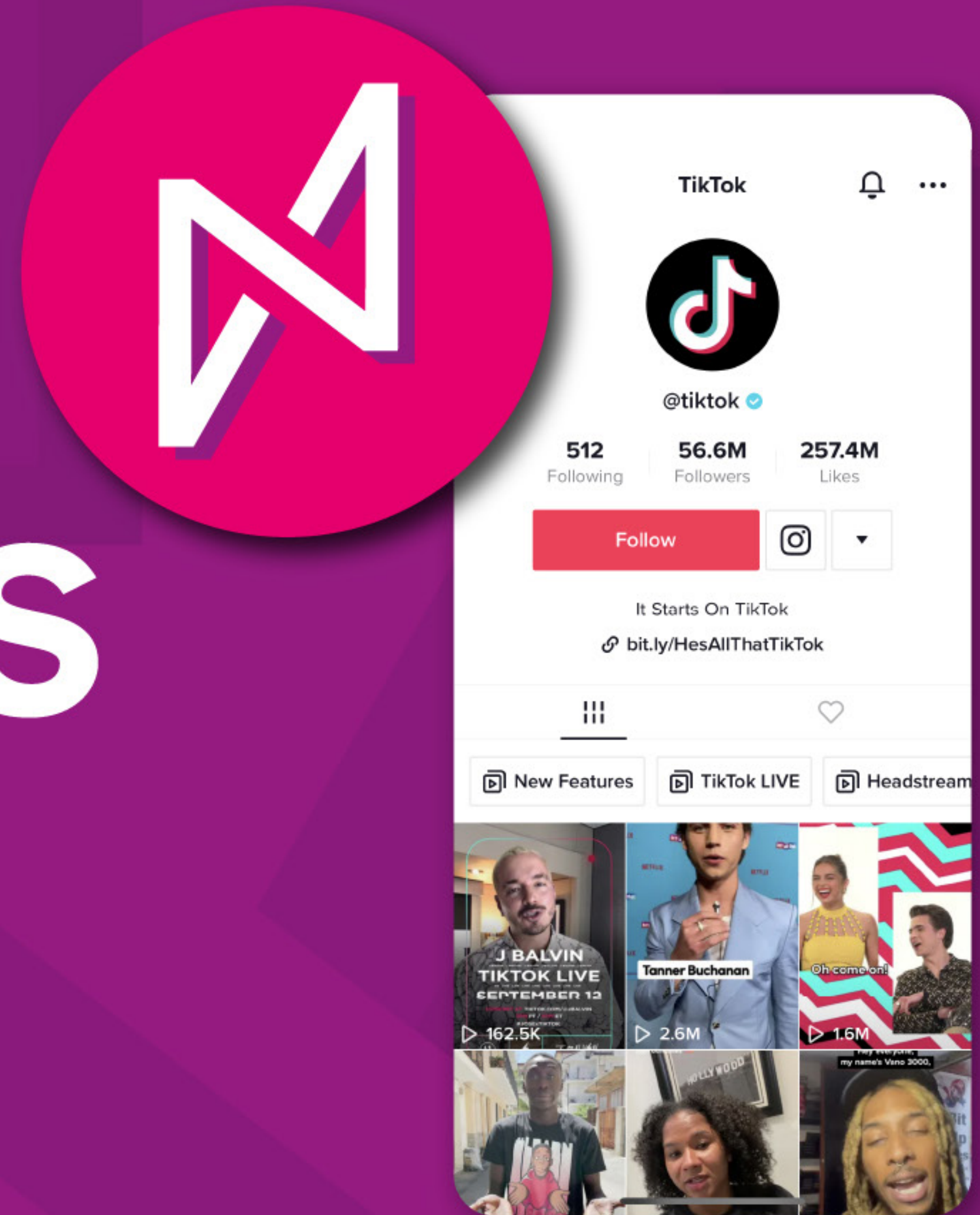


Top 30 UK Universities On TikTok



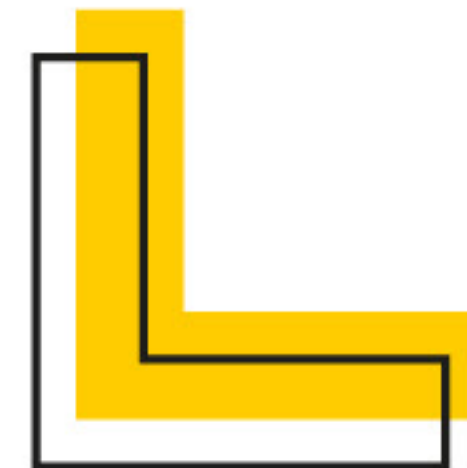
The Role Of Social Media In Student Recruitment



A prospective student can find an institution's credentials and program information on the website. However, it's harder for prospects to understand what life might look like as a student at a university.

A recent study by TargetX states that 58% of students use social media to research universities. This number only increases once students have decided where to apply or attend (68%).

Social media can be a great way to lift the veil and help future students envision what life might be like attending each school.



Prospective Students And Tiktok

A recent study shows that social media is the 2nd most important platform students consult, after university websites and rankers, when considering a university.

According to Times Higher Education, Universities have noticed that as other social media platforms are ageing, their audience on those platforms is ageing as well. TikTok serves as the sweet spot as nearly a quarter of the users are between 15 and 25-years-old, a prime demographic for Higher Ed.

Additionally, TikTok's reach is worldwide, having reached 1 billion total users in Q4 2021. University's on the platform have a direct, authentic link to international students without putting any money directly into paid advertising.

TikTok will continue to grow and is a prime channel for universities to communicate with their prospective students. (source: UCAS)

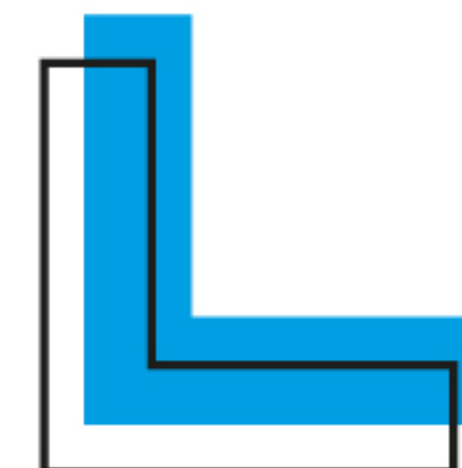


Methodology

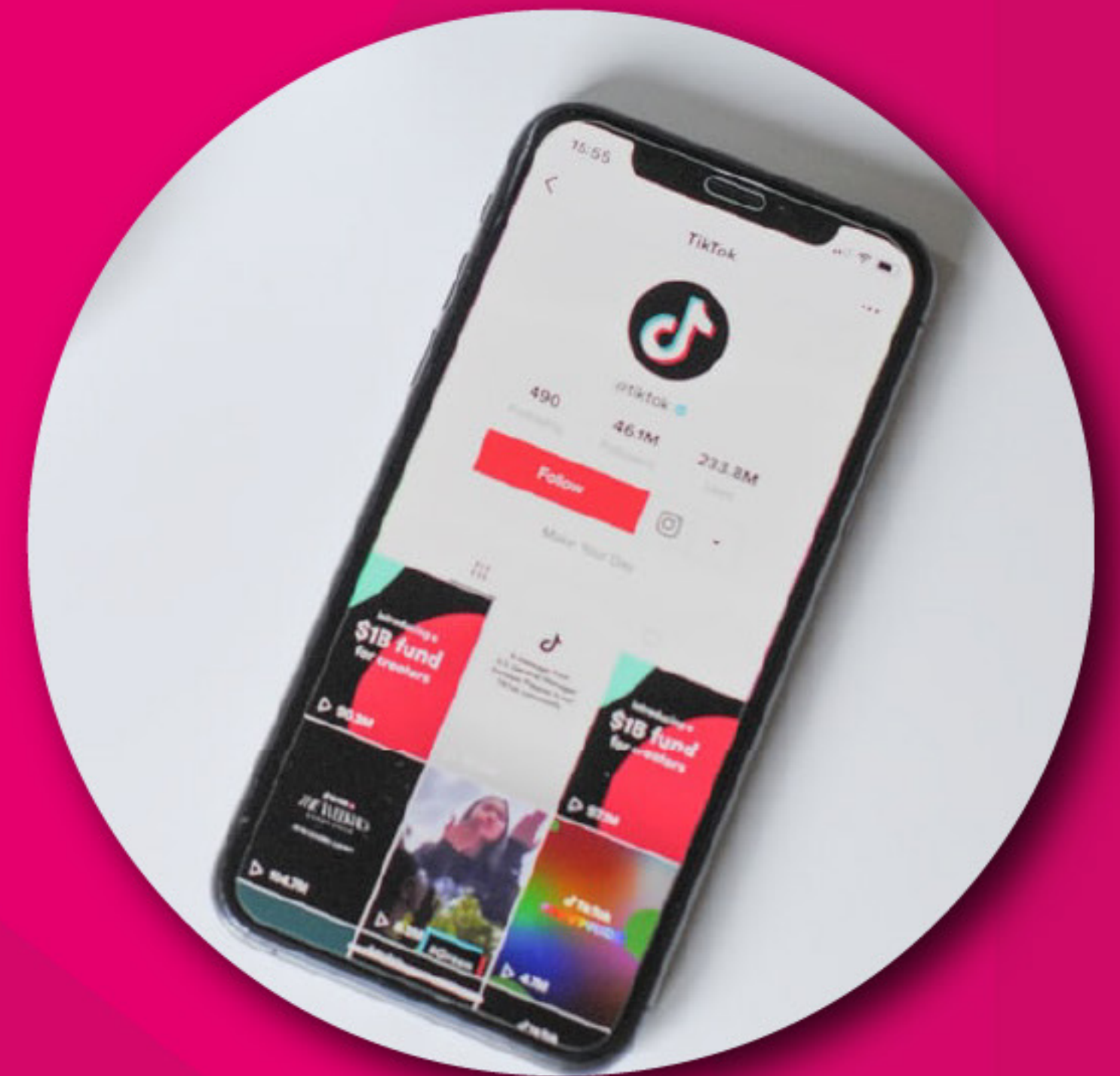


Given TikTok's popularity amongst the target audience, we have evaluated UK universities' presence on the platform based on the following criteria:

- **Is it genuinely useful?** Can students and prospective students get the answers to their questions through the University's accounts?
- **Is it relatable?** The target audience wants to see themselves reflected in the institutions' social media content.
- **Are there sneak peeks of student life?** A three+ year commitment is a big deal for prospective students; it's important to showcase what one might expect on a day-to-day basis.
- **Is it aspirational?** Universities are supposed to be the gateway to successful careers. Does the content highlight that?



Top 30 UK Universities On TikTok



30

UNIVERSITY OF
LIMERICK

@universityoflimerick

23.3K

Followers

17.20%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



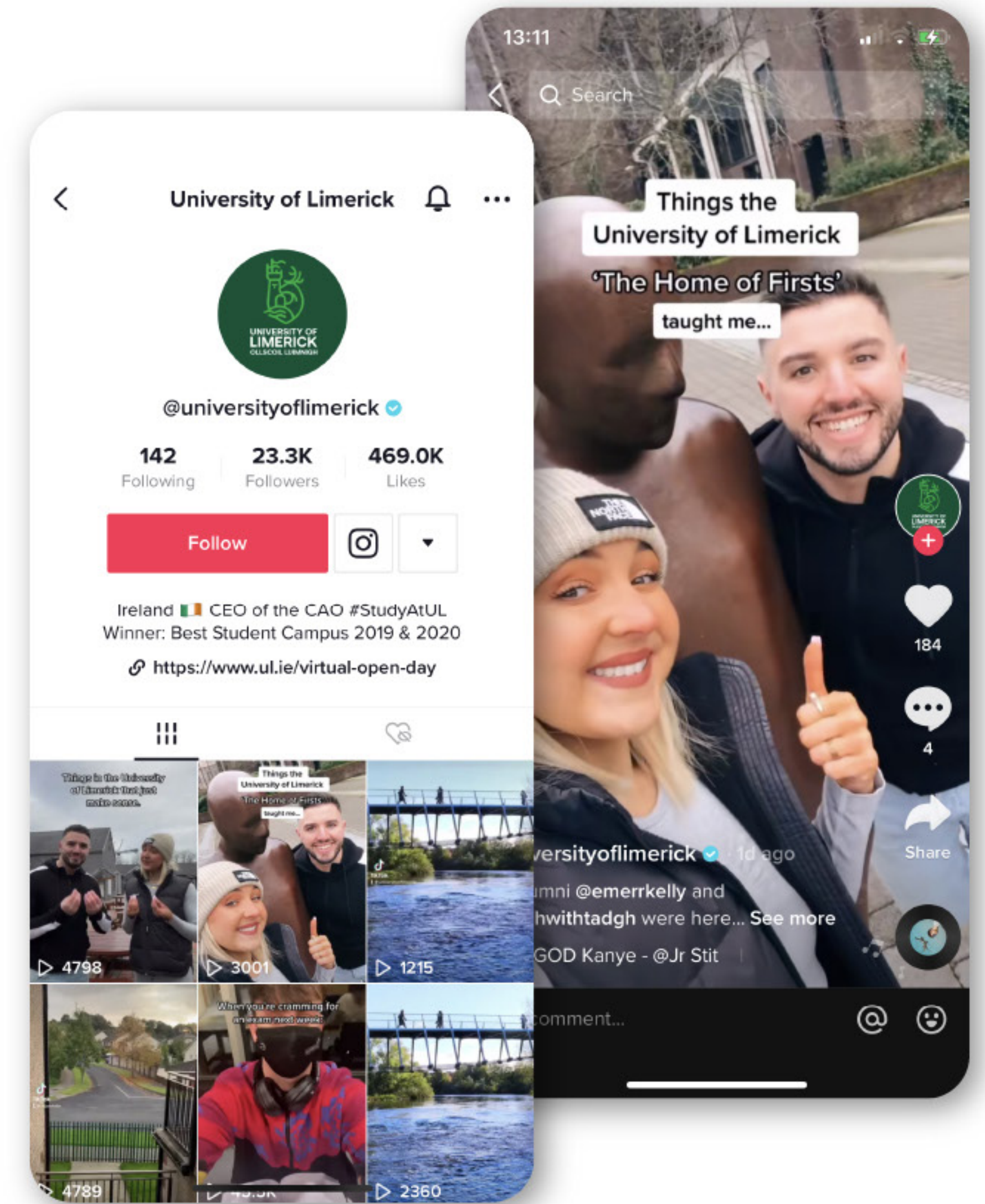
Useful



The **University of Limerick's** personality is highlighted on their TikTok, despite not being very active on the platform.

They jump on trends and feature student-generated content that blends in seamlessly with the For You Page.

They also highlight the University's stunning campus with impressive drone shots and had their mascot, Wolfie, navigate some seriously intense obstacles.



29

UNIVERSITY OF
BRIGHTON

@uniofbrighton

431

Followers

17.48%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

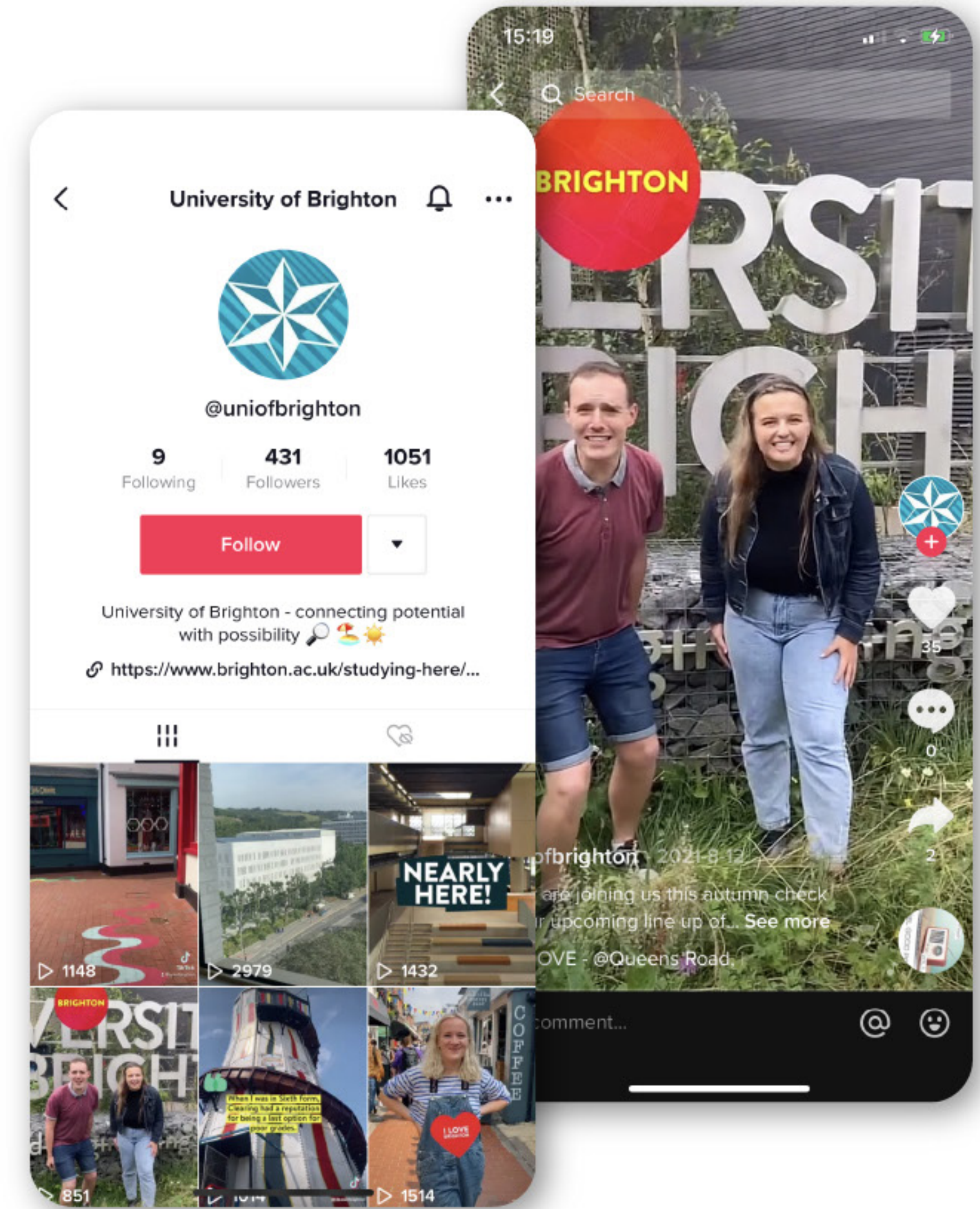


The **University of Brighton** shows the city a lot of love on their TikTok, as students highlight their favourite things to do and see in the surrounding areas.

