

# Brainiac



Perhaps the ideal student, fully committed to their course, coming prepared to seminars and quick to understand the value of gaining a placement and acting on this. Brainiac has signed up to student Union societies but is not really engaged with them. Similarly, they are hedging their bets on academic success and does not engage in volunteering or sports. Brainiac is a local student living at home and does not have part-time work.

**Opportunity** - when Brainiac does engage in an activity they will commit to it, being quick to understand the benefits. They will explore it deeply and, given the chance, they make connection to other ideas.

**Challenge** - Teaching needs to offer opportunities for Brainiacs to excel academically, not limiting them to the surface level engagement of assessment-driven teaching. The Brainiac needs to understand why what they are doing now will benefit them later so they can self-direct their study in their course and in life. Brainiac may need greater support to engage with peers in groupwork.

# Traditional student



The Traditional Student (TS) is rare, even mythical. They arrived at university aged 18 or 19 via an A Level route, leaving the family home for the first time. They are a 'full on student' intent on building memories, but strategically focused on what's happening next rather than on life and employment beyond university.

**Opportunity** - TS will engage in induction, being keen to understand how the system works. They will engage with programmed support too, usually, taking advantage of skills development workshops if they are timely and do not clash with other academic or social commitments. They understand the benefits of PPDP and academic advice sessions and will comply with what is needed..

**Challenge** - TS has a confused understanding of independent learning and is easily distracted being in a continual struggle to balance academic work and social life. TS has part-time work which they usually manage to fit around their timetable.

# Full-time Vocational Male (FTVM)



FTVM is a white, emotionally young male. His family are quite wealthy. He is motivated by having a successful career, though he is unsure exactly what this will be or what it means for his study. Coming to university was a conscious decision, though he did not take an A Level route.

**Opportunity** - FTVM actively engages in sport societies which are often a distraction, but evidently they have helped FTVM to develop his confidence. He has acted in a mentoring capacity across the levels and has a strong sense of course identity.

**Challenge** - FTVM does not engage deeply with course material. He is capable enough, but does just enough to get through being 'too cool for school'. Mild panic in his last year has seen his late night social activity convert to late night cramming. Despite his ambition, he will graduate with a 2:2 and do well enough taking a role in the family business.

# Young White Male from the Region (YWMR)



YWMR is friends with FTVM, being easily led. He is the first from his family to go to university and is still not sure if this is a good thing. He has a very limited outlook but, now he's got here, he has strong expectations, limited confidence and limited cultural capital.

**Opportunity** - YWMR has engaged in student-led societies and has used the careers service on several occasions. He knows his personal tutor quite well now, always having a question on his mind to explore.

**Challenge** - He has a poor understanding of academic and cultural expectations. He works part-time. Nobody is sure he is going to complete but he's not showing any particular signs of dropping out.

# Engaged Hard Worker (EHW)



We're pretty sure EHW will get a 1st, even at this stage of Level 4. She is a couple of years older than most of her peers and obviously has had some life experience. She's certainly capable and committed and always asks intelligent questions based on the course readings. She lives in student accommodation. She's a team player, engages in societies, is personable, inquisitive and easy to be with.

**Opportunity** - EHW takes advantage of challenging opportunities, using them to focus her energy and develop her leadership qualities. She is frequently seen encouraging her peers to do better too. She has become the course rep.

**Challenge** - While she is committed, capable and ready to lead others, her peers don't always respond. She leads by doing and probably does not have the social skills to bring others with her.

# Higher Degree Apprenticeship (HDA)



HDA is in her mid-20s and is motivated by her employer expectations and her own desire to progress quickly through her career.

**Opportunity** - She has used the study support available on The Bridge on several assignments and appreciates the opportunity of university to develop her skillset. She is motivated, but academically she is not excelling.

**Challenge** - She has low self-esteem and is not sure whether she is 'worthy' of being at university. She is brighter than she thinks and could do more to appreciate her broader capabilities including her creative thinking that are evident when given the chance.

# Local Commuter (LC)



LC came straight to University from college following a BTEC route. He is a natural group worker and has a supportive sister who was first in the family to come to university. He commutes from Barnsley where his home friendships are still more important than his university relationships. He is frustrated by his timetable when he has to come all the way in for a single session or when lectures are spaced apart at either end of the day.

**Opportunity** - He takes part in social activities during 'working hours' in the week and is often willing to co-ordinate groupwork activities, but he does not develop university friendships beyond class.

**Challenge** - He's not fully integrated into the social scene. He is liked, but he is predominantly an outsider. He could do with greater opportunities for and acknowledgement of his group leadership skills.

# Part-Time Vocational (PTV)



PTV is in her mid-20s and motivated by career progression, being sponsored by her employer. She is a tactical student and demands high standards. She manages her home, work and study commitments tightly.

**Opportunity** - PTV is highly motivated and takes her academic work seriously. She feels an obligation to her employer, but more importantly, she has an opportunity to springboard her career and she does not want to waste her time at university. She has come to realise that degree level work requires her to 'read around' or 'think around' her subject and she values her peers for providing her with different insights to the material.

**Challenge** - PTV's course requires her to be on campus more than she would prefer, but being around her peers gives her insight into their experiences and their different takes on the course material. Her course requires a lot of self study and , periodically, this fills up her social and work life and she increasingly struggles to cope. Work colleagues have been promoted without study and she wonders if her long-term study commitment is going to pay off.



# Returner



Returner dropped out of university first time round, but has come back years later being motivated by her need for a change. She has carer responsibilities. She has a very traditional idea of university which sometimes puts her out of kilter with other students. Her time in university now is precious. She has a rich experience of life but does not yet know how or if this is a help or a hindrance to her at university.

**Opportunity** - She has previous work experience and knows she needs to create a different, more meaningful career identity for herself. She has accessed Careers and study skills support and makes full use of her Academic Adviser. She is down-to-earth and has good relationships with her tutors. Other students like her, though they see her as a mother figure rather than a peer.

**Challenge** - She has real financial pressures and seems to be holding on for dear life sometimes. She uses Facebook as a lifeline for managing her life and is 'friends' with fellow students on Facebook, but tends to remind her of how mature she is compared to them.

# EU International Student (EUIS)



EUIS comes from a well-off family background. He is smart and confident. Culturally, has a different disposition to most of his peers.

**Opportunity** - He offers a lot to the course, bringing an international perspective. He is supportive of a group of Chinese students who seem to be far removed from the rest of the cohort socially. He is very disciplined, has good study skills, is well-organised and doesn't mind if this means he gets his leg pulled. In fact he is proud to be a model student!

**Challenge** - He is fairly confident and does not seem to need or take advice. He just gets on with things. He could do more to challenge himself in academically.

# Class Clown (CC)



CC does the bare minimum and will always take the short cut. This includes cheating and 'feeding off' other people's work. He does not engage unless he can see there is something in it for him. He acts as the class clown and distracts those who are easily led.

**Opportunity** - He focuses his energies on non-academic opportunities including student societies, though he has become the course rep.

**Challenge** - He seems to have no sense of what he will do with his degree. He is immature and seems to have little experience of learning.