apply for - along with the study abroad options for each one. She is also interested to learn about extracurricular activities associated with Modern Languages e.g. societies, language exchanges etc.

Technical competence

Emily is a very confident user of technology. The majority of her internet use is via smartphone or tablet.
Communication

Emily is applying through UCAS so the majority of correspondence concerning her application will be through this system. She would, however, like the option to contact someone at the University via phone prior to her application if she has any questions or concerns.

Goals

Emily would like to know about tuition fees and her eligibility for scholarships. She is interested in Modern Languages and opportunities to study abroad.

Information required

- Tuition fees
- Scholarships
- Travel information
- Study abroad opportunities
- Degree options
- Entrance requirements
- How to apply

Abby – American student

Age: 17-years old

Location: Columbus, Ohio

Background information

Abby is a prospective undergraduate student considering studying International Relations at the University of St Andrews.

Abby has never travelled outwith the US before so her primary concern is information on moving to and studying at St Andrews - including visa applications, tuition fees and accommodation options. She is quite nervous about moving to a new country where she doesn't know anyone so would also like the opportunity to get in touch with people from the same area as her who attend St Andrews. Abby is also not sure how her American school qualifications translate into the Scottish system so would like information on international entrance requirements.
Technical competence

Abby is a very confident user of technology. Her internet use is split between her smartphone, tablet and laptop.

Communication

Abby would like to receive all official University correspondence via email. However, she would really appreciate the opportunity to discuss the University face to face with an Admissions agent - both her and her parents have questions and concerns that they would like to talk over with someone.

Goals

Abby would like to understand everything involved in moving to the UK, especially the visa application process. She would also like to get in contact with people from her local area prior to travelling to Scotland who will be attending the University.

Information required

- Visa process
- Tuition fees
- Accommodation
- Entrance requirements
- Living in Scotland

Bruno – Brazilian student

Age: 17-years old

Location: São Paulo, Brazil

Background information

Bruno is a prospective undergraduate looking into studying Physics at the University of St Andrews.

Although competent in English, Bruno has never lived in an English speaking country and is worried about his ability to keep up in English speaking lectures and actively participate in tutorials. He would like to know about entrance requirements, specifically English language proficiency, and any implications for visa applications in terms of not being a native English speaker. He is also wondering what English language support would be available through the University while he is studying.
He would also like to know about accommodation options and information about moving to and living in St Andrews.

Technical competence

Bruno is a very confident user of technology. He splits his internet use between smartphone, tablet and laptop.

Communication

Bruno would prefer to send and receive emails rather than talk over the phone. He likes to have time to proofread his writing and he is not confident in his ability to understand phone conversations in English. Also, the time difference would make the timing of phone calls difficult.

Goals

Bruno is primarily interested in English language proficiency requirements and English language support that would be available through the University while he is studying. He is also curious as to how his school qualifications translate into the Scottish system, and whether his degree will be recognised by Brazilian employers.

Information required

- Entrance requirements
- English language requirements
- ELT summer schools
- ELT support
- Tuition fees
- Visa process
- Living in Scotland

Danny – direct entrant to 2nd year

Age: 17-years old

Location: Cardiff, Wales

Background information

Danny is a prospective undergraduate exploring the option of direct entry into second year to study Computer Science at the University of St Andrews.
Danny is an excellent candidate for direct entry to second year having achieved excellent grades at school and also undertaken a computer science industry work placement. He is exploring the option of direct entry into second year so would firstly like to know if this is available in his chosen subject.

He also has doubts about whether direct entry into second year would be the best choice for him. He wonders if he will miss out on important first year experiences so would like to know what benefits there are to direct entry to 2nd year to help inform his decision. He would also like to know if any extra support would be available to help him make the transition into second year.

Technical competence

Danny is a very confident user of technology. He splits his internet use between smartphone, tablet and laptop.

Communication

Danny would prefer to communicate via email, unless he has a specific question in which case he’d like to have the option to speak to someone over the phone.

Goals

Danny would like to know if direct entry into second year is possible in his chosen subject, and the additional entrance requirements for this.

Information required

- Programmes that allow direct entry into second year
- Additional entrance requirements
- Benefits of direct entry
- Support for direct entry students
- How to apply
- Tuition fees
- Accommodation
Juno – incoming undergraduate study abroad student

Age: 20-years old
Location: Hong Kong

Background information

Juno is a second year student at University of Hong Kong who is interested in coming to St Andrews for a semester abroad. Due to his mother’s job, he has lived in a range of different countries and he thinks that a semester abroad would look good on his academic transcript.

Because of his strong academic record in Management, Juno wants to ensure that any study abroad programme that he joins will allow for academic credits to be transferred back to his home institution. He is also interested in taking some new classes during his time abroad. Juno would prefer to be in a shared room in a town centre hall as to be able to make friends quickly.