Can't blame them when they are situated in such a beautiful place.

They have also given their audience some sneak peeks at new builds on campus.

Their account makes the city seem like a fun and colourful place to study.



28

COVENTRY
UNIVERSITY

@coventryuni

512

Followers

160.65%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

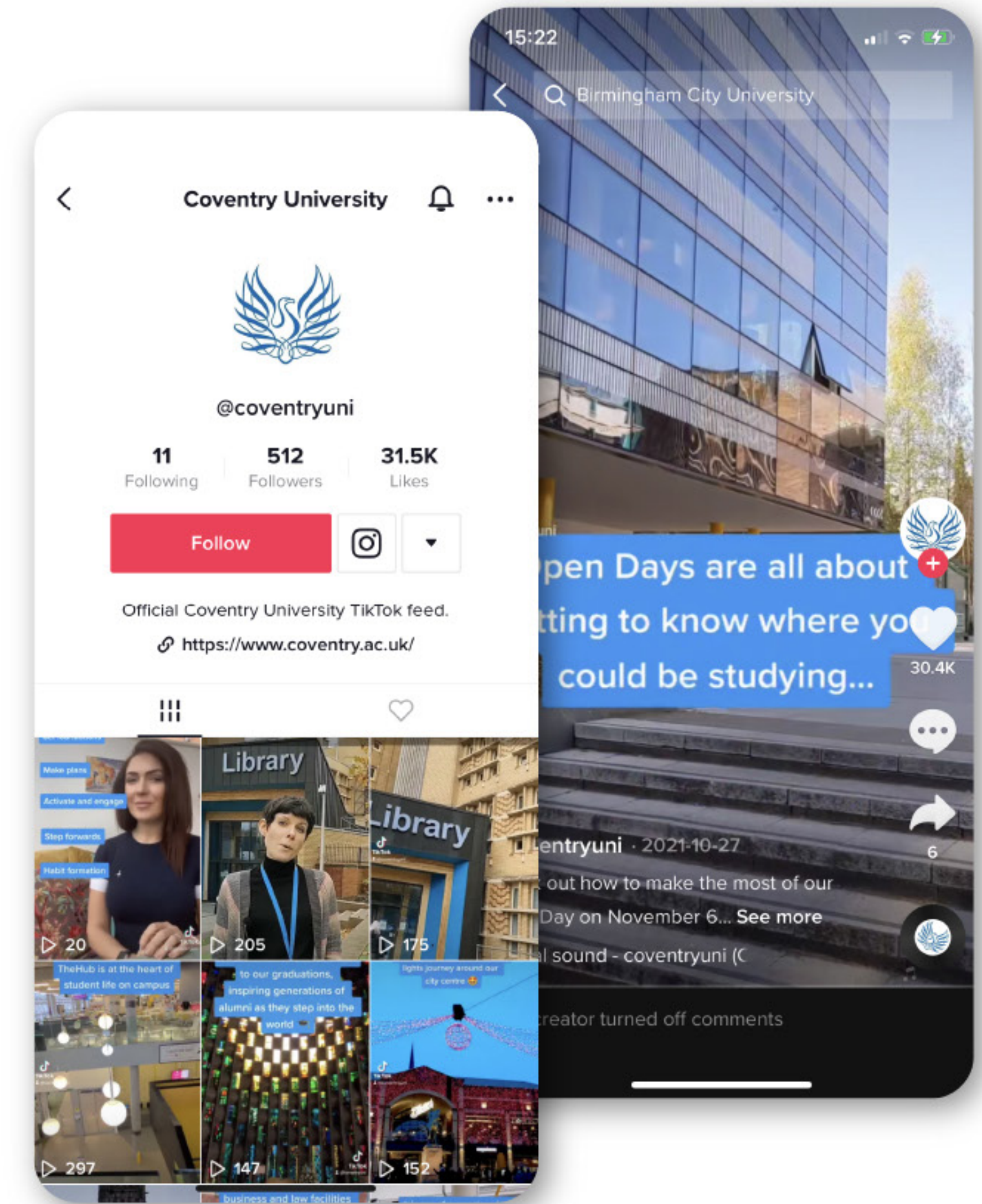


Coventry University's TikTok does a great job highlighting the city and available activities to the prospective students.

They put an emphasis on open days and clearing.

While they are still finding their voice on TikTok, it's clear they have been experimenting with content, including budget-friendly recipes for students.

Coventry is off to a good start!



27

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

@uniofnottingham

4963

Followers

36.93%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



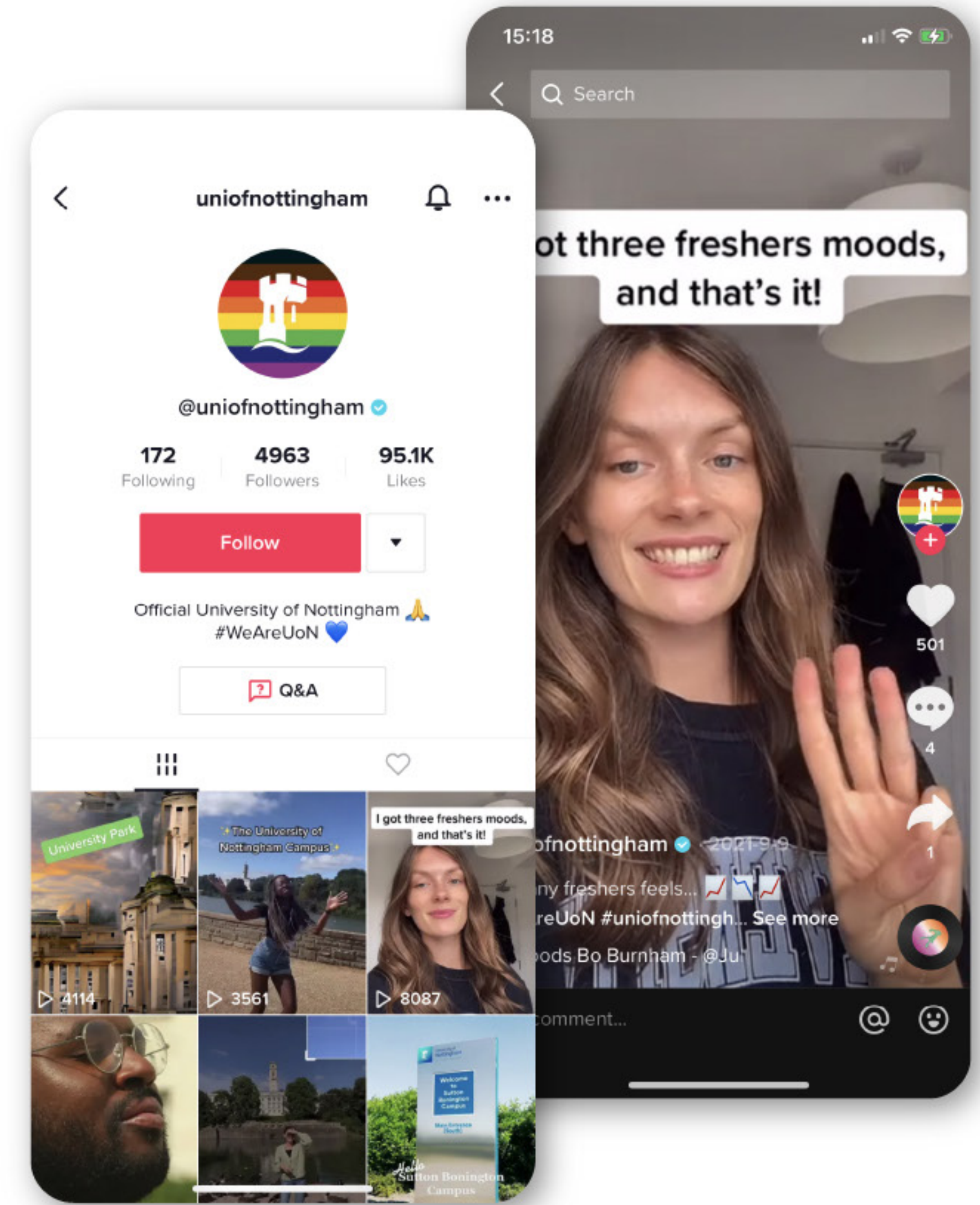
Useful



The **University of Nottingham** highlights student life content lives on TikTok with a range of TikTok trends and 'day in the life' content.

While they haven't posted in a few months, their content showcased the personality of their students, possible career paths and staff.

They should be revamped for the new year!



26

UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING

@universityofstirling

250

Followers

11.58%

Engagement Rate

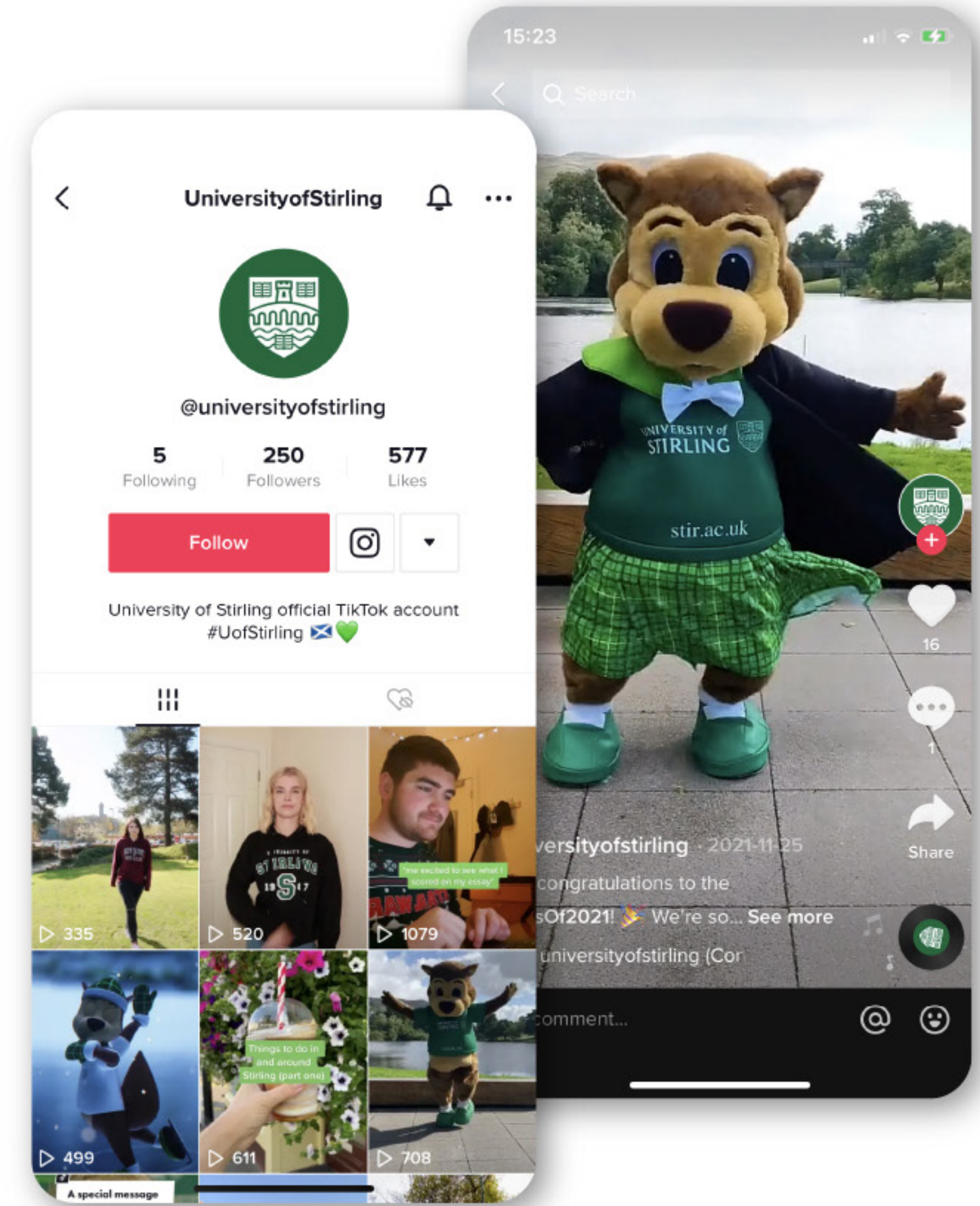
Aspirational ☐Relatable ☒Student Life ☒Useful ☐

The **University of Stirling's** TikTok is sparse but shows some promise.

They've experimented with transitions and relatable content that any student will resonate with.

Their Stirling Squirrel mascot adds a comedic edge, and a message from Sam Heughan will get you excited to study.

They've even created a student guide to Instagram photos in Stirling! #relatable



25

UNIVERSITY OF
ABERDEEN

@uniofaberdeen

1039

Followers

4%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



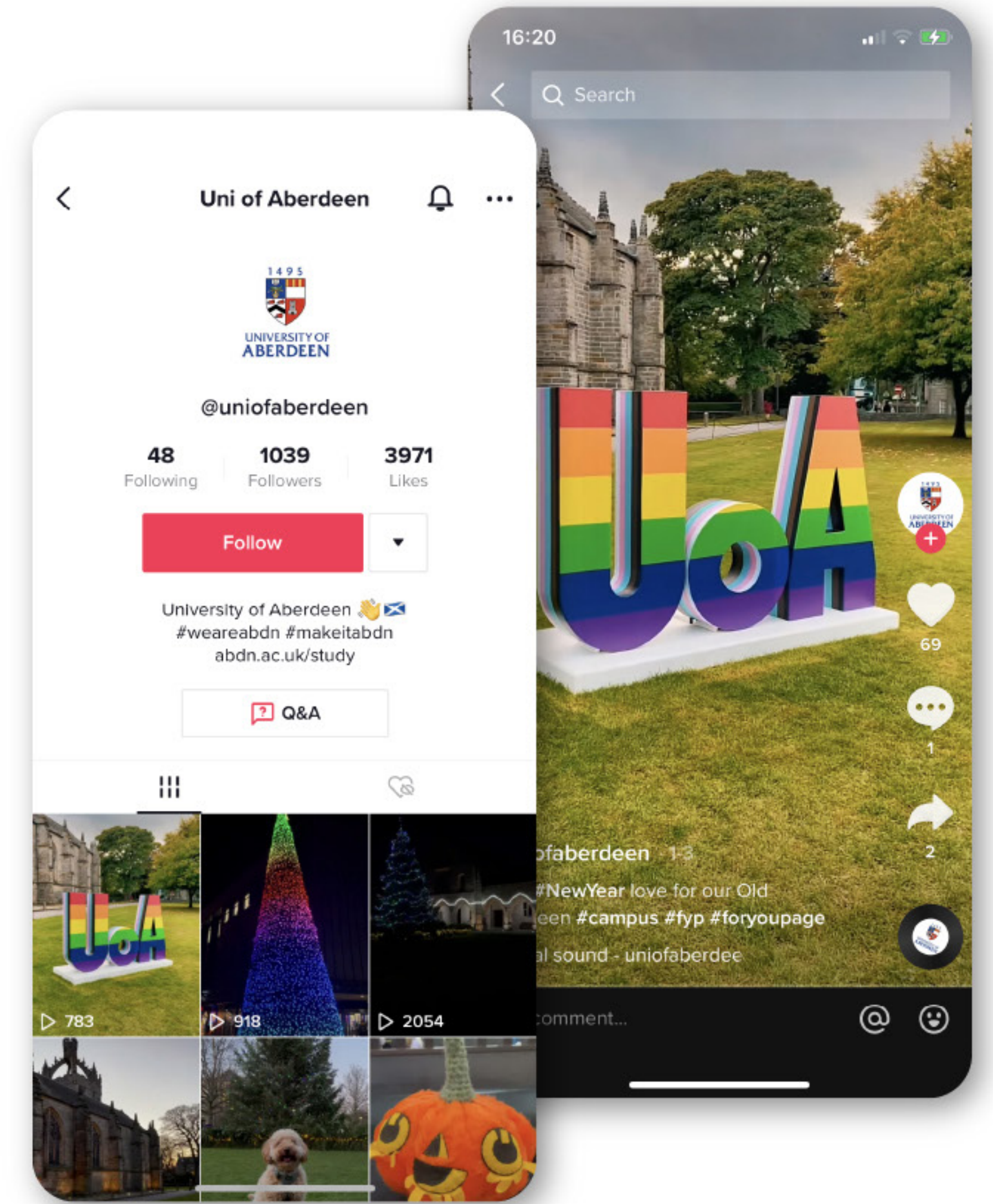
Useful



The **University of Aberdeen** seems to experiment with content on TikTok.

They have more student-led content, including tips for freshers, hidden gems to find on campus and day-in-the-life of a student.

This content gives prospective students a better understanding of what life might look like at UoA.



24

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

@universityofleeds

694

Followers

8.30%

Engagement Rate

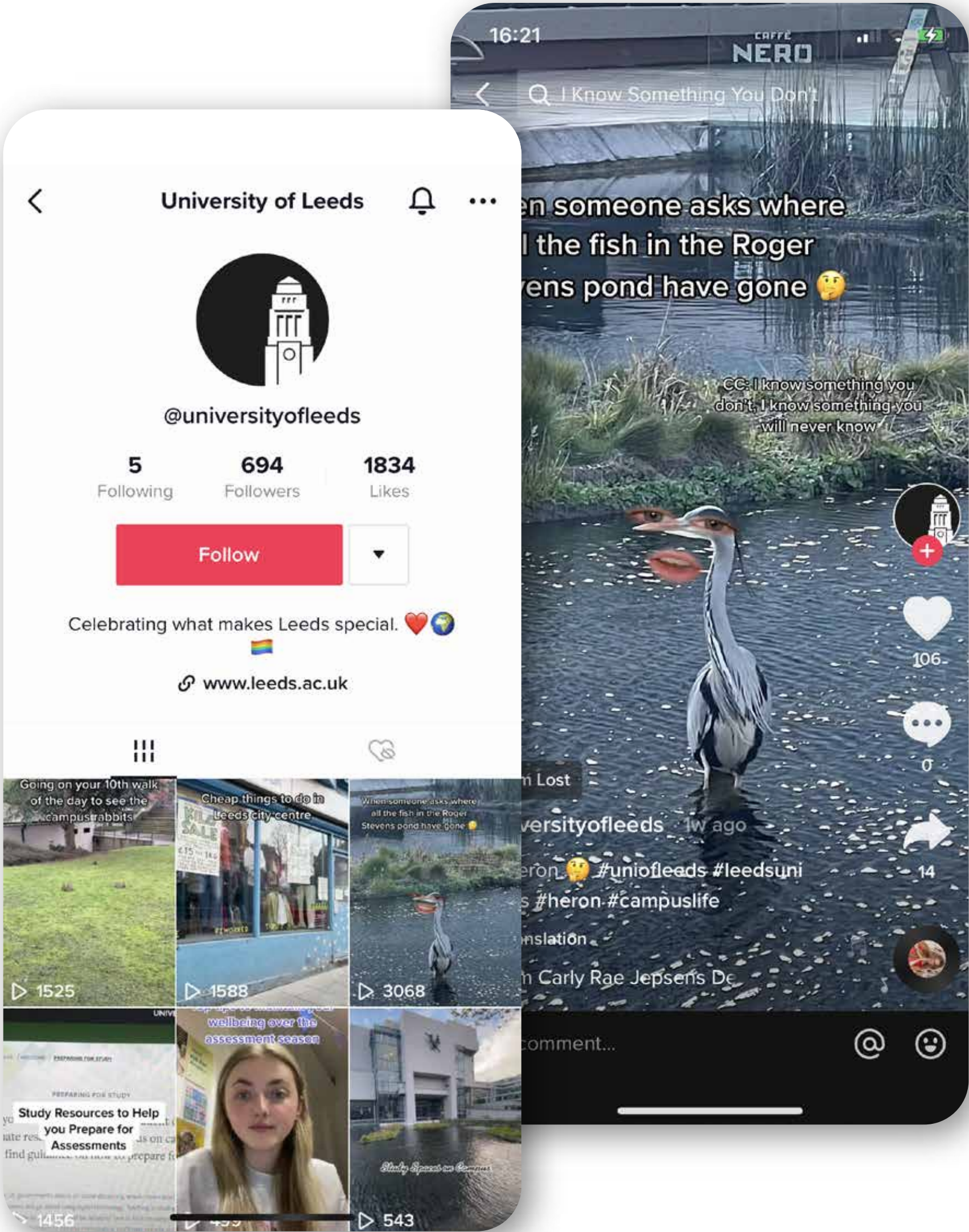
- Aspirational
- Relatable
- Student Life
- Useful

- ☒
- ☐
- ☐
- ☒

The **University of Leeds** showcases their stance on climate change on their TikTok feed, where students and faculty discuss the topic in more detail.

They balance the serious topics on the feed with campus tours to trending sounds and Leeds food guides.

Prospective students will quickly learn that studying at Leeds will push them to do better for themselves and their surroundings.



23

LIVERPOOL
UNIVERSITY

@liverpooluni

1722

Followers

12.08%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



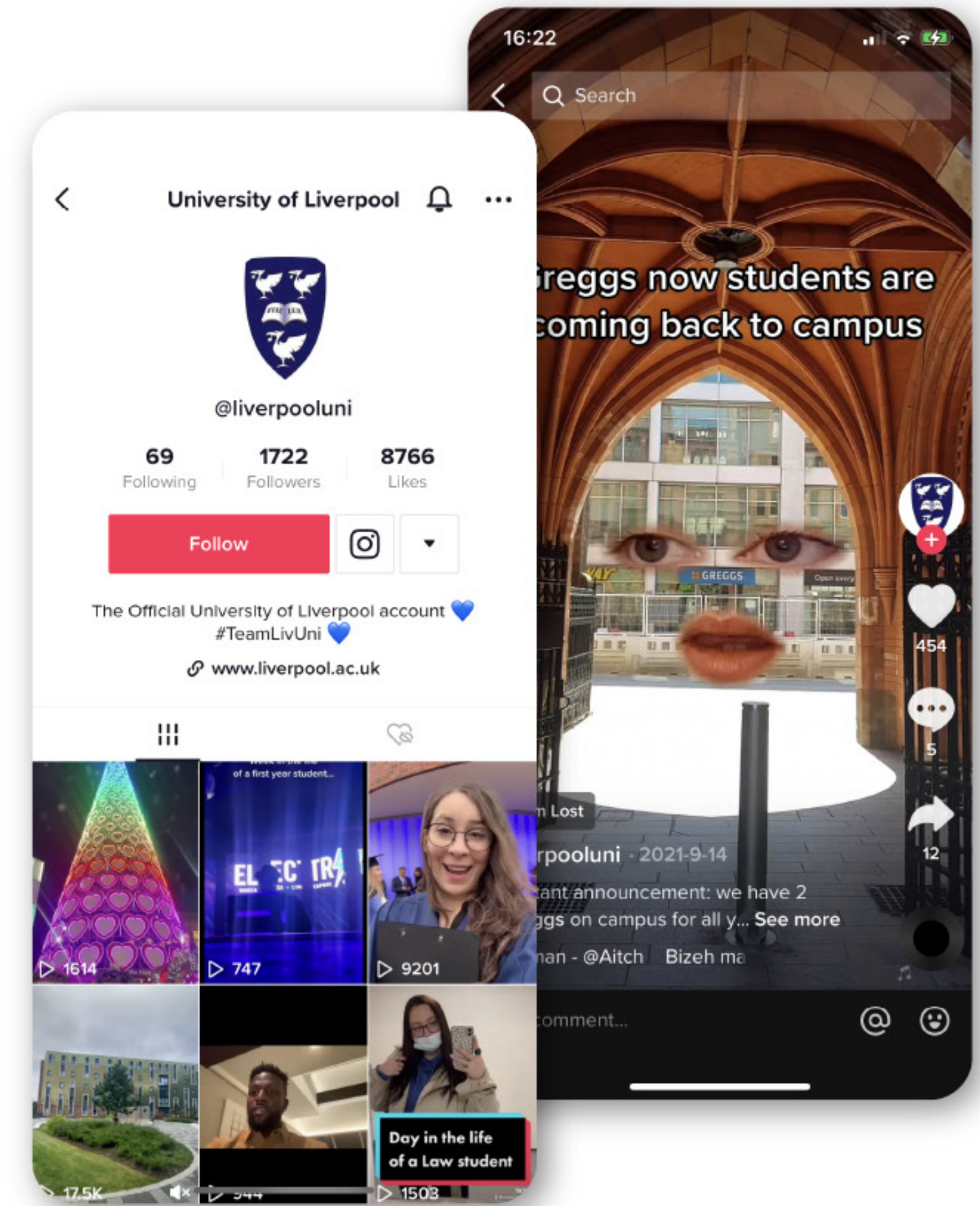
Useful



Liverpool University is experimenting on TikTok with a range of student-led videos and campus tours.

They even got Origi Divock from LFC to wish the uni's recent graduates congratulations on their social media platform; every football fan's dream!

With content like this, a prospective student can understand what to expect while living and studying in Liverpool.



22

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY

@edinburghnapier

540

Followers

59.41%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

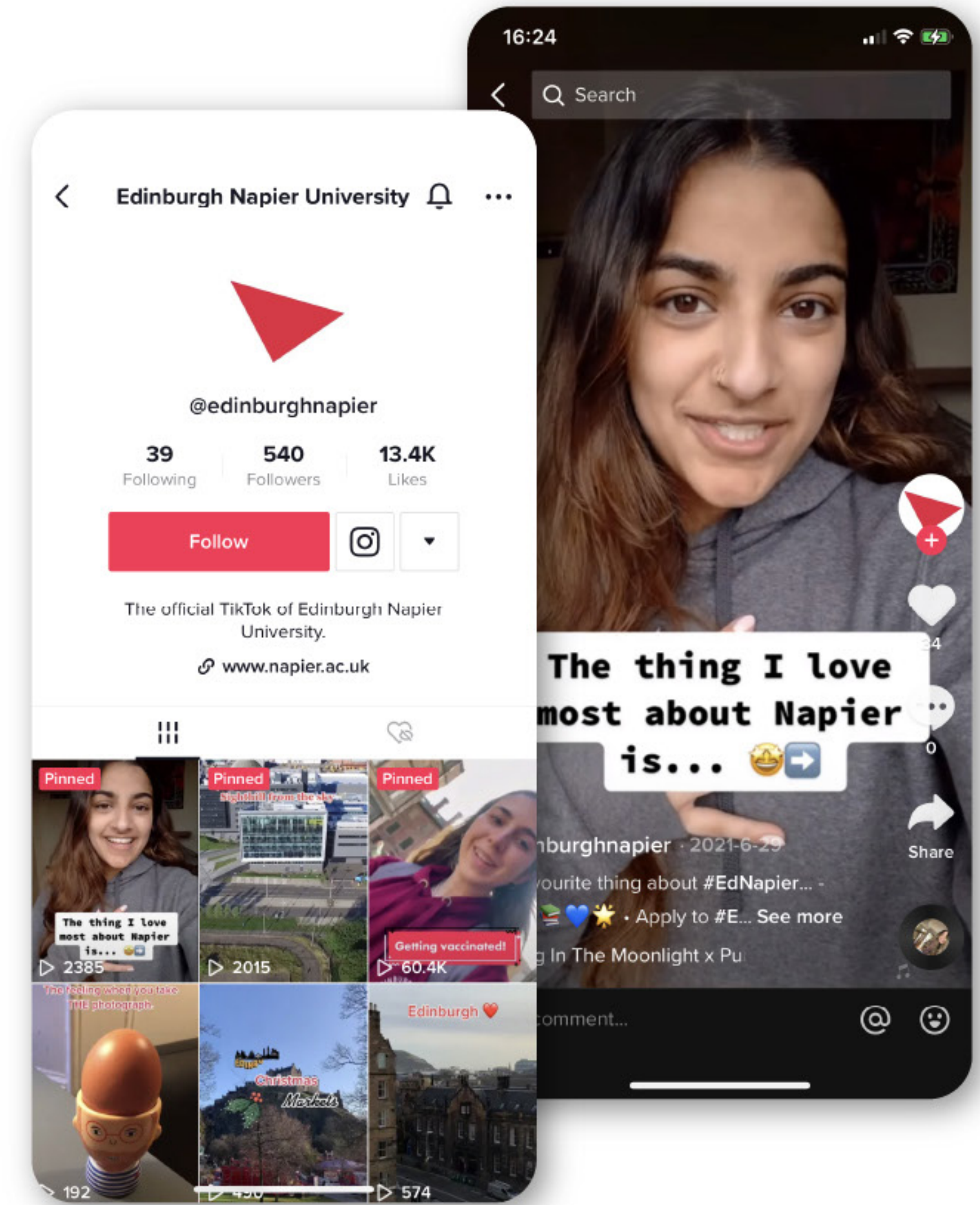


Edinburgh Napier University's

TikTok is nearly entirely student-led.

The content showcases what it's like to be a student at Edinburgh Napier University. Students walk through their daily lives and show the audience around the magical Scottish city.

The Uni also includes content with friendly tips about clearing, SAAS deadlines and open days to ensure prospective students are all set to join them in Edinburgh.



21

UNIVERSITY
OF YORK

@uniofyork

2055

Followers

12.58%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



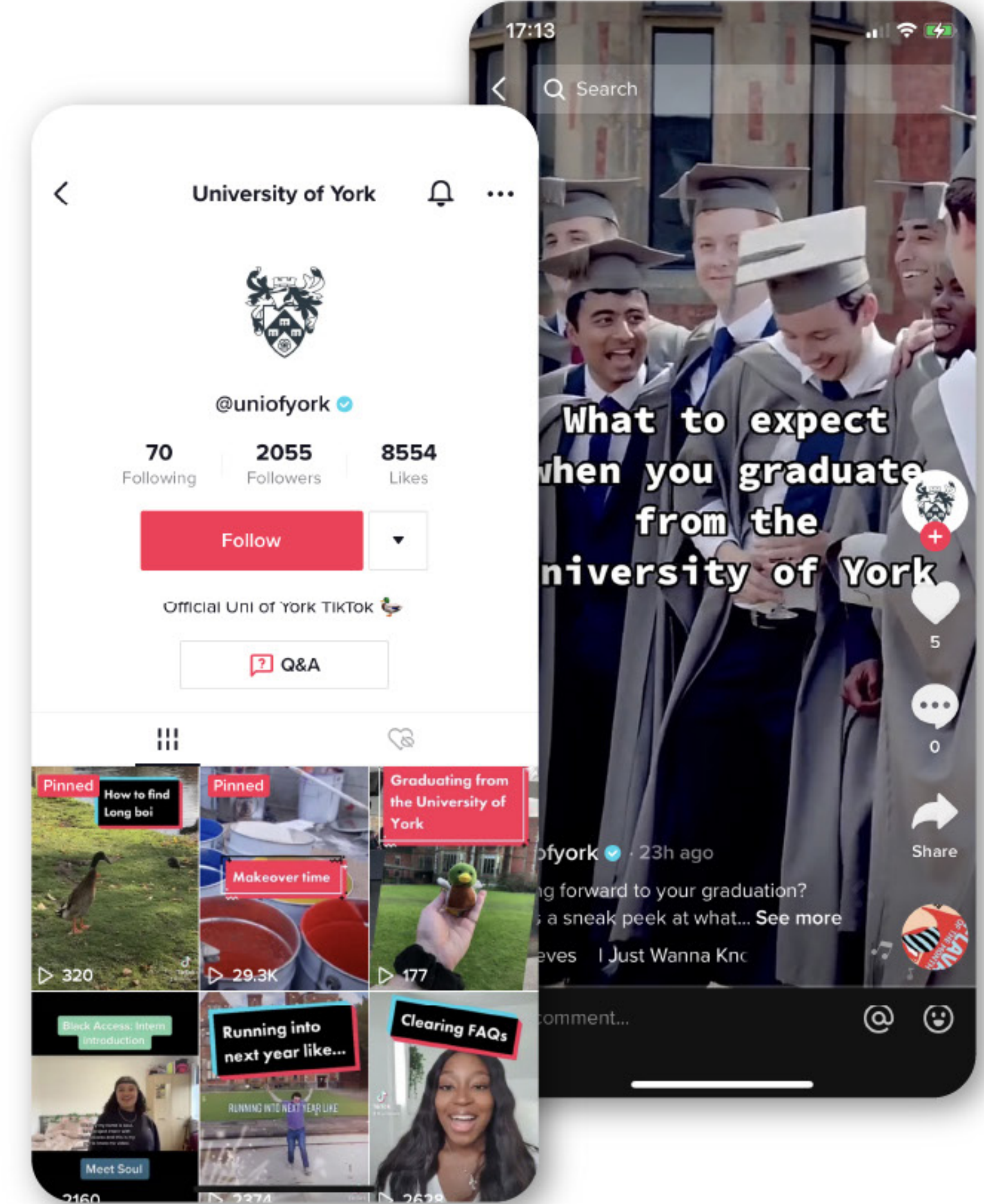
Useful



The **University of York's** TikTok is not as active as it once was, but the existing content is engaging! They have featured profiles on a diverse range of students, highlighting their individual experiences.

You can find student-led content advising on how to tackle the clearing process, understanding that it can be stressful for many.

Notably, they had an international student walk the audience through UK slang and all its uses. Now, if that's not useful, I don't know what is.



20

BOURNEMOUTH
UNIVERSITY

@bournemouth_uni

530

Followers

8.51%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

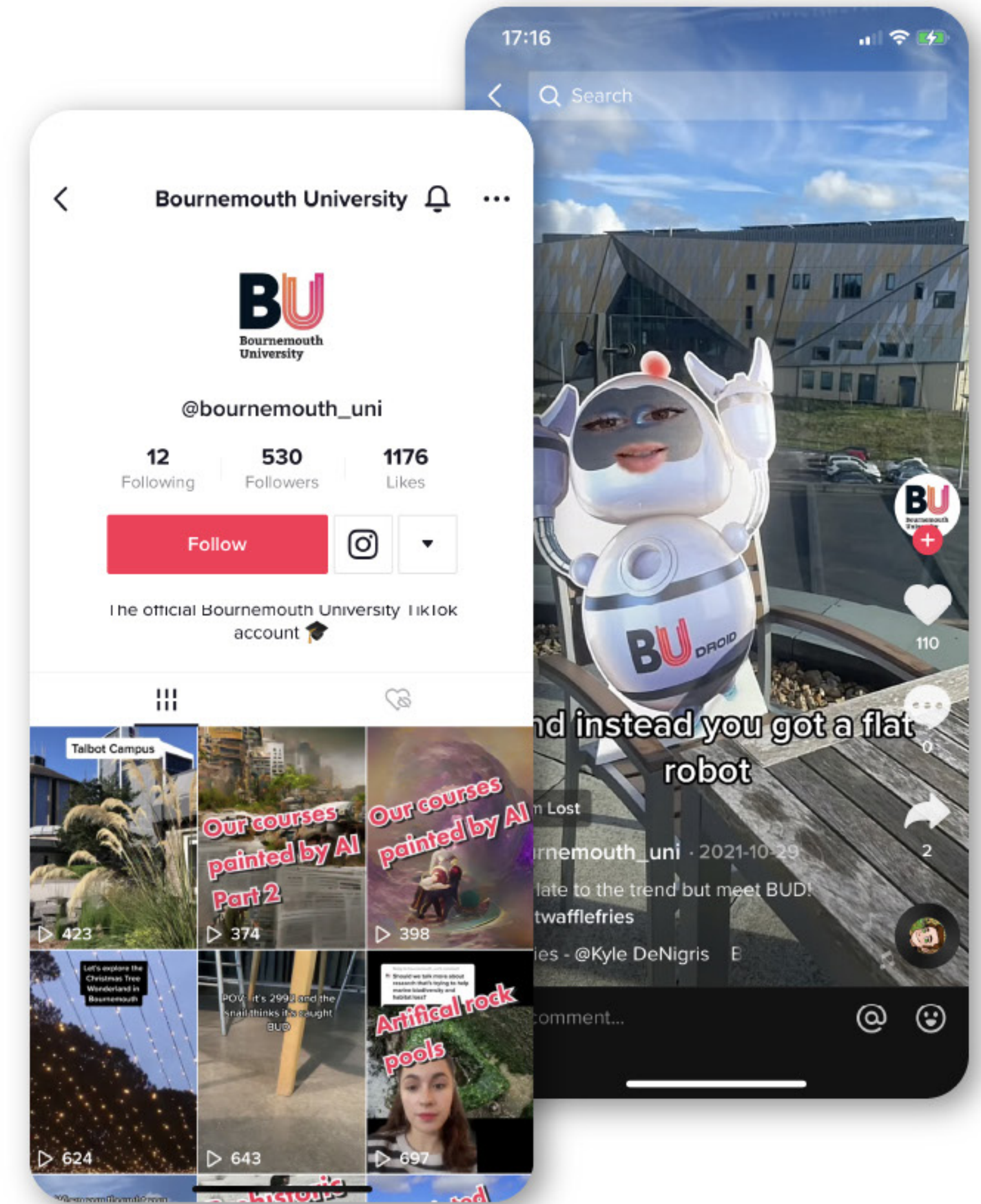


Bournemouth University uses their TikTok to discuss interesting facts about artificial reefs and prehistoric footprints.

These facts tie into the exciting research at the university but in an authentic, and non-pushy way.

They don't shy away from the fact that their campus is beautifully positioned by the sea.

Anyone who scrolls through will want to visit the university at the very least.



19

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

@sussexuni

1284

Followers

4.97%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

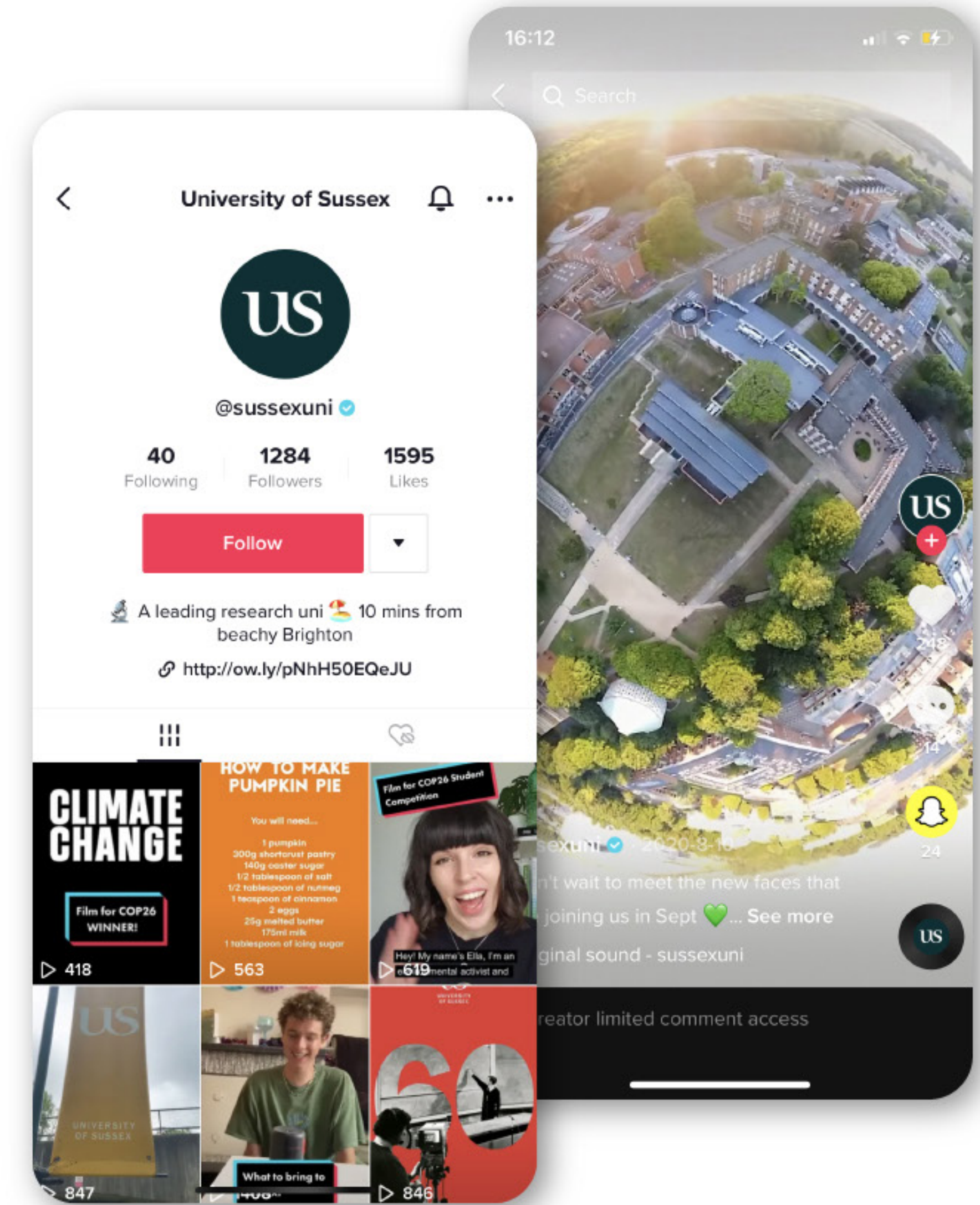


The **University of Sussex** is not all that active on TikTok.

Still, a quick scroll through the existing content will give the audience an understanding of the uni and what they stand for, namely, climate change.

Additionally, their students give tips and walk the audience through things they wish they knew before starting their journey at Sussex.

Overall, the Uni's student-led content should definitely make potential students feel supported and understood.



18

UNIVERSITY OF
GLASGOW

@uofglasgow

18.7K

Followers

103.17%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



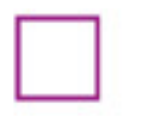
Relatable



Student Life



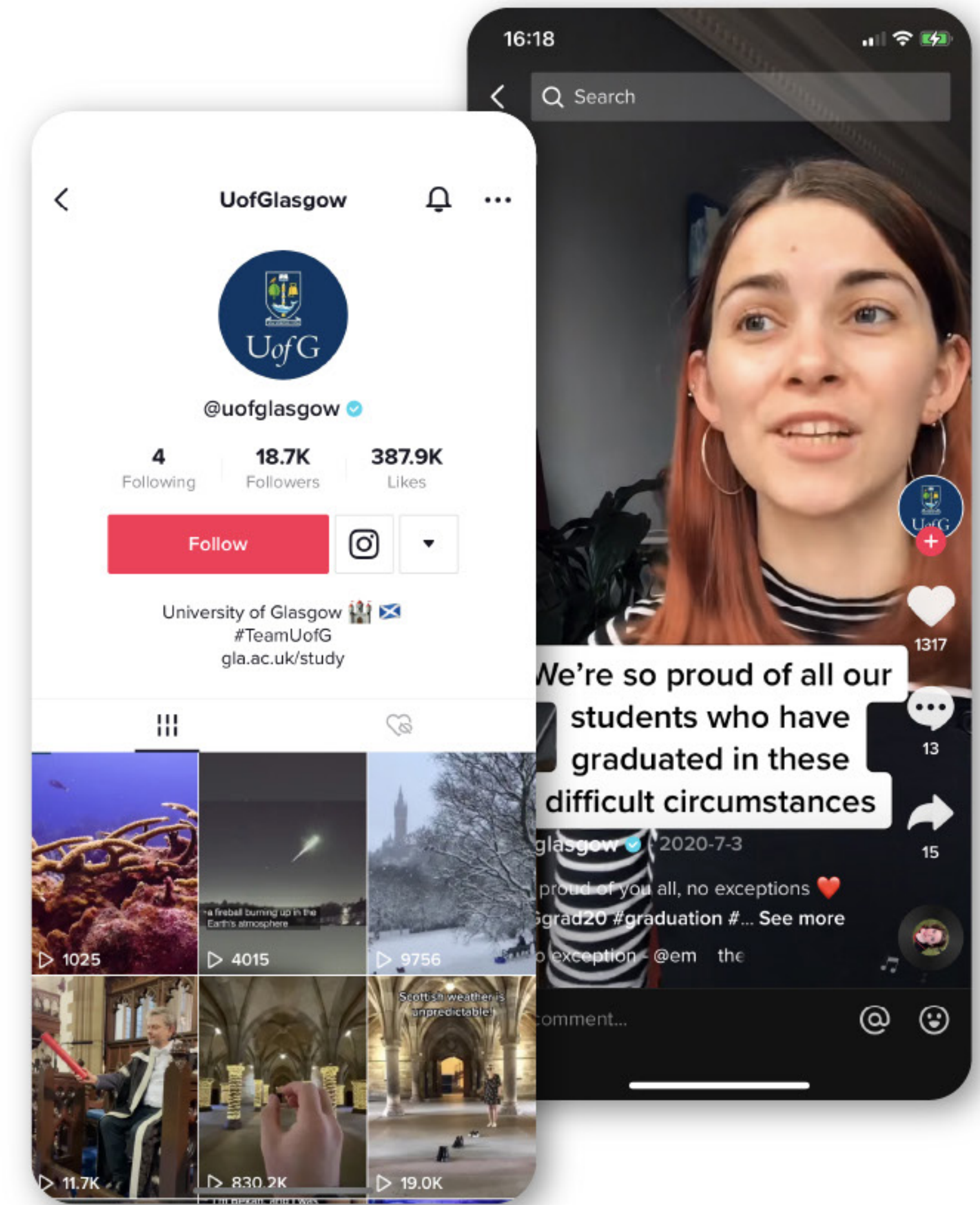
Useful



The **University of Glasgow's** TikTok is not as active, but they do have surprising and engaging content.

The trending dances they feature on this platform might just catch you off guard after scrolling through their Instagram or website.

It's clear whoever is managing TikTok is having fun, and the overall good vibes are sure to rub off on prospects.



17

UNIVERSITY
OF BATH

@uniofbath

1798

Followers

8.20%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



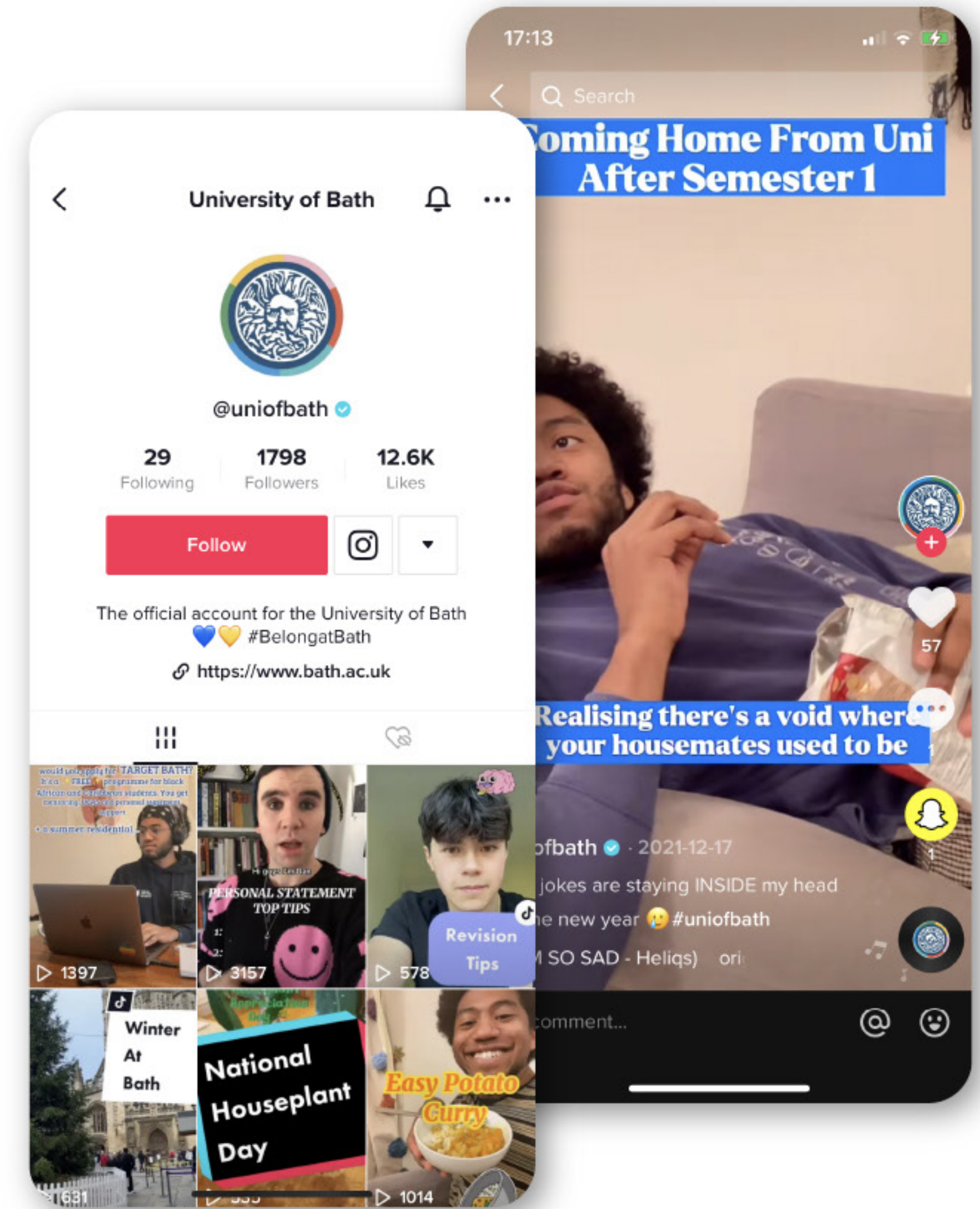
Useful



The **University of Bath's** TikTok is nearly all student orientated, with student presenters, student tips and 'day in the life' videos.

They aren't afraid to hop on trends or engage the audience by answering frequently asked questions.

It's clear that their TikTok is geared towards prospective students, making sure to equip the prospects with as much information as possible.



16

UNIVERSITY OF
WORCESTER

@universityofworcester

1169

Followers

6.99%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

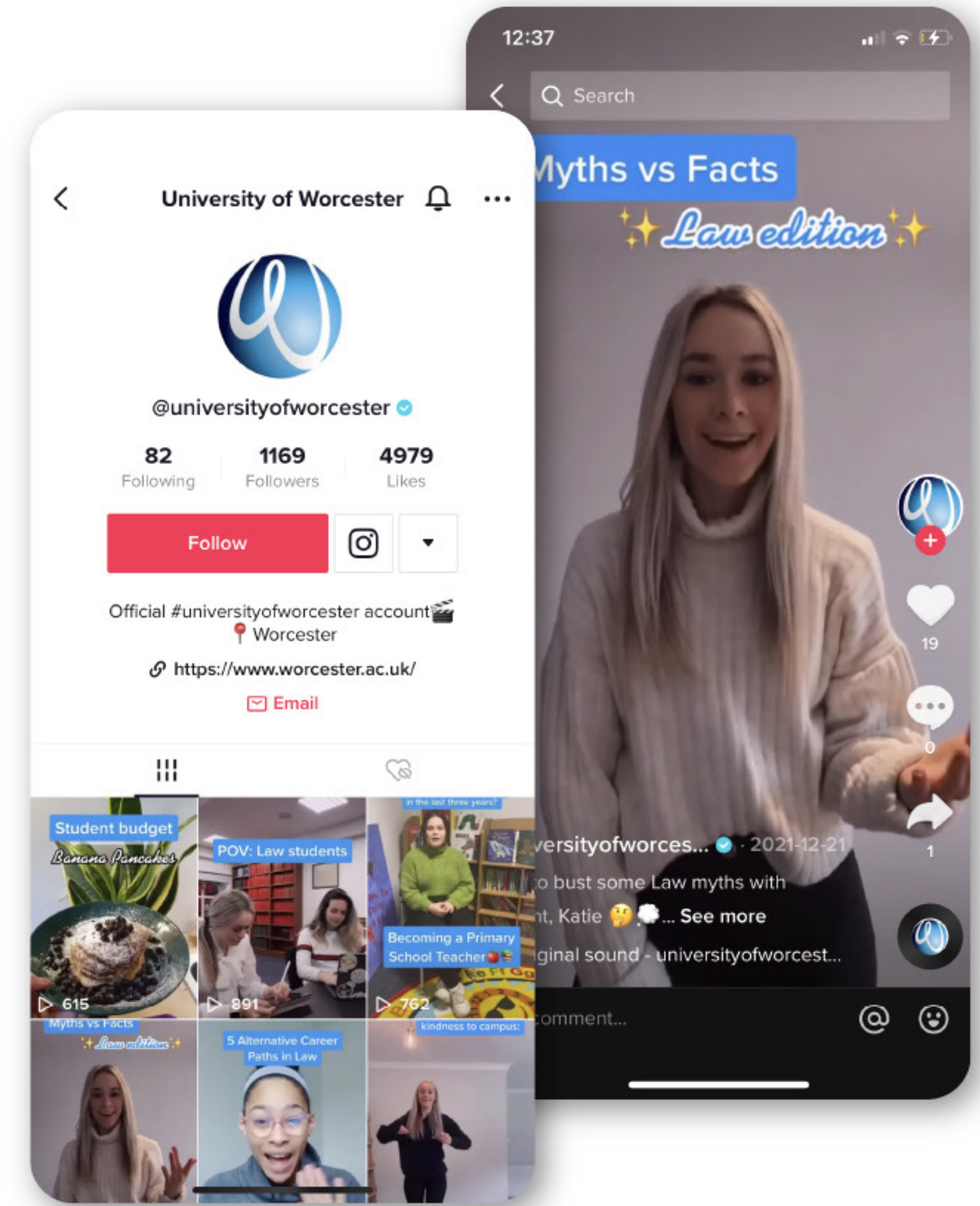


The **University of Worcester's** TikTok features some great student-generated content.

They give tips on remaining positive, creating change, and additional guides for 1st years.

They also highlight student journeys, showing the personal growth students experience while at the University of Worcester.

The Uni do all of this through entertaining and digestible content, allowing prospective students to experience edutainment at its finest.



15

NEWCASTLE
UNIVERSITY

@newcastleuni

659

Followers

219.41%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



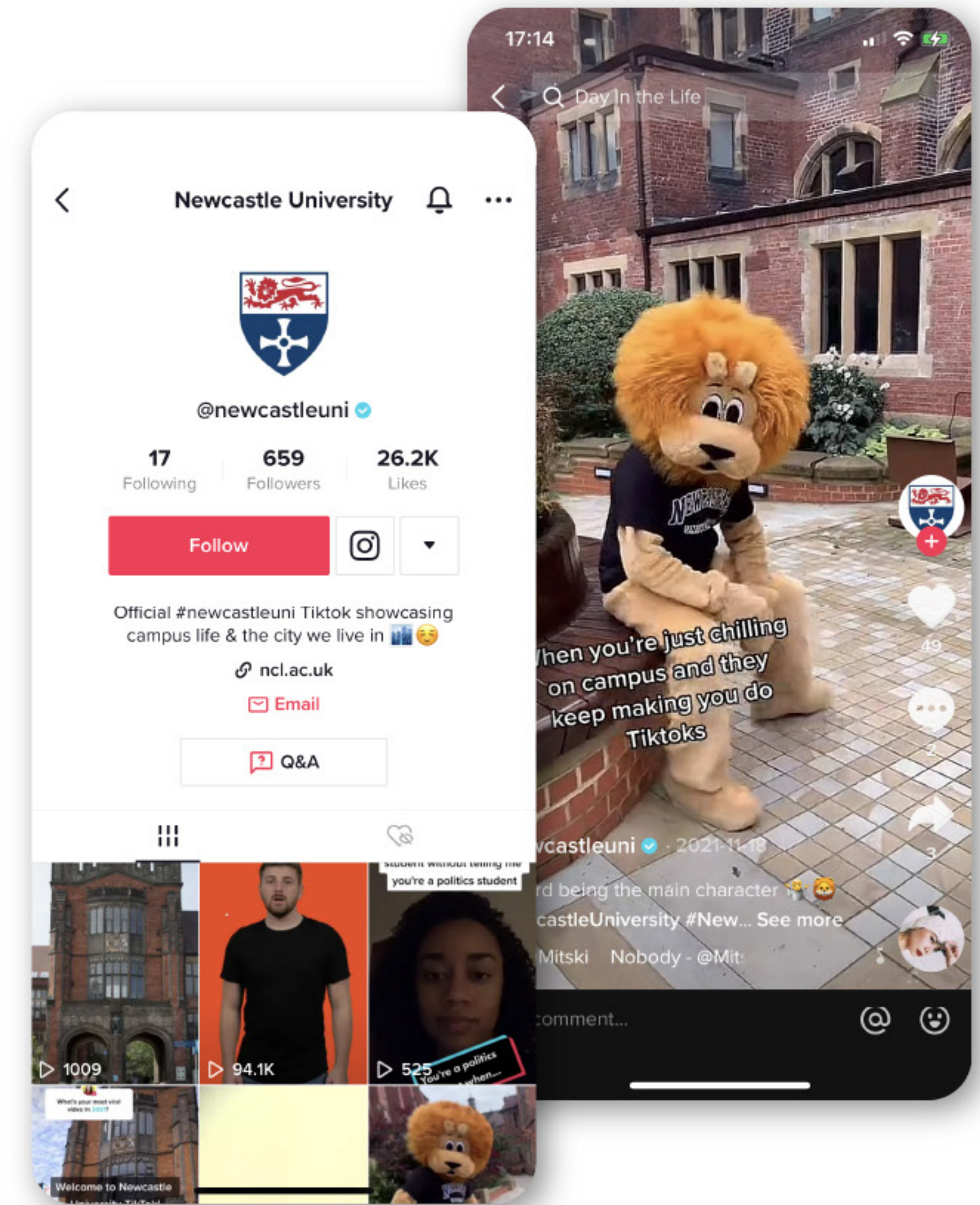
Useful



Newcastle University's TikTok highlights the personality behind the brand.

They have taken notes from the likes of Duolingo and have assigned a mascot, Percy the Lion, to their account to make it more recognisable. Percy isn't the only thing attracting students on their TikTok.

The Uni have included beautiful city guides and campus tours that give prospective students a better idea about daily life at Newcastle Uni.



14

QUEENS UNIVERSITY BELFAST

@qubelfast

654

Followers

29.52%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

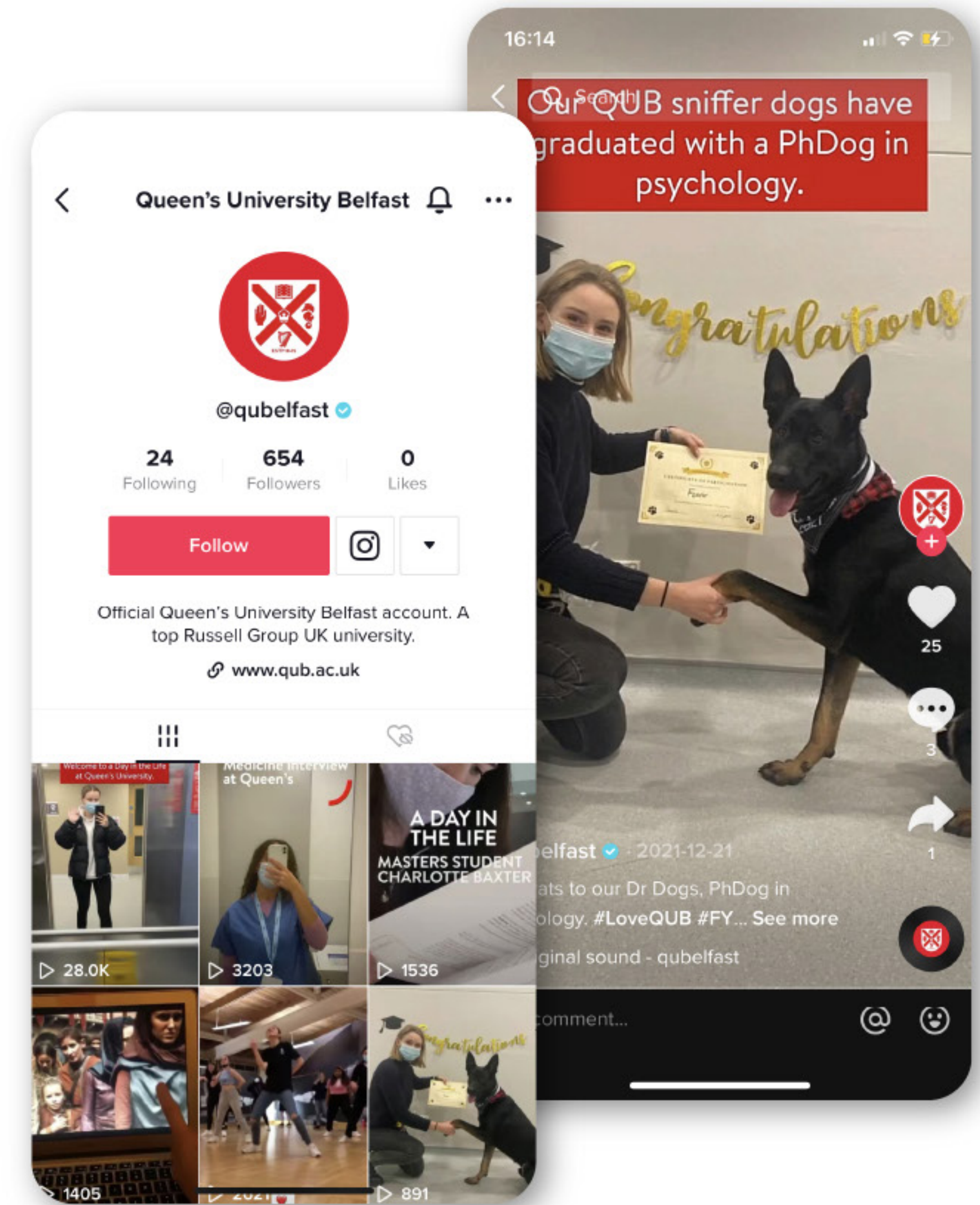


Queen's University Belfast have created a good foundation with their TikTok.

Some of their content walks you around Belfast, shows the best food places, advises on being a more sustainable student and breaks down the Irish slang.

They include course-specific tips like how to ace your medical interview and more.

With the addition of dolphins, cute dogs and even Hilary Clinton, their TikTok seems to cover it all!



13

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

@unibirmingham

2688

Followers

8.58 %

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



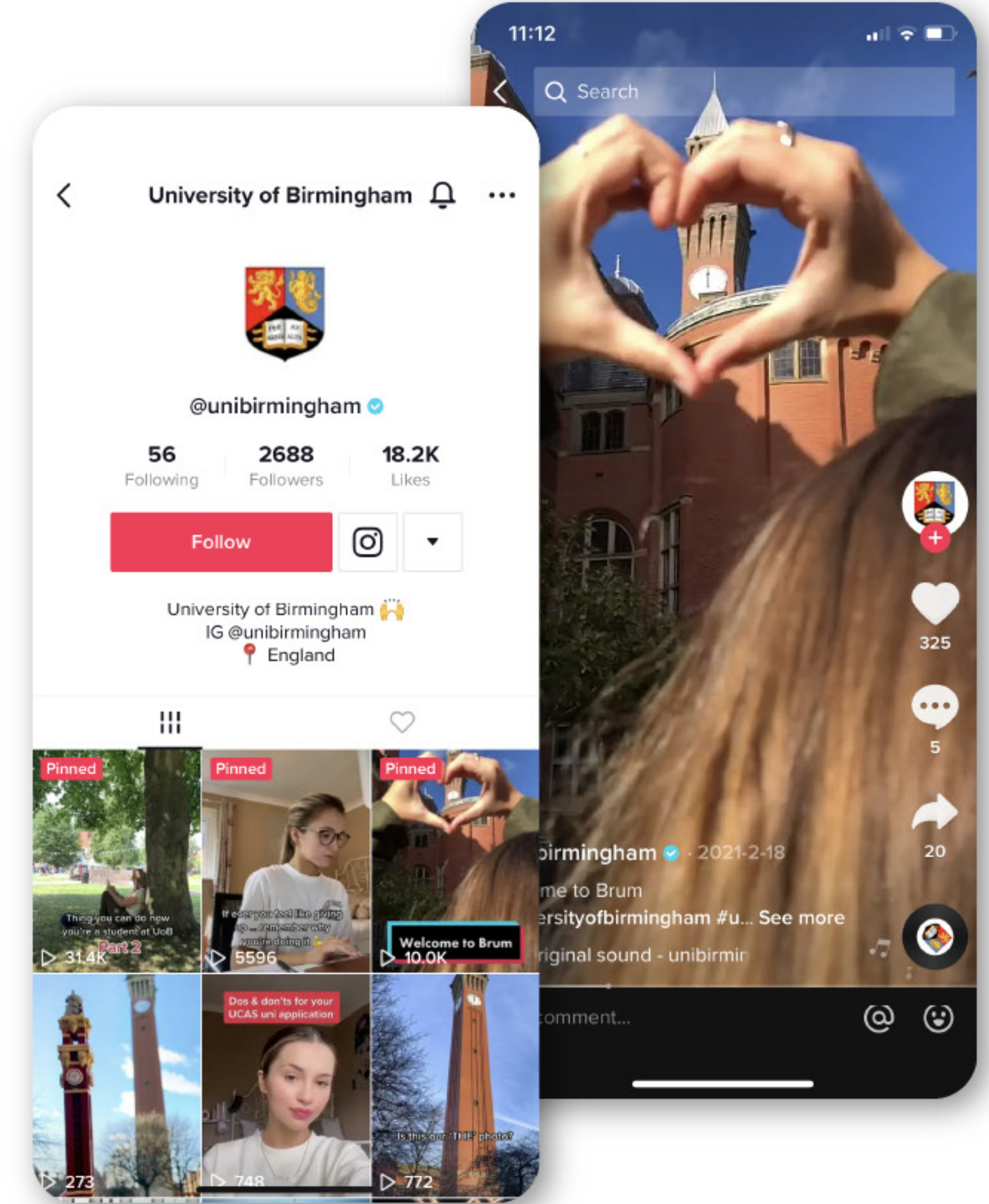
Useful



The **University of Birmingham** consistently has their eye on the trends of TikTok, keeping their feed entertaining and relatable.

On the more informative side, they include student tips, campus tours and city highlights. Their content is clearly made for TikTok specifically, and much is student-led.

The university is still growing on the platform, but they are continuously experimenting with content and have already had a few hits!



12

UNIVERSITY OF
MANCHESTER

@officialuom

1345

Followers

5.84%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



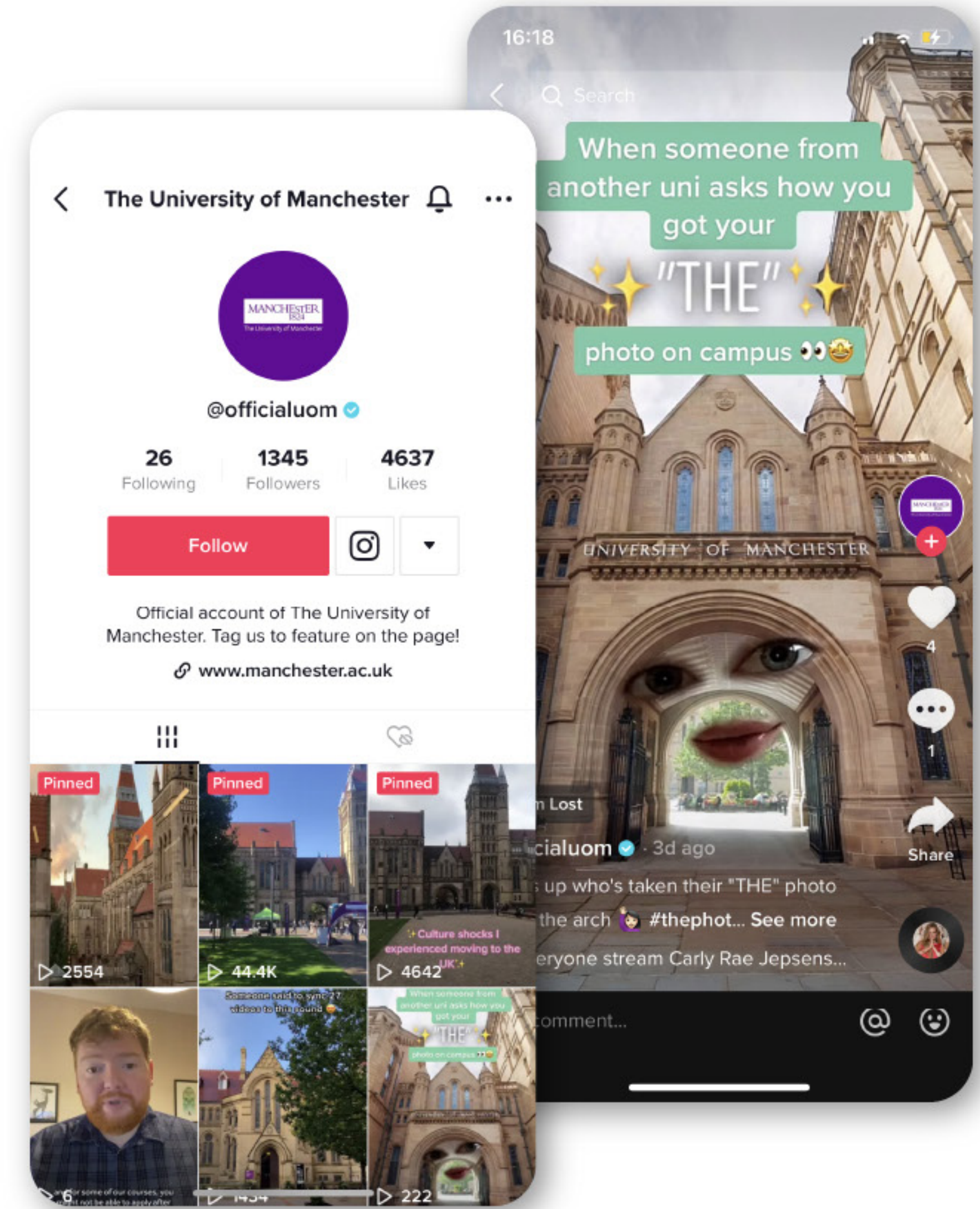
Useful



The **University of Manchester's** TikTok has used professors to address current events and profess their favourite facts from their respective fields.

This is a clever way to highlight the personality of the professors and the different courses available at Manchester University.

They also continue to experiment with content showcasing student tips and city tours to give prospects an understanding of what student life might look like.



11

UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHAMPTON

@unisouthampton

1658

Followers

45.74%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational

Relatable

Student Life

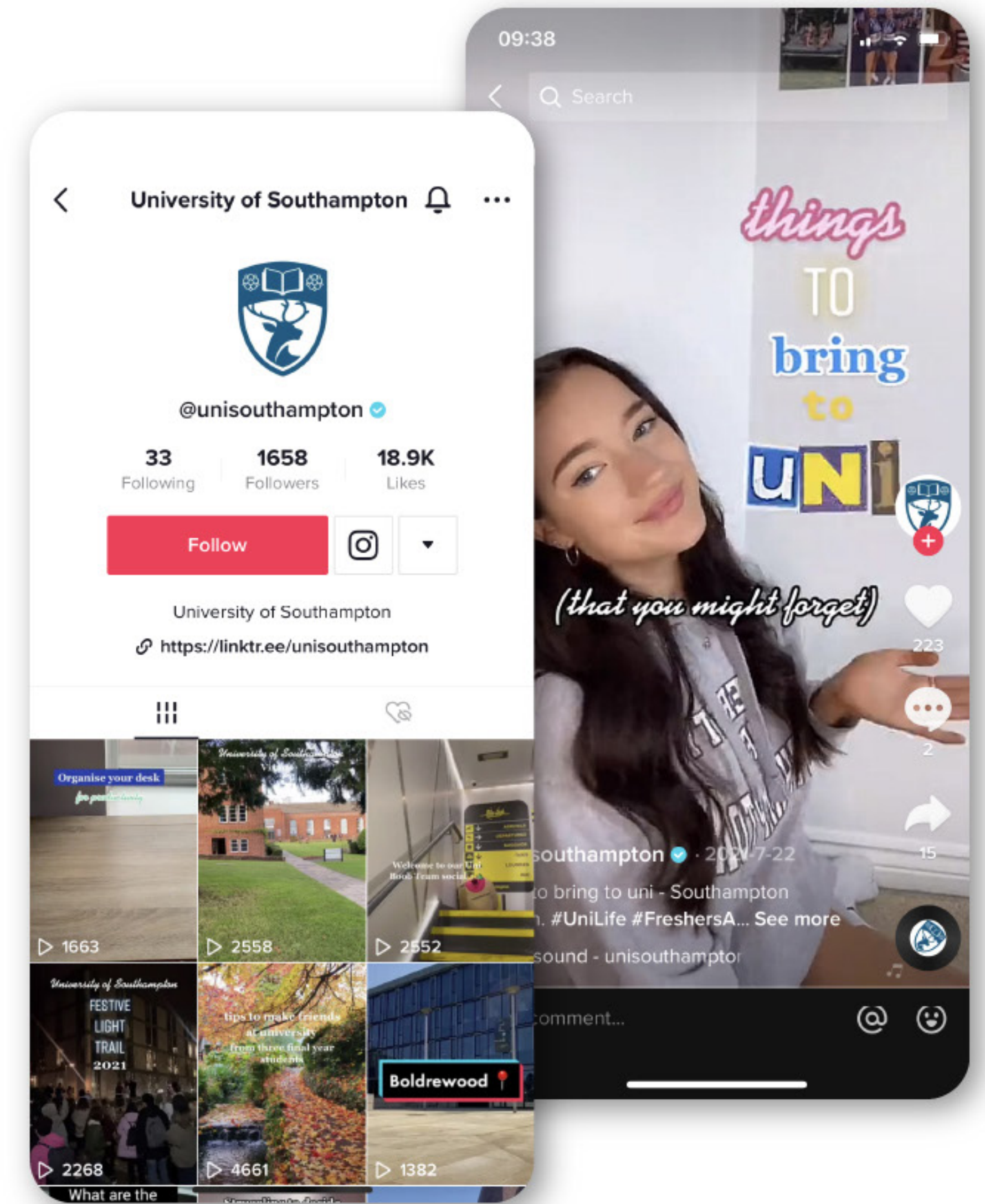
Useful



The **University of Southampton** seems to be experimenting with content but are off to a great start!

They have some seriously useful tip videos like what to bring (fancy dress) and what NOT to bring to uni (a blender). They've also created some great relatable content that highlights the unique experiences of being a Southampton student (owning a pair of Jesters shoes).

With more content like this, students will want to join in on the fun.



10

UNIVERSITY OF
READING

@uniofreeding

1189

Followers

20.56%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



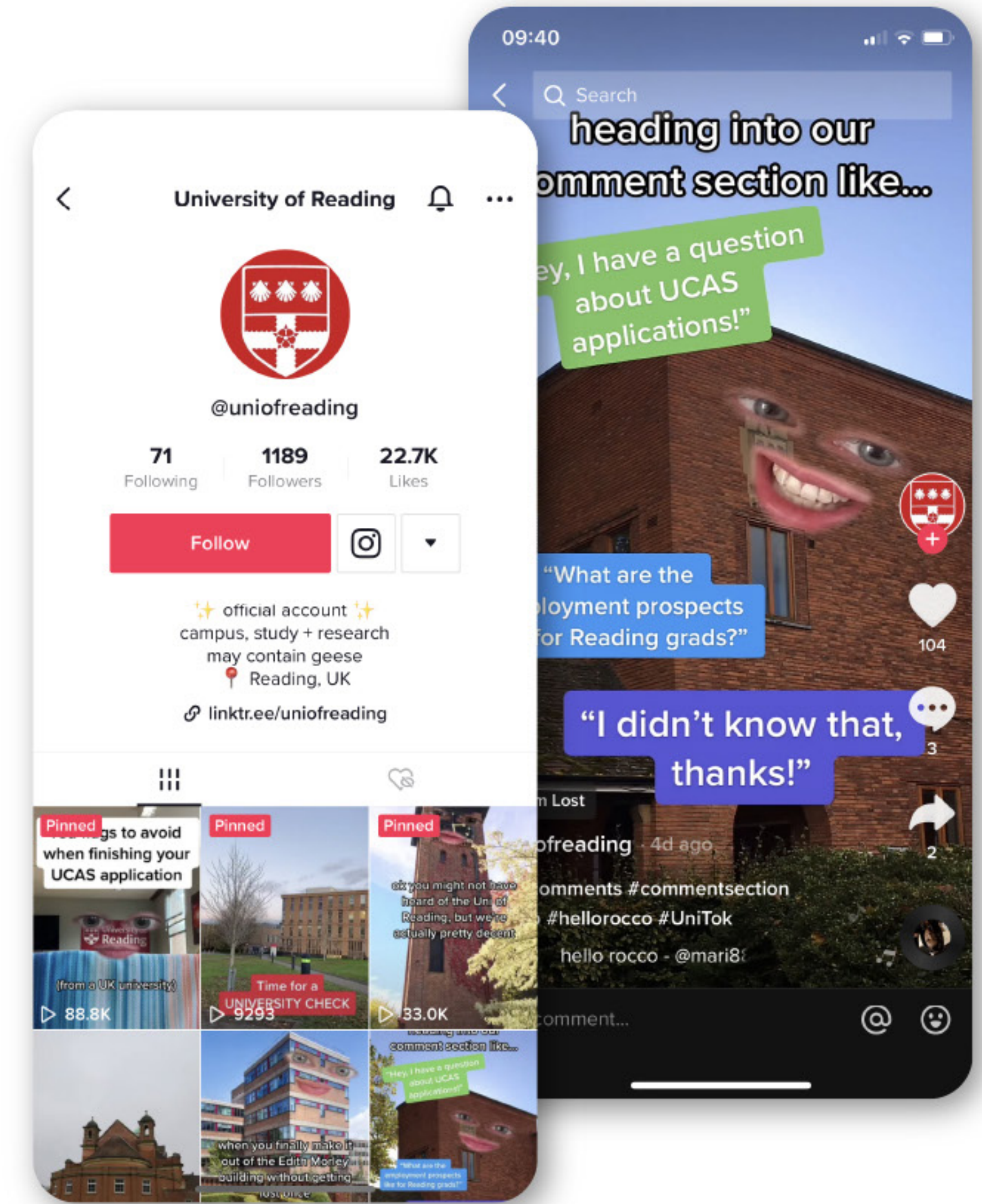
Useful



The **University of Reading** has seriously picked up their TikTok game this year, participating in more trends and using the 'I'm Lost' filter to add in comedic relief.

Their more serious content highlights their stance on current issues, like climate change and the pandemic issues.

They break up those serious conversations with student life videos and cute animals (hi Arla the llama!).



09

UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER

@uniwestminster

3666

Followers

200.38%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



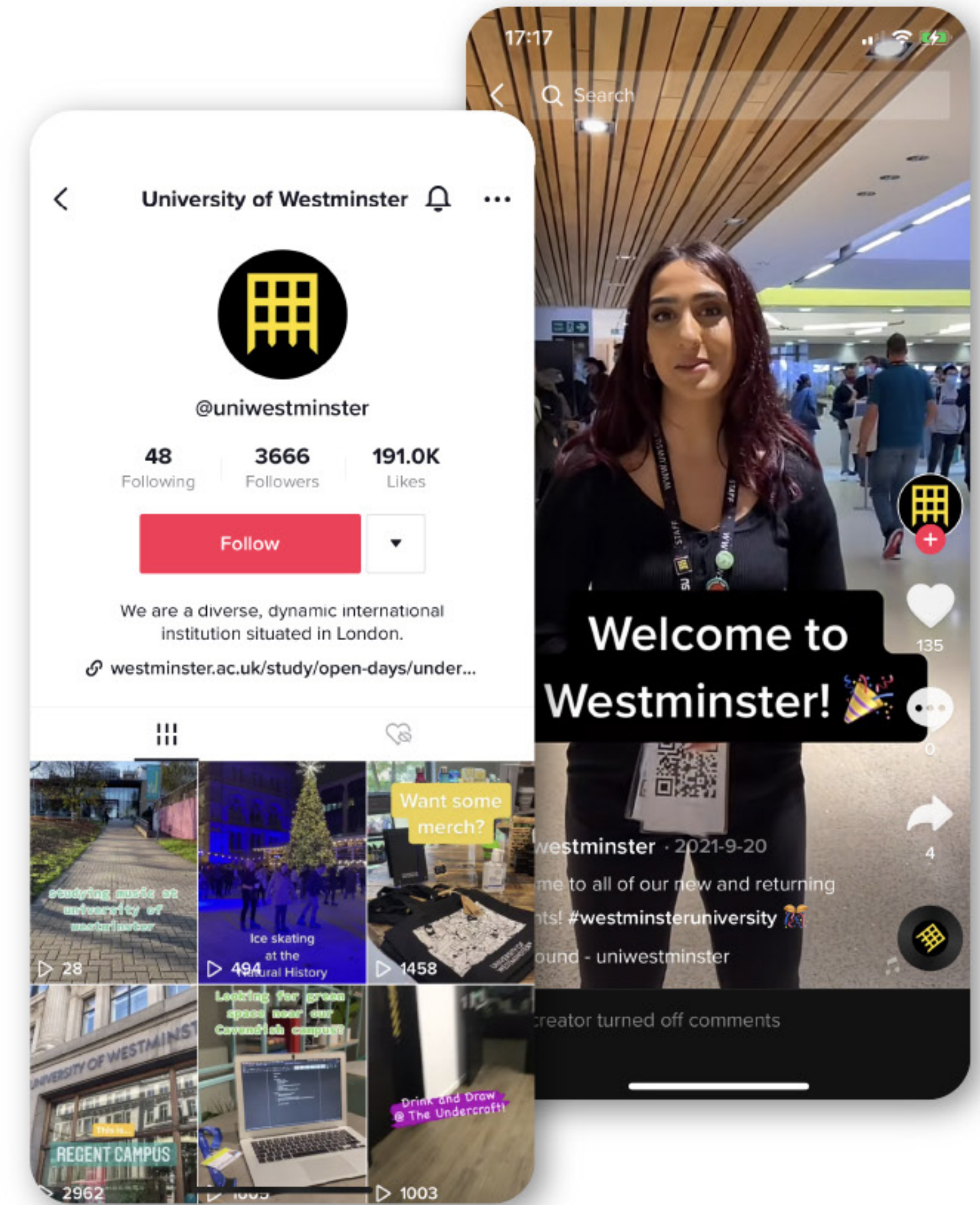
Useful



The **University of Westminster's** TikTok features primarily student-generated content. They tackle tips for clearing, working as a student, and student life in London.

They have seen some great engagement with some key pieces of content that authentically showcase student life.

Anyone scrolling through their content can see that a student at the University of Westminster will be exposed to a modern and forward-thinking environment.



