



# Strange statistics

Giving the evidence  
without the story  
in higher education



Amongst the many challenges facing higher education in recent years, perhaps the greatest has been the introduction of tuition fees. Research quickly personified the student of the future as a savvy, performance-obsessed consumer. This in turn led to one university after another promoting itself with statistics.

As leading universities have strutted their similarly stellar statistics their perceived differentiation has dissolved. Meanwhile, less blessed universities have scrambled around for whatever statistics they can get their hands on, from '200,000 books in the library' to '1st in Yorkshire for tea'.

We believe all of this misses the point. Statistics are there to support your claims and not be your claims. If your statistics are great, they are still unlikely to be very different from your nearest competitors'. If your statistics are obscure, your audience won't know what to make of them - is '200,000 books in the library' good or bad? And if your statistics aren't great, your audience will spot it.

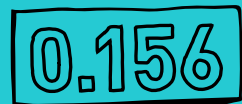
Statistics matter. Tuition fees mean prospective students and their parents will be more discerning. The international market is especially concerned about getting the right return on its investment. But statistics aren't everything. There's not a university we've visited that isn't different. And it's what that difference is that students really buy into - the ethos, the atmosphere, the particular style of teaching and so on. So when students engage, what they really need to hear isn't '1st in Yorkshire for tea' but 'welcome to the first day of the rest of your life'. Didn't you, when you were 18?

Statistics have a role in marketing but not in the way they're used by many universities today.

**Read on and judge for yourself.**



third



0.156

MOVED UP  
**24**  
places

Were things not so great before, then?

**1:15**  
 **STAFF TO  
STUDENT  
RATIO**

Teaching or administrative?

**Broadcasting Place  
was voted the world's  
best tall building in 2010  
by the Council on Tall  
Buildings and  
Urban Habitat**

Great. Quick where's the application form?

**Books in library  
200,000**

...and a lot more on the internet

**1<sup>st</sup>**  
for  
**student**  
experience  
in the  
**North East**

How many universities are there  
in the North East?



## **SHIVER ME TIMBERS!**

Of our many thousands of fans on Facebook, over 100 of them claim to speak Pirate. We also have an RGU Pirate Society, led by their Captain, First Mate, Chest Keeper and Scroll Keeper!

That's better, a statistic that doesn't  
take itself too seriously!

.....

Home to 12 of the  
most BEAUTIFUL  
lakes in England

.....

Yep, and...

**1st in the world** for 'host friends'

...and these are what?



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14th

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Biggest town or  
city in the UK

**13th out of 119  
institutions for  
'value added',  
measuring students'  
improvement from  
entry qualifications  
to degree results  
(The Guardian, 2013)**

Thanks for that

Sorry, fell asleep before the end of this point

# CASTLE AND WHISKY COUNTRY

There are more than 50 whisky distilleries and over 350 castles in Aberdeenshire and Moray.

At least 50% of this point is accurately focused on student needs

# 250,000+

ALUMNI OF THE  
UNIVERSITY  
SPREAD ACROSS  
THE WORLD

More than 250,000 used to study at the university. Different point



.....  
Southampton was the first  
place to sample fish fingers in **1955**  
.....

Out of a stable of strange statistics,  
this one has to win the prize

WE'RE **NO.1**  
IN THE UK FOR THE STANDARD OF OUR  
**ASSESSMENT**  
AND **FEEDBACK**

We'd like to offer some constructive  
criticism on this point...

**{ 1st**  
**in the UK for**  
**accommodation**  
**office support**

i-graduate Student Barometer™, Autumn 2011

...but the accommodation itself is rubbish?

**Top Two in the North West for**  
**Overall Student Satisfaction**  
**(National Student Survey 2011)**

How many universities in the North West?

**8th in the UK for  
Media Studies,  
Communications  
and Librarianship  
(The Guardian League  
Table 2013)**

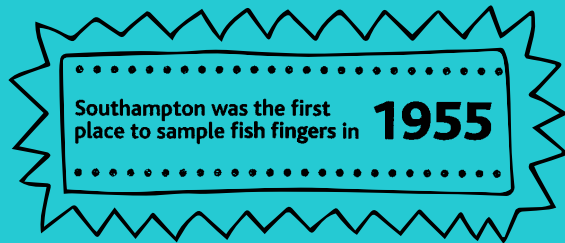
Got to go there then...

- **Edinburgh has 112 public parks and more trees per person than any other British city.**

...And?

If you want to continue the trend of statistics instead of, rather than in support of storytelling, you probably don't need to call us.

But if you want to speak to a communications consultancy that can help you tell your story and support it well, then you know what to do next.



We're a creative consultancy of communications specialists. We're Frank, Bright & Abel. Not who we are, but what we do and how we do it.

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