Technical competence

Is an adept user of technology, including new technology. His internet usage is almost entirely on his smartphone.

Communication

Juno is not receiving all that much support from his home institution so he requires a lot of communication from St Andrews. He expects to be able to call and speak to a member of University staff who will know which stage of the application process he is at and will become frustrated if he has to repeat the same information to multiple members of staff. Juno can be lax at checking his emails regularly.

Goals

Juno wants to know before he applies how likely he is to be offered a place to study abroad at St Andrews. He also wants to know what courses he could take, and whether the credits could be transferred back to his home institution.
Information required

• How likely he is to be offered a place
• What academic courses could be taken
• Can credits be transferred

Sally – prospective undergraduate student

Age: 17-years old
Location: Kent, England

Background information

A prospective undergraduate interested in studying Economics and Management at the University of St Andrews. Sally is very interested in attending St Andrews but requires a lot of reassurance that the University will be able to support her, due to her disability, which makes it difficult for her to walk long distances and requires her to have regular hospital appointments. Sally has had outstanding support from her sixth form and has applied to other Universities, including the London School of Economics, Durham and York. St Andrews is the furthest distance from her family and she is concerned that without them in close proximity, she may struggle at University.

Technical competence

Is a confident user of technology. Her internet use is split between her smartphone and her laptop.

Communication

Sally would rather email than call the University, as she sometimes gets anxious when talking about her disability.

Goals

Sally thinks that it is vital for her to visit the Universities to discover whether she will be able to cope with the depends of living in each setting. She also needs reassurance that academic staff will not penalize her for missing classes due to hospital appointments.
Information required

• Accommodation
• Timetable scheduling
• Student support
Prospective postgraduate taught student user persona

Harris – prospective postgraduate taught student
Age: 22 years old
Location: St Andrews, Scotland. Originally from Colorado, USA

Background information

A current undergraduate at the University, Harris is now exploring whether he could continue on to a Masters at St Andrews.

Harris at the start of his fourth year of a Computer Science degree at St Andrews which he has enjoyed greatly. He would eventually like to attain a PhD, but is currently focusing on Masters programmes. He is on course to attain a First and could probably acquire a substantial scholarship were he to apply to courses back in the USA, but Harris has a good relationship with the School of Computer Science and would like to stay in St Andrews if possible.

Technical competence

Is a highly confident user of technology. His internet use is split between a desktop device in the School of Computer Science, his smart phone and a large tablet device.

Communication

Harris already has a strong relationship with the School of Computer Science and would usually go to the School first with questions about his application. He is sometimes disorganized and often asks the same question multiple times. He is already aware of the University’s structure, processes and some tools, such as the ask a question online facility.

Goals

Harris would like to undertake a PGT course from the School of Computer Science, but is unsure about whether he could afford the fees for an overseas student. He is also confused as to how to extend his student visa to allow for further study, and wants to know whether he would have to leave the UK after his undergraduate graduation.
Information required

- Information on PGT courses in Computer Science
- Funding for overseas students
- Visa information
Prospective postgraduate research student user personas

Erin – EU prospective postgraduate research student
Andy – International prospective postgraduate student
Fernando – Non-native English speaker

Erin – Irish prospective PGR student
Age: 30-years old
Location: Dublin, Republic of Ireland

Background information

Erin is a prospective postgraduate research student currently based in Dublin. She has been working as a research assistant in Sustainability at University College Dublin. She is considering undertaking a PhD to further her career and has a well-established professional relationship with a researcher in Sustainable Development at the University of St Andrews whom she would like to be her supervisor.

Her primary concern is funding, so she would like to know about any funding and scholarships that she may be eligible for, including research council funding. Erin is also considering starting a family in the future and would like to know if she would be able to take time out from her studies to do this, what support may be available and any implications this may have on her funding.

Technical competence

Erin is a competent user of technology. The majority of his internet use is via her tablet or desktop computer.

Communication

Erin has already found a potential supervisor at the University with whom she is in regular email contact with. She would also like to receive all official communication from the University via email.
Goals

Erin’s primary concern is money and she would like to find out about the funding and scholarship opportunities she may be eligible for.

Information required

- Funding and scholarships
- PhD maternity leave and support
- Research and networking opportunities
- Professional development

Andy – Australian prospective PGR student

Age: 25-years old

Location: Brisbane, Australia

Background information

Andy is interested in applying for a postgraduate research degree in biomedical science at the University of St Andrews.

He has found two potential research supervisors and wishes to know if he should contact both or whether there is the opportunity to have more than one supervisor. Andy is also not clear about how his Australian degree translates into the Scottish system so would like some more in-depth information about entrance requirements.

Money is another concern for Andy, so he would like to know about any funding opportunities or scholarships that he might be eligible for, including research council scholarships, should he choose to study at St Andrews.