08

UNIVERSITY
OF SHEFFIELD

@sheffielduni

4021

Followers

198.79%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



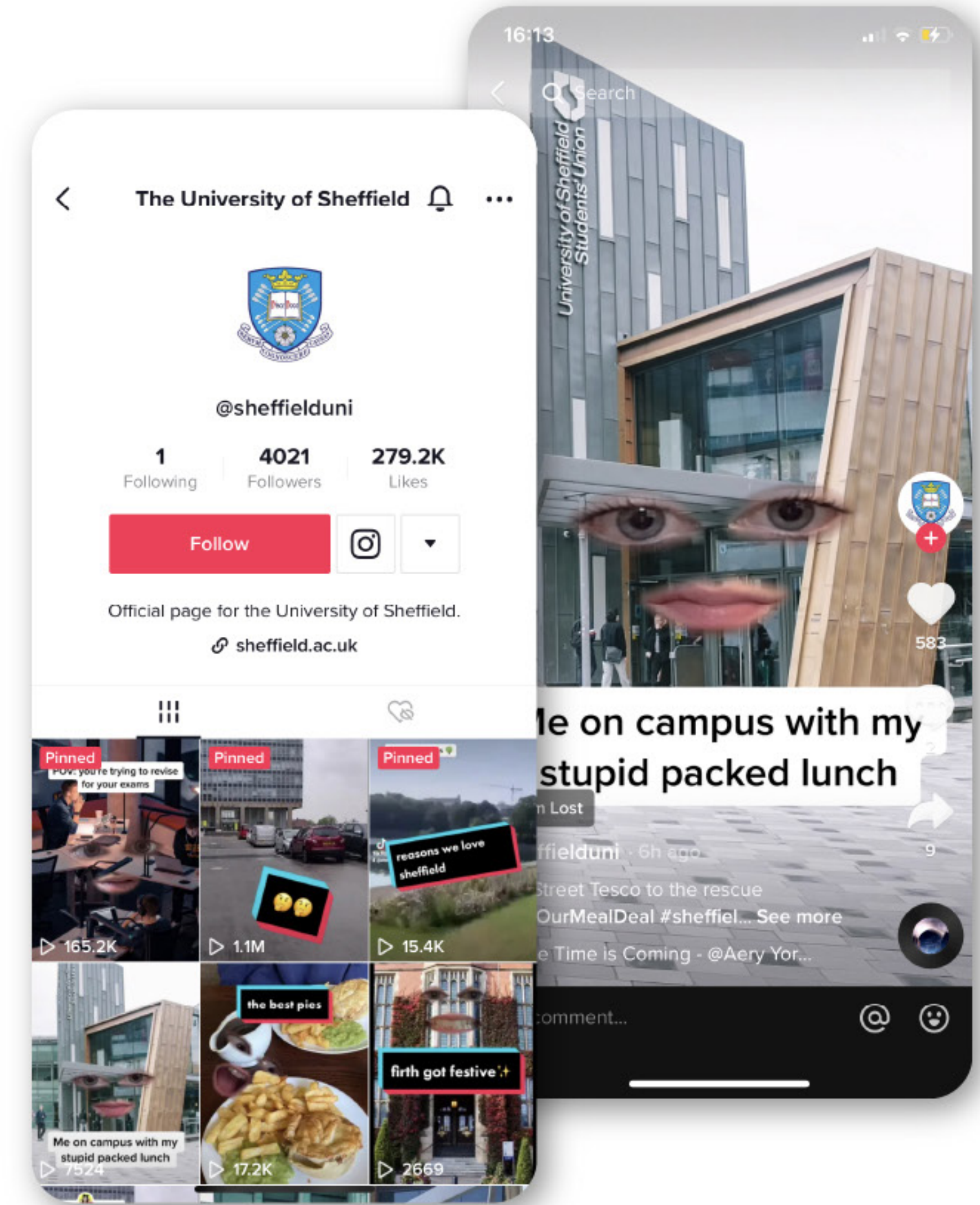
Useful



The **University of Sheffield** uses their TikTok to walk their audience around campus and the city.

They highlight the mouthwatering meals you can find at the food hall, poke fun at the surrounding areas and local attractions. While they don't use presenters in their videos, you still get a sense of their personality.

The Uni have also started to experiment with the popular 'I'm Lost' filter, giving them that comedic edge.



07

BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

@birminghamcityuni

1681

Followers

79.31%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



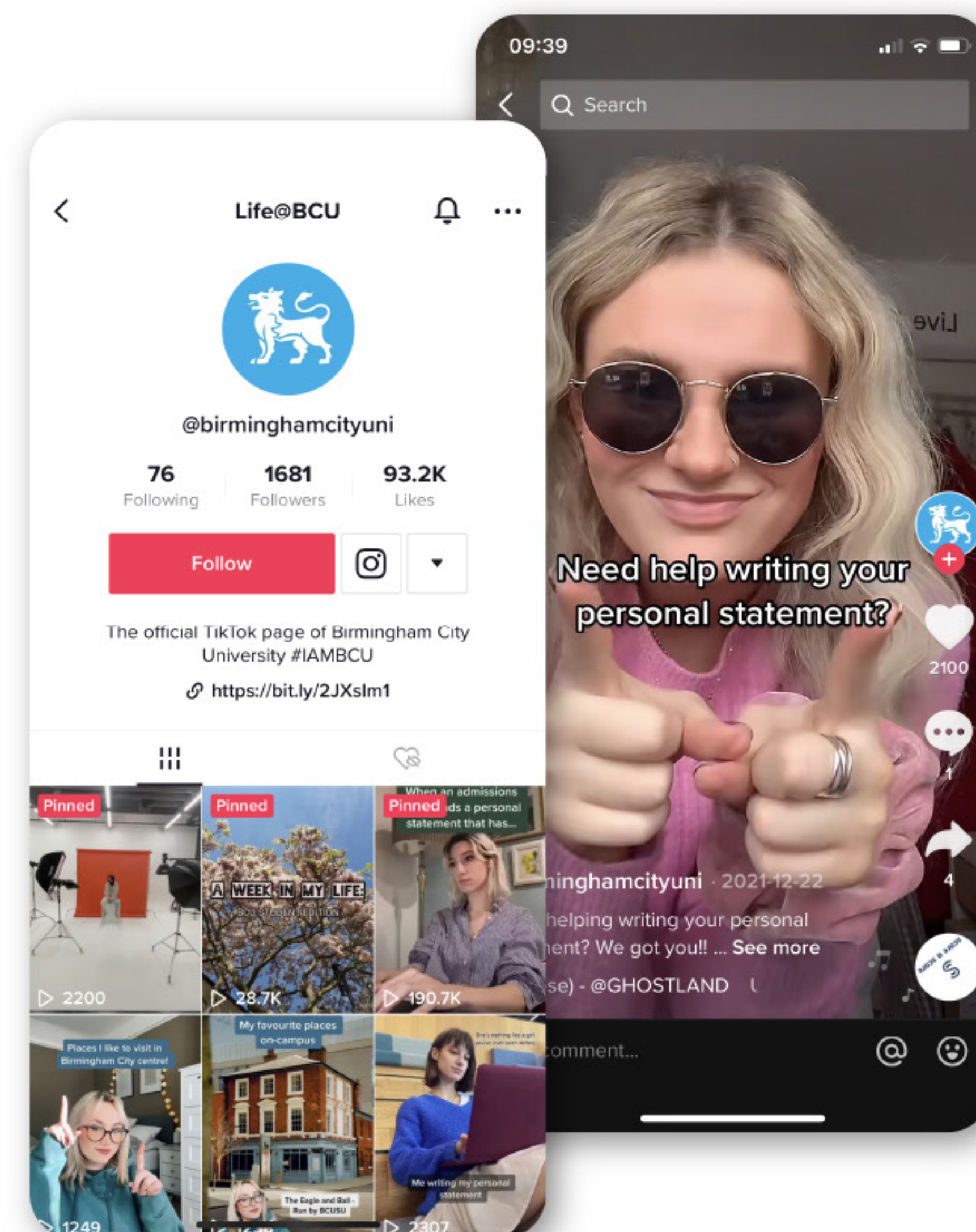
Useful



Birmingham City University seems to be still testing the TikTok platform; they have leaned into student-centric content that is well-positioned for growth, their page having already experienced some great engagement.

Their videos about personal statements will warrant a genuine LOL and their willingness to experiment should be rewarded.

This approach has already gained them a few hits, and we're excited to see more!



06

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

@nottinghamtrentuni

4546

Followers

20.26%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



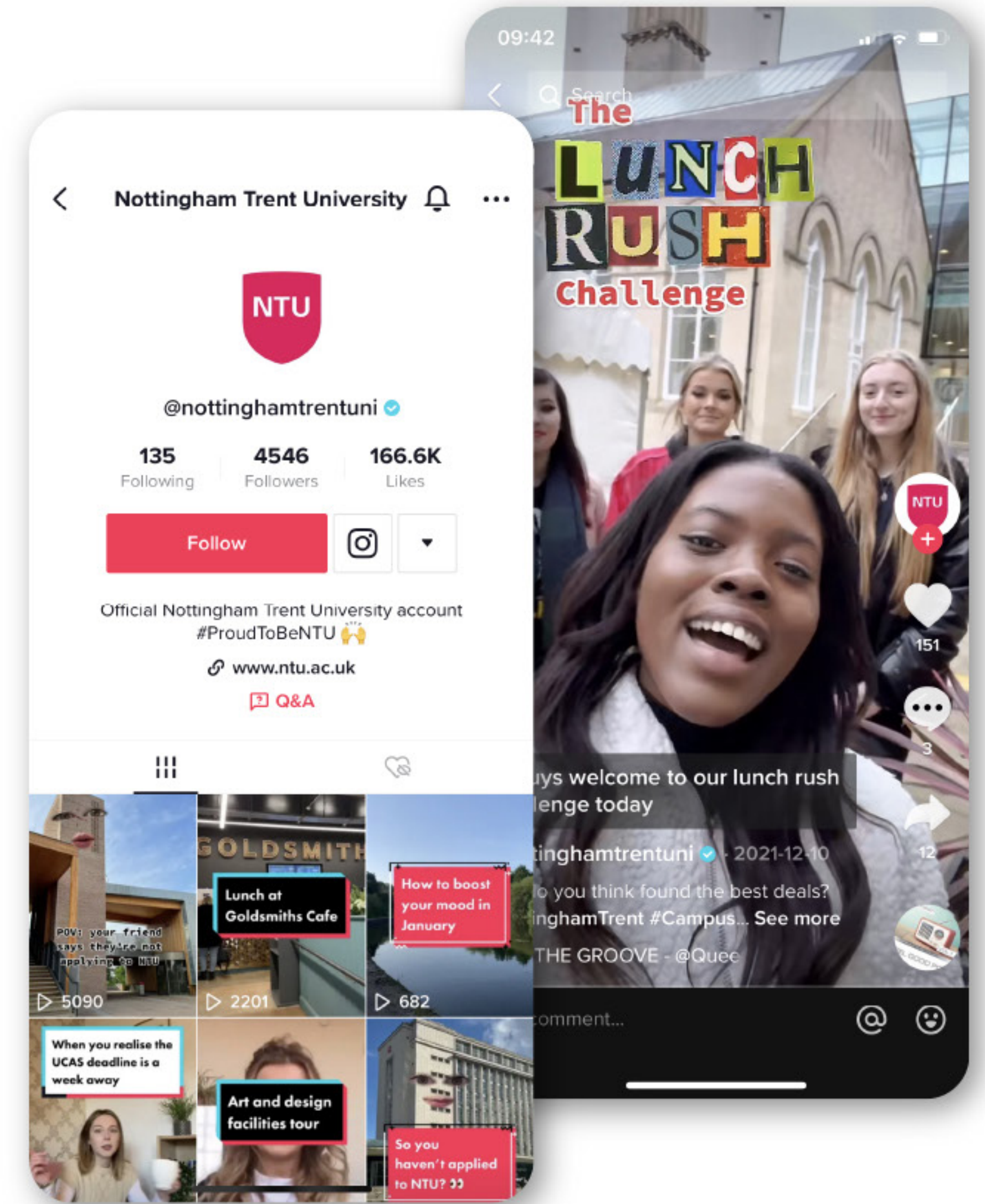
Useful



Nottingham Trent University's Tiktok is extremely useful for current or prospective students.

With content concerning wellbeing tips and how to build confidence at uni, the audience can get the sense that the university truly cares about their students.

This, coupled with trending content, has won the university a couple of hits, and with nearly all the videos being student-led, Nottingham Trent comes across as very relatable.



05

UNIVERSITY OF
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

@theuniofglos

1043

Followers

24.89%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



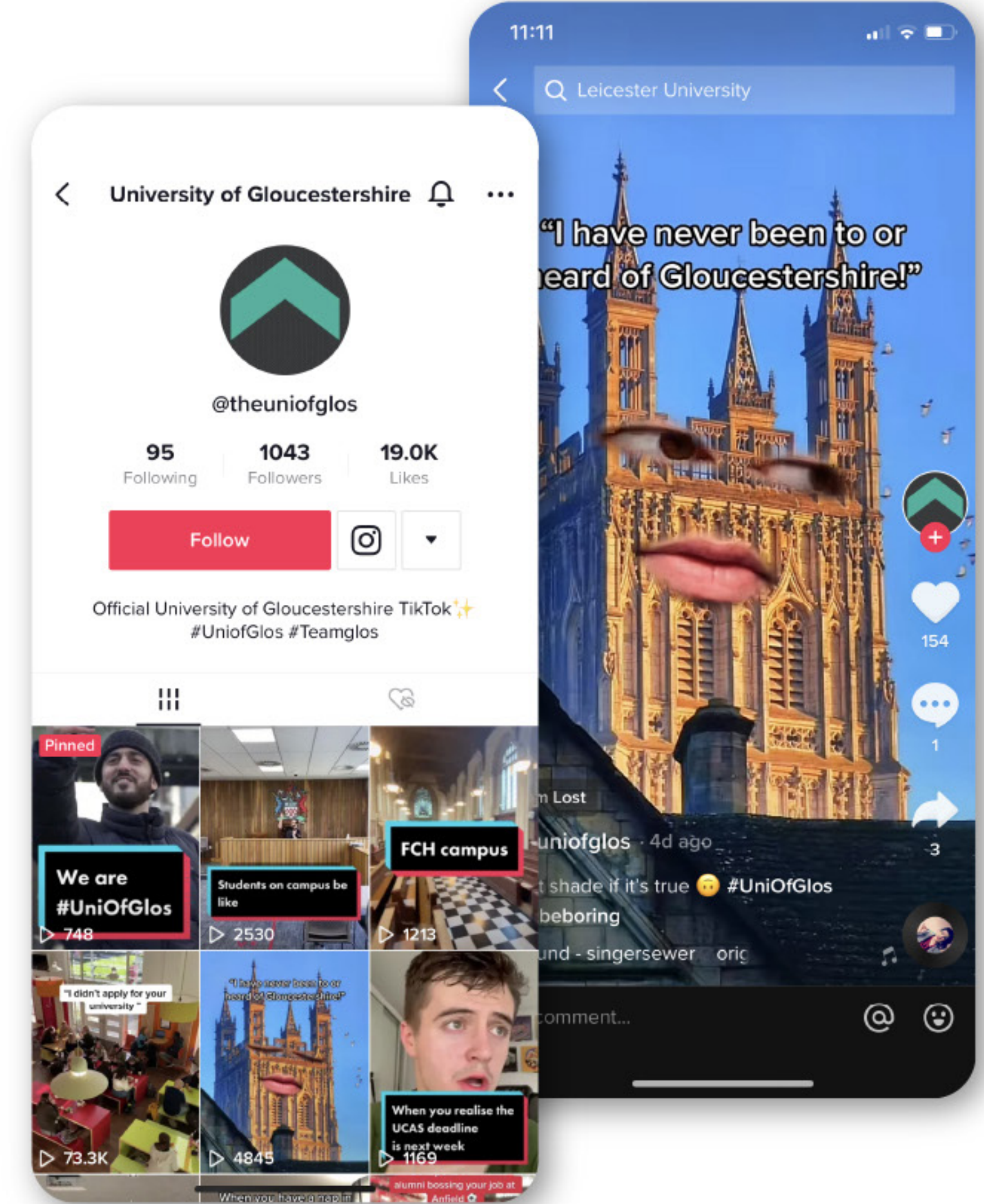
Useful



The **University of Gloucestershire's** TikTok has such a great variety of content. They take the audience into the classrooms and around the campus, fully immersing them virtually.

They even give prospective students advice on which degree they should do based on their Zodiac sign; even I feel seen.

With the addition of trending sounds and comedic content, a prospective student will understand what it might be like to be a part of #teamglos.



04

UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

@plymuni

1110

Followers

20%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



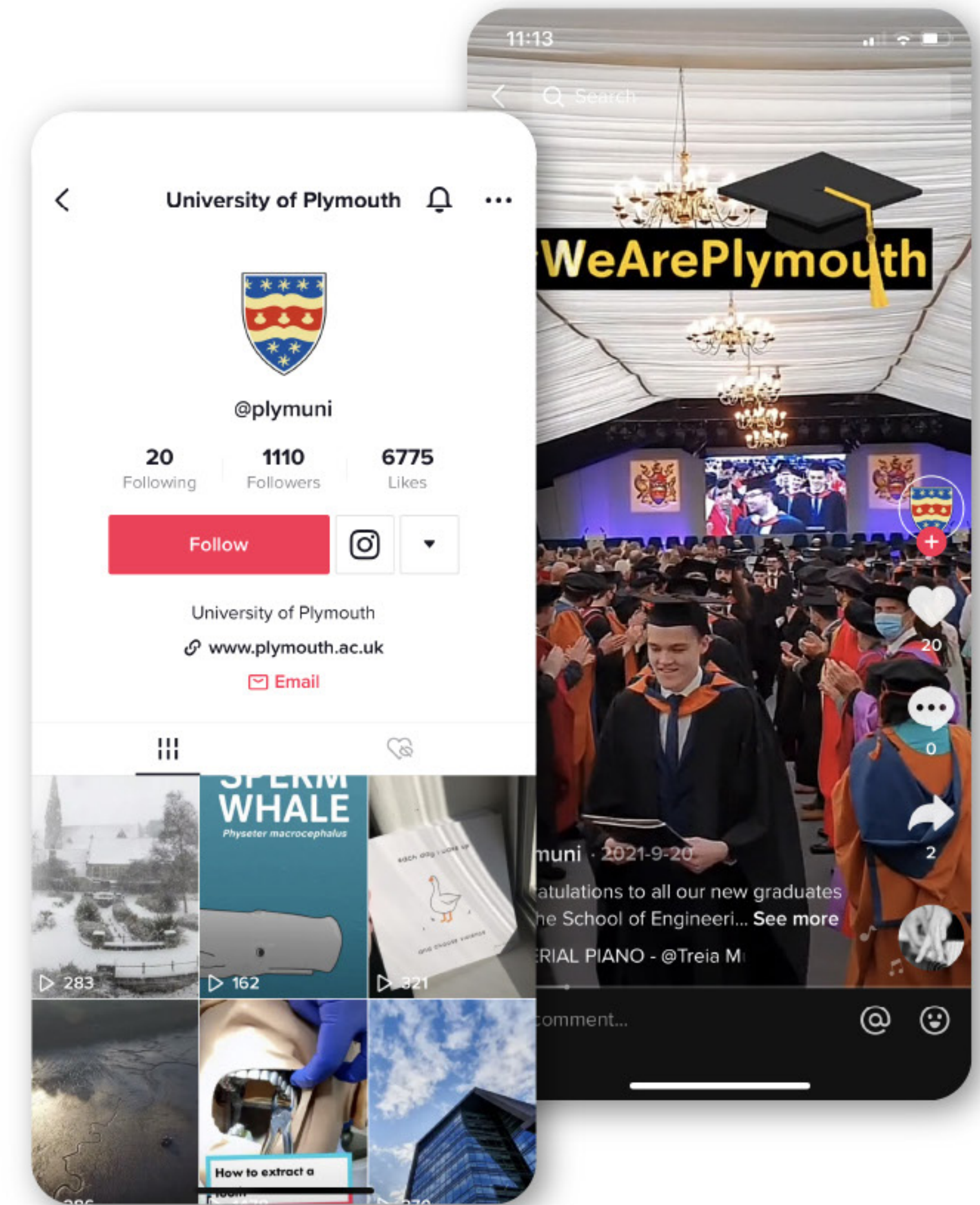
Useful

**University of Plymouth's**

TikTok really gives you the sense of all the fun you can have on their campus.

They have their students take you to the photography courses, walk you through a molar extraction and participate in the climate change discussion. They also jumped on the Squid Game trend and had their engineering students show the audience how to do it right!

Students should feel excited to learn and express themselves after viewing the Uni's TikTok.



03

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

@theopenuniversity

1565

Followers

199.65%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

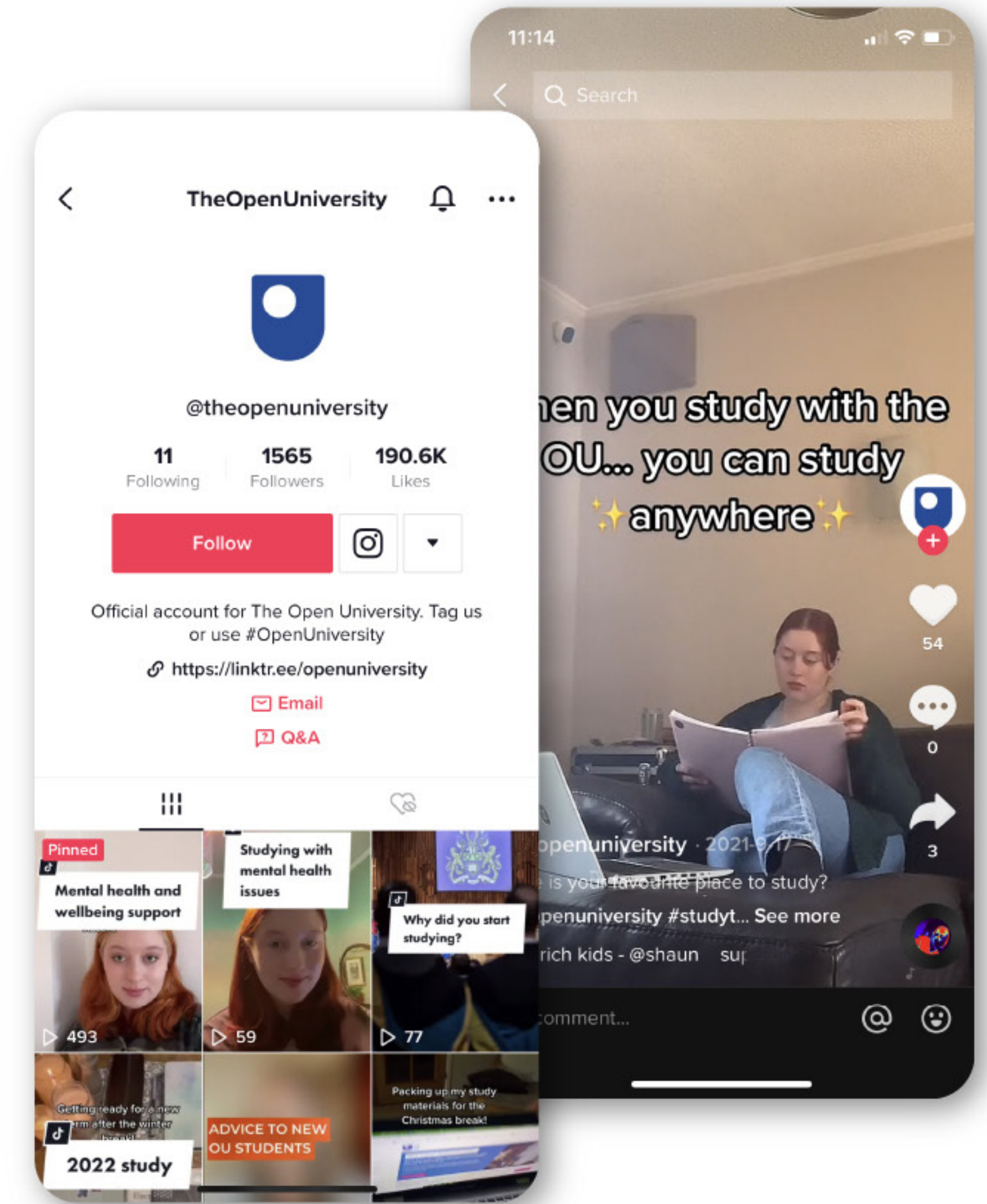


The **Open University's** TikTok has a variety of useful content.

From students hopping on TikTok trends to 'jobs of the future' and everything in between.

They've done a great job highlighting different student stories and course highlights.

After scrolling through their feed, prospective students will have a good understanding of student life and all the opportunities that wait for them at The Open University.



02

UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

@cambridgeuniversity

28.8K

Followers

5.75%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



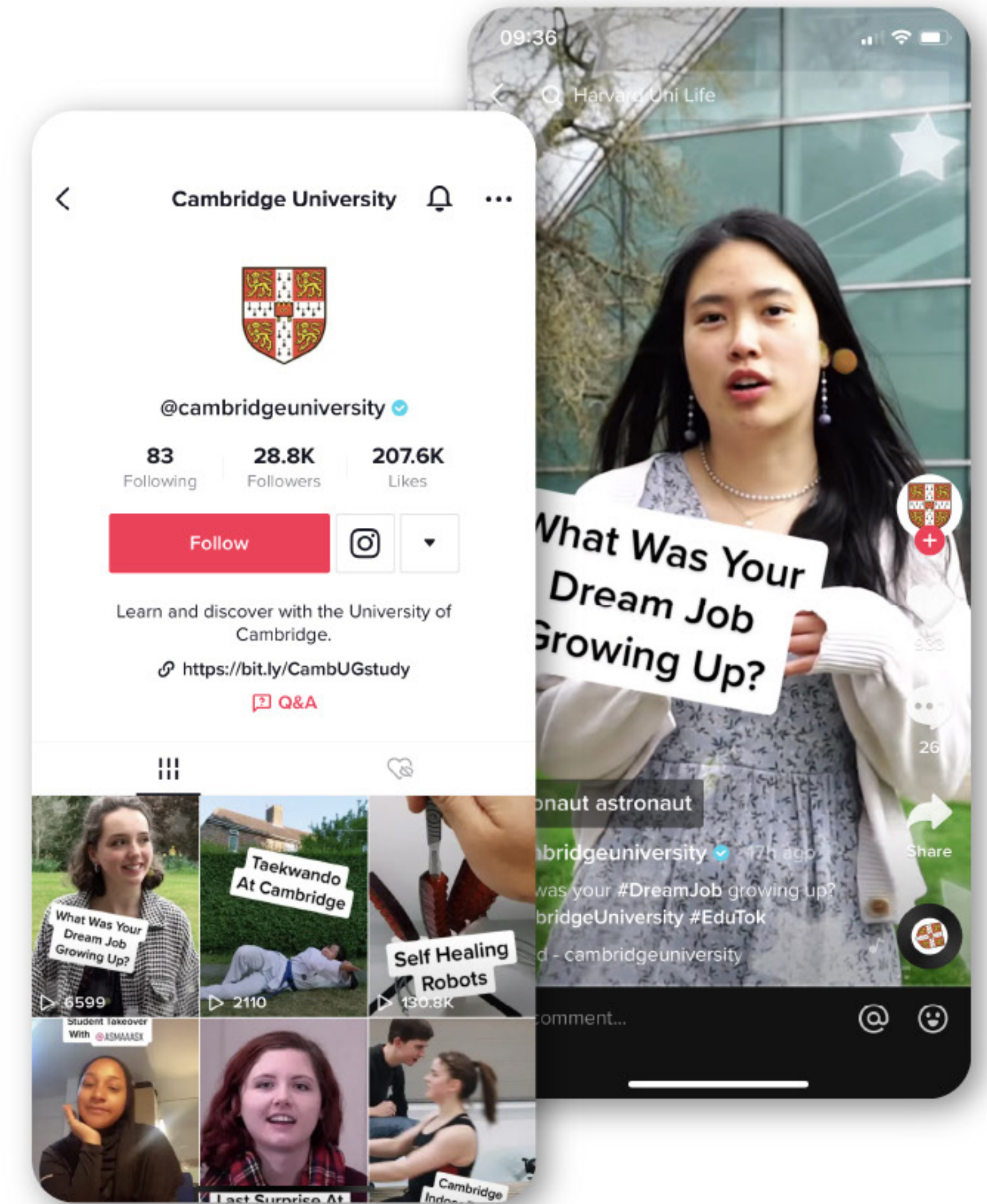
Useful



The **University of Cambridge** has positioned their TikTok toward prospective students.

Their feed is full of application & interview tips and deep dives into all sorts of topics like how to make a sustainable cricket bat.

They have also produced a series of content that features students as they talk through their Cambridge interview 'fails'. The university's content gives their prospective students a sense of comfort despite their prestige.



01

UNIVERSITY OF
CHICHESTER

@universityofchichester

22.5K

Followers

27.96%

Engagement Rate

Aspirational



Relatable



Student Life



Useful

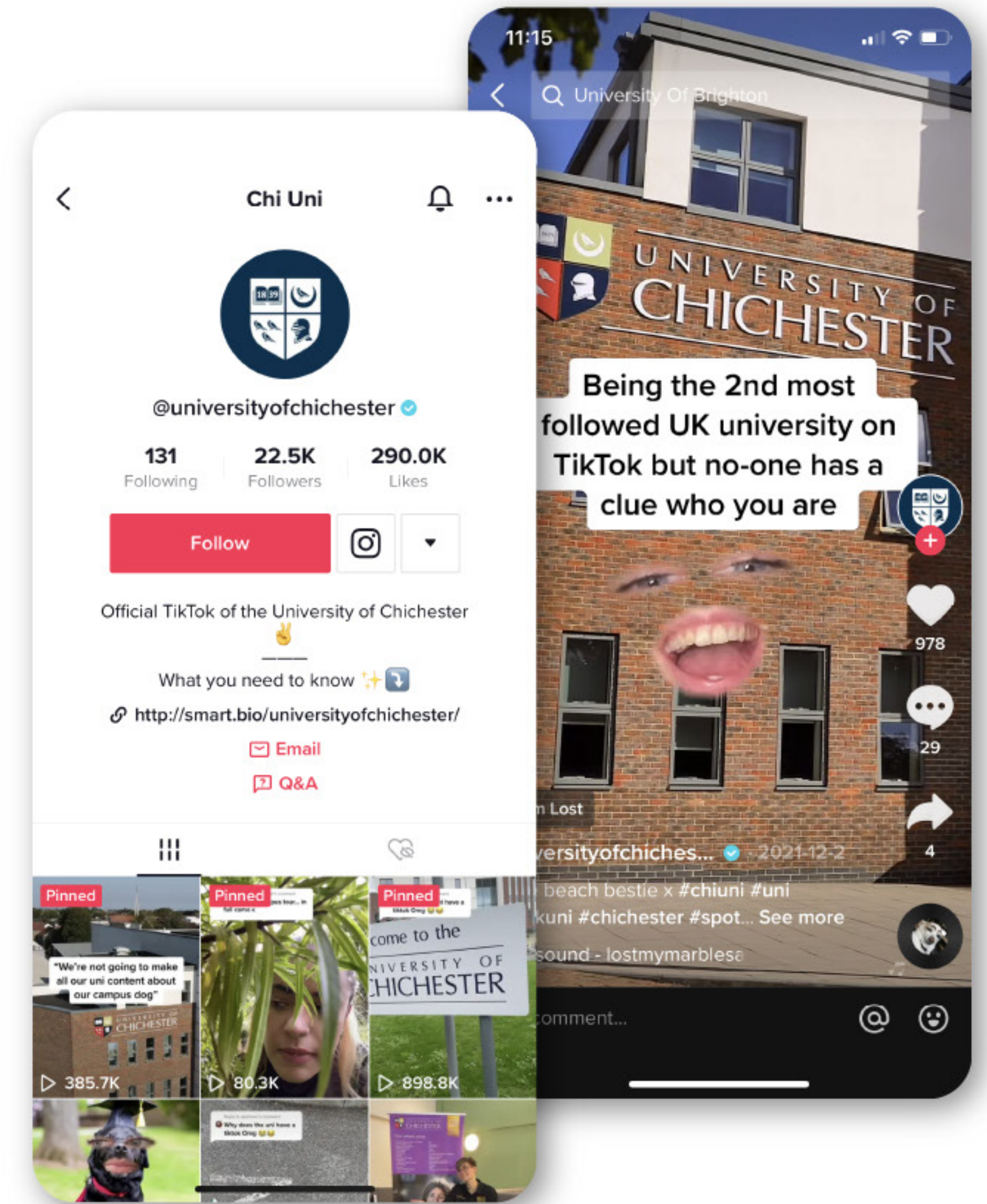


The **University of Chichester** has mastered TikTok.

They post comedic and trending content that resonates with more than just students or prospective students.

They have taken a page out of Ryanair's handbook and have found clever ways to use the eyes and mouth filter that will make you laugh.

When they aren't making you laugh, they're making you want to visit the city and attend student events.



Key Takeaways

Four main takeaways we've learned from this analysis are:

- Student-generated content is an authentic way to showcase the realities of student life, and universities should use this where possible rather than repurposing content from other marketing materials
- The more random the topic, the better. TikTok is a great platform to experiment and share quirky academic content to fit the #LearnOnTikTok niche and give students a sneak peek into the classroom
- Event-related content (open days, clearing, etc.) is great and informative but should be mixed in with other daily life content to make the feed more relatable and less ad-like
- Trends are your friend. This does not mean jumping on every trend possible, but it is essential to keep an eye out for relevant trends as its one of the most organic and entertaining way to break through on the platform

