



Maximising your QS Stars visibility:

Channels, platforms and techniques

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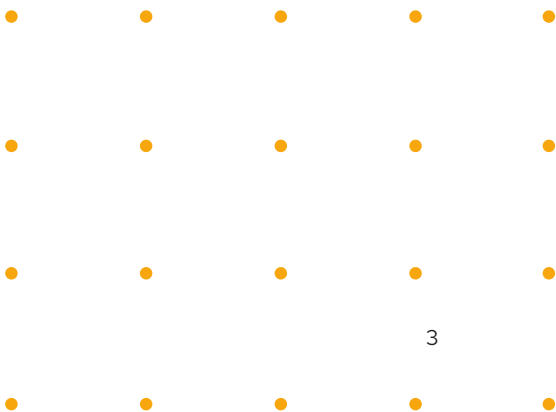


Your QS Stars rating deserves to be showcased in the best possible light. This guide is your practical partner in leveraging your prestigious achievement to enhance your institutional reputation, attract top talent, and reach strategic goals.

For detailed exploration into crafting your compelling QS Stars narrative, weaving your unique story, and amplifying your strengths, download our companion guide on telling your QS Stars story.

In this guide, we'll explore:

- What QS Stars is and why it matters
- How to use your QS Stars badges and best practices
- Choosing the optimal channels to tell your QS Stars story and engage your key audiences



What is QS Stars?

With ratings across several categories, QS Stars' in-depth evaluation and awards have already enabled more than 700 universities to spotlight their strengths, identify growth opportunities and build their institutional reputation, outcomes and cohort.

QS Stars can help you:

- Guide your strategic planning
- Elevate your reputation and performance
- Differentiate your institution from the competition
- Enhance your student experience
- Achieve your student recruitment goals
- Uplift the overall quality of the higher education sector

Strategy: Using your QS Stars badges

Introducing our new-look badges

Bolder, sleeker and now even easier to use, our upgraded badges enable you to showcase your institution's excellence in a more striking way than ever before.

QS Stars badges are eye-catching icons that can be used anywhere you promote your institution – on your website, your prospectus, adverts, banners, t-shirts – you name it. We've refined their design to better reflect the status and prestige that QS Stars represents but they're still the most effective, universally understood way to show off your hard-earned results.



Badges are distributed to institutions once the QS Stars audit for that university is complete. Any institution that wants to promote its QS Stars rating needs to have a valid QS Stars subscription in place and have agreed to publish results in full on the TopUniversities website.

How to display your QS Stars badges

The badge comprises of the QS logo artifact, the stars and the word indicator.

Nothing should overlap these elements of the badge.



✓ Adhere to the clear zone of the white rectangle



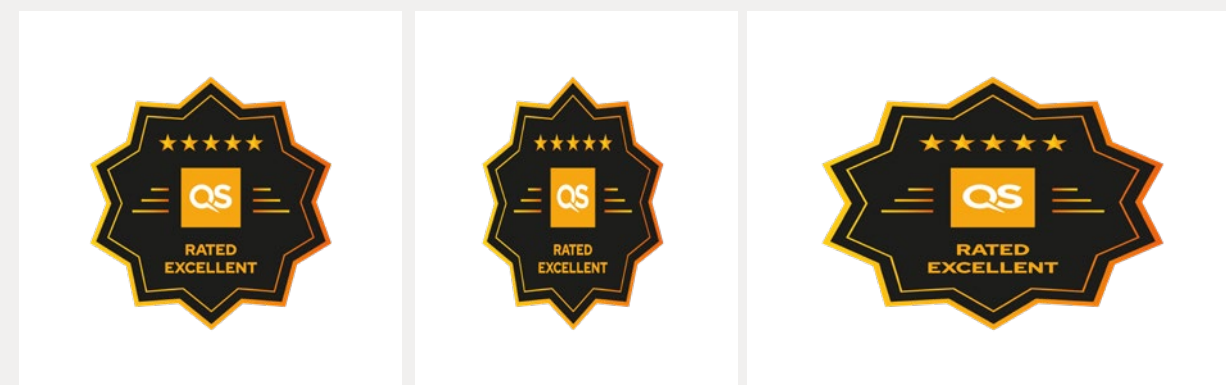
✗ Do not overlap the badges

Here's how and where you can use your QS Stars badges:

- Institutions may use all of the badges in their marketing, as they choose
- Badges can be used wherever the institution chooses, such as in email signatures, prospectuses or banners
- Badges may only be used as long as an institution has a valid QS Stars subscription
- Badges cannot be used for the promotion of offshore campuses
- Only the latest version of the QS Stars badges should be used

Minimum size

- For digital collateral a minimum height of 100 pixels is advised.
- For printed collateral a minimum height of 20 millimetres is advised.
- To ensure readability, a minimum font size of 10pt is set for print and 16px for web.



✓ Maintain the aspect ratio

✗ Do not compress the badge

✗ Do not stretch the badge

Do

The badges should not be squeezed or stretched. The proportions of the badge should always be maintained.



Understand and leverage your digital badges

Introducing the QS Stars digital badges



Staying ahead in today's digital world requires more than just skills; it demands visibility. Stand out with digital badges.

Accredible digital badges provide a cutting-edge, verifiable way to showcase your strengths and achievements across platforms.

Discover the benefits of digital badges and integrate them effectively into your strategy:

- 01 Shareable and accessible:** Access your badges anytime, from any device. Easily share them across social platforms, via email or embed them into signatures or webpages to maximise visibility.
- 02 Verifiable and authentic:** Digital badges provide instant credibility with real-time verification, ensuring your credentials are trusted and recognised.
- 03 Professional recognition:** Boost your presence and reputation within your professional network by integrating your badges into your own social and communication channels.

Displaying your range of QS Stars ratings

The category badges have been built so that you can showcase the ratings together and alone. In the example below is the recommended structure for displaying badges together.



✔ How to display your overall rating and highlight some category badges



✔ How to display multiple category badges together

Writing style guide

The letter ‘**S**’ in “Stars” must always be capitalised.

“it has been awarded 5 Stars...”

✔

“it has been awarded 5 stars...”

✘

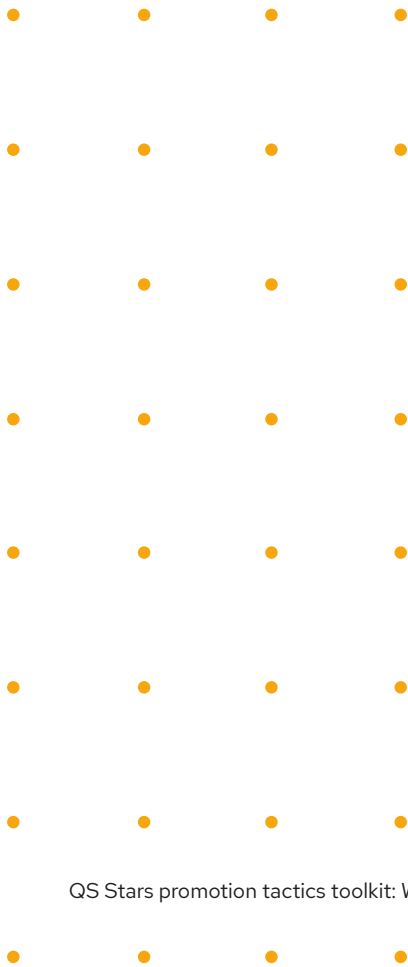
Use the number (**5**) rather than the word (five) when advertising results (e.g. 5 Stars overall)

“has 5 Stars global ratings in innovation..”

✔

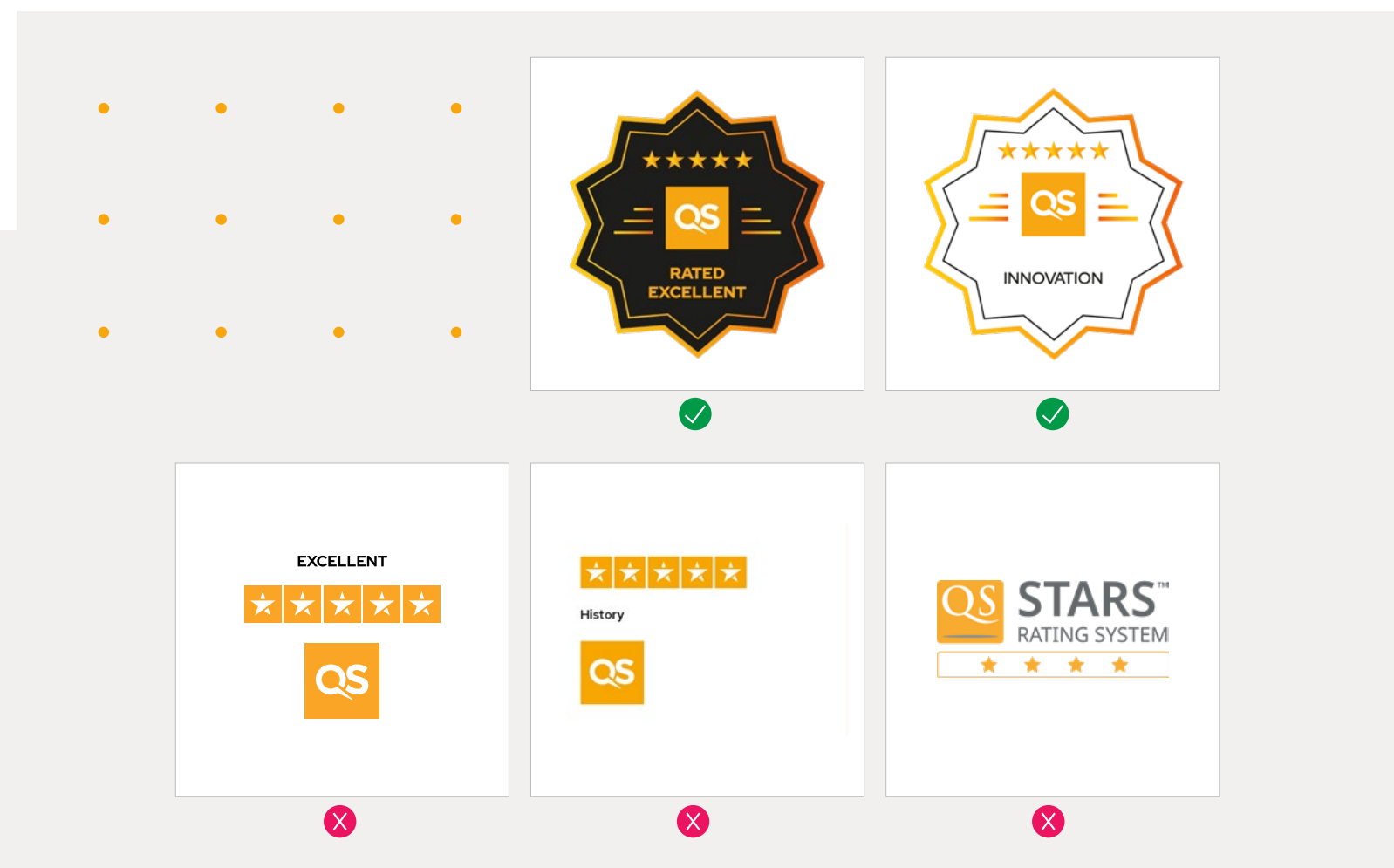
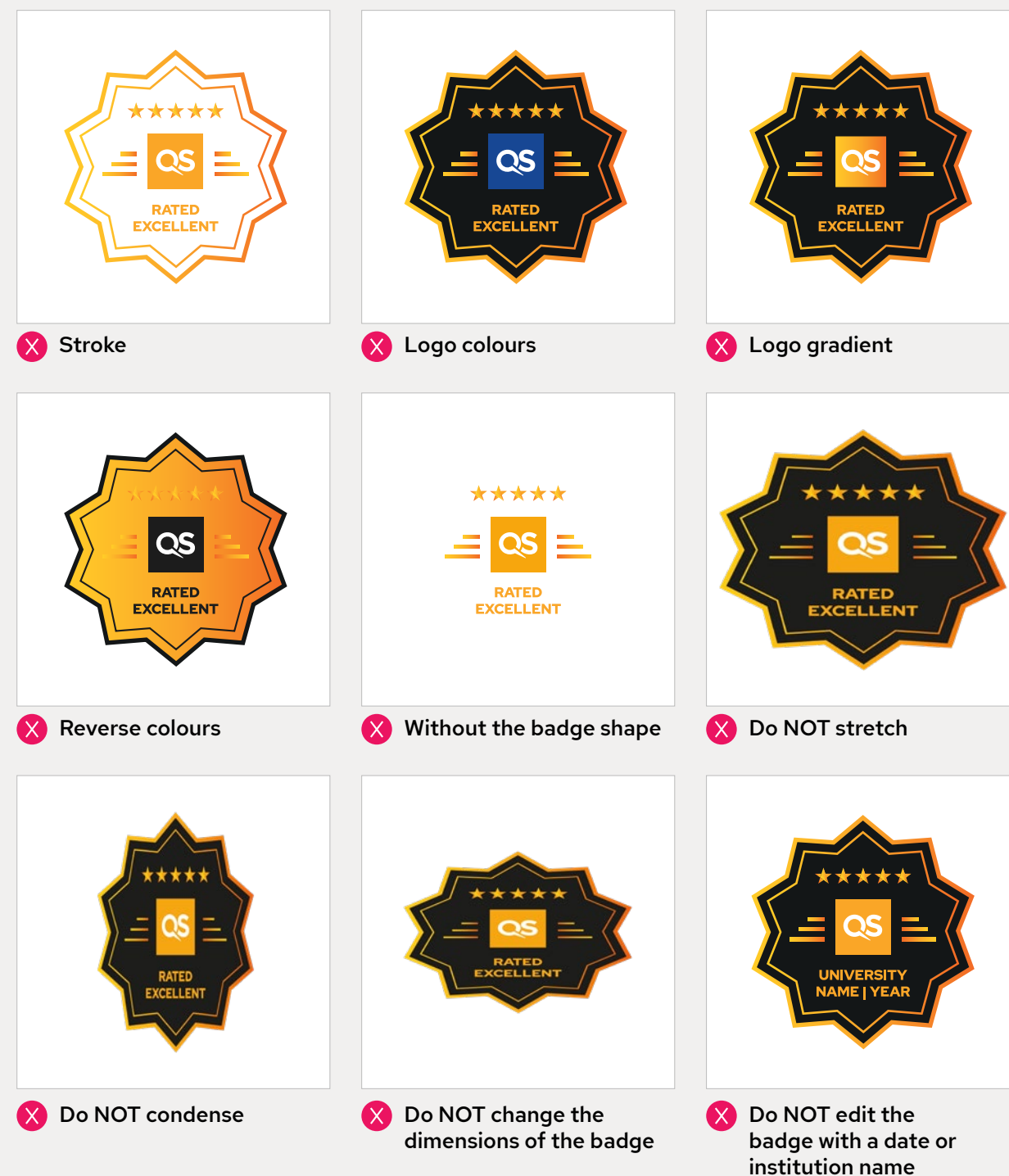
“has five Stars global ratings in innovation..”

✘



Practices to avoid

The QS Stars badges are central to the QS Stars brand, so please take care when you use it. Here are some things to avoid:



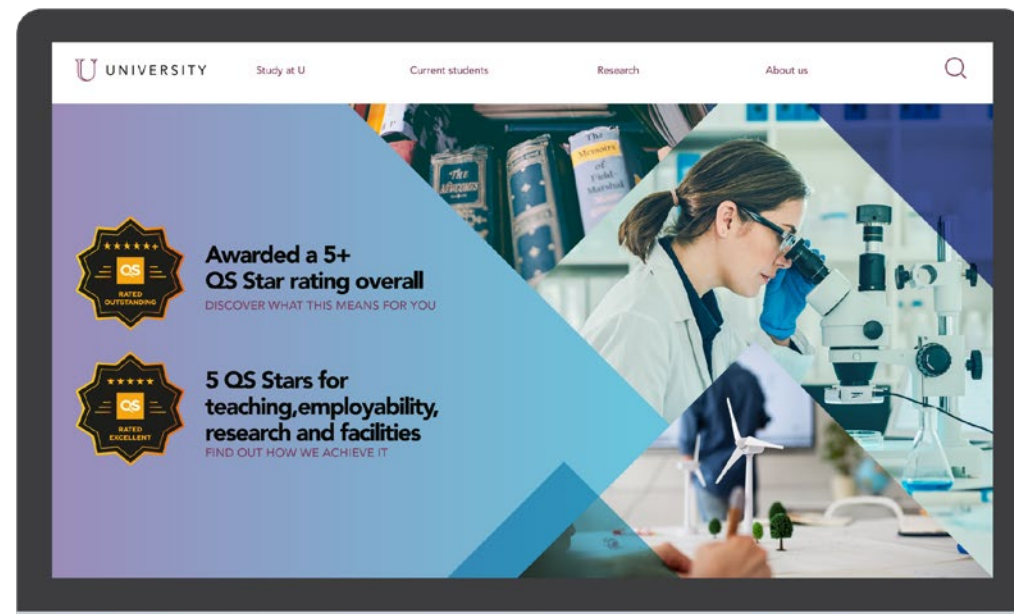
Do NOT use the old versions of the badges



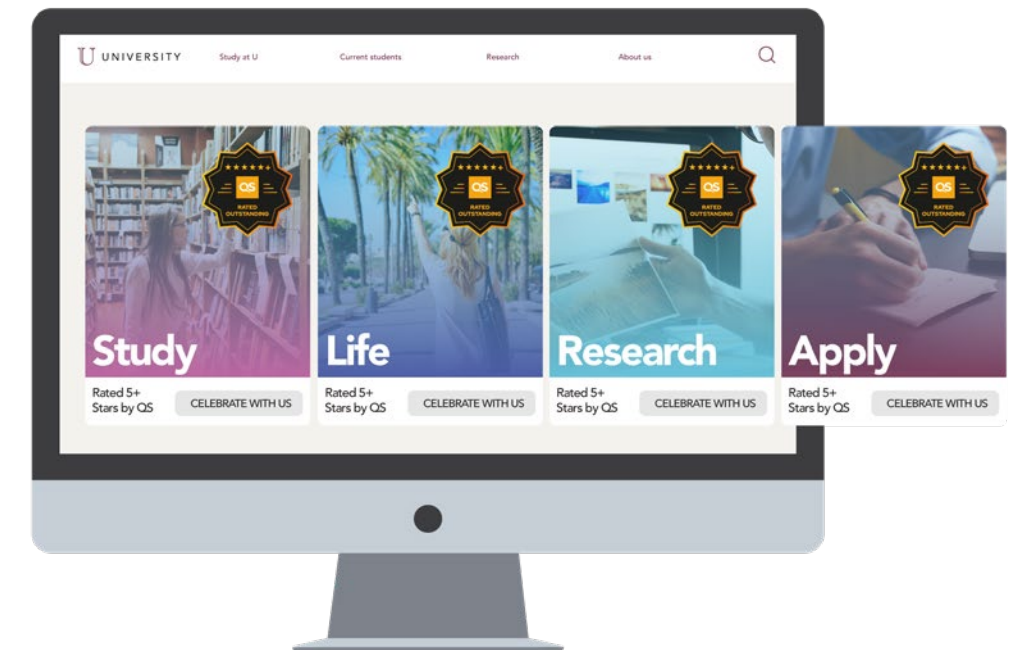
Online promotional tactics

Transform your website into a QS Stars showcase