Aside from these concerns, he would like to know about the research activities of the School of Medicine, opportunities to co-author papers and participate in research while studying at the University and networking opportunities.

Technical competence

Andy is a proficient user of technology and his internet use is split between his laptop and smartphone.
Communication

Andy believes he has found two potential supervisors; so would like to know who he can contact to talk about whether this is allowed. He would like to receive all correspondence via email as he is conscience that the time difference would make telephone calls difficult.

Goals

Andy would like to know if there are any suitable supervisors at the University of St Andrews School of Medicine whose research activities align with his own interests. He would also like more specific information about entrance requirements; scholarships and funding; and opportunities to participate in research during the course of his studies.

Information required

- Available supervisors
- Research activities
- Research outputs
- Entrance requirements
- Funding/scholarships
- Research opportunities

Fernando – international prospective PhD student

Age: 25-years old
Location: Spain

Background information

Fernando has recently completed a Masters’ degree in Mediaeval History at Complutense University of Madrid. He is interested in being supervised by a member of the School of History for a PhD. Fernando has an offer of funding from a Spanish research institution and so funding is not a concern for him.

Whilst Fernando has experience in academic writing in English, he has never attended an English speaking University and is worried that he will have to pass an English proficiency test in order to be accepted at St Andrews. He is aware that he may require support in transitioning to the UK. He is also concerned that he may be overwhelmed by the application process, which is entirely in English.
Technical competence

Comfortable using technology, although sometimes struggles with long web pages or emails which are entirely in English. Uses a laptop and smartphone to access the internet.

Communication

Fernando prefers to email the University so that he can proof read his replies before sending them. Fernando is in touch with his potential supervisor, the School of History secretary and with Admissions and would prefer it if he did not have to repeat the same information to each party.

Goals

Fernando would like to be given an offer to start a PhD at St Andrews, ideally with support for his English language skills. He is aware that he is lucky to have funding already organized, which means that if he does not feel happy with the offer from St Andrews, he will stay at his current institution for his PhD.

Information required

- English language proficiency information
- Support for overseas students
- The benefits of attending St Andrews
External academic user persona

Philippe – Professor at the University of Toulouse

Age: 50-years old
Location: Toulouse, France

Background information

Philippe is a Professor in Developmental Psychology at the University of Toulouse.

Philippe is interested in developing his research group by forming international collaborations with groups at other universities with similar or complementary research activities. He thinks there might be a research group within the Psychology Department at the University of St Andrews that could be a good fit but would like a little more information before he makes an enquiry. Philippe is keen to learn about the Department's research activities and outputs, staff profiles, PhD students and recent awards/accolades.

Technical competence

Philippe is an average user of technology. The majority of his internet use is via his desktop computer at work.

Communication

Philippe would like to be able to email specific members of staff from the Department with an introduction should he feel that there could be potential to form a collaboration. As English is not his native language, he would prefer not to have to talk over the phone in the first instance.

Goals

Philippe would like to know if there is an equivalent research group (Developmental Psychology) at the University of St Andrews, and how it compares to his research group at the University of Toulouse.

Information required

- Research activities
- Research outputs
- Staff profiles
• PhD students
• Recent awards/accolades
• Collaborations
• Upcoming events and conferences
General public user persona

Suzanne – mother of a St Andrews student

Age: 52-years old
Location: New York, USA

Background information

Suzanne is the mother of Amelia, a third year student in Chemistry. Suzanne is highly proud of her daughter for choosing to go overseas for her undergraduate degree, and for meeting the high entrance requirements for St Andrews. She visits Scotland regularly and has an ongoing relationship with the Admissions staff who assisted Amelia during her application.

Suzanne is a criminal deference lawyer for a New York law firm, whilst her husband is the CEO of a logistics company. They are paying for Amelia’s tuition at St Andrews and have high expectations for their daughter’s university experience. Suzanne has hosted St Andrews welcome events for new students at their home, and is happy to talk to other parents about St Andrews.

Technical competence

Suzanne is a competent user of technology. She is almost always connected via her smart phone and also uses a desktop computer at work.

Communication

Suzanne would rather speak to people – either in person or by phone – over email in most instances. Emails sent to her work email address are usually read by her secretary and only passed to Suzanne if there is something to action. Suzanne is an avid social media user and often comments on the St Andrews social media pages, and is very active on the international parent’s Facebook page.

Goals

Suzanne wishes to be communicated to often about University news and events, and especially those in her local area. She wishes to share her knowledge about the University and the processes around being an international parent with others. She is happy to support the University where she can; in hosting or attending events, aiding with fundraising or donating money to University causes which Amelia is passionate about.
Information required

• News and events – especially local events
• How to support the University – financially, through giving time or a venue
• How she can support her daughter from New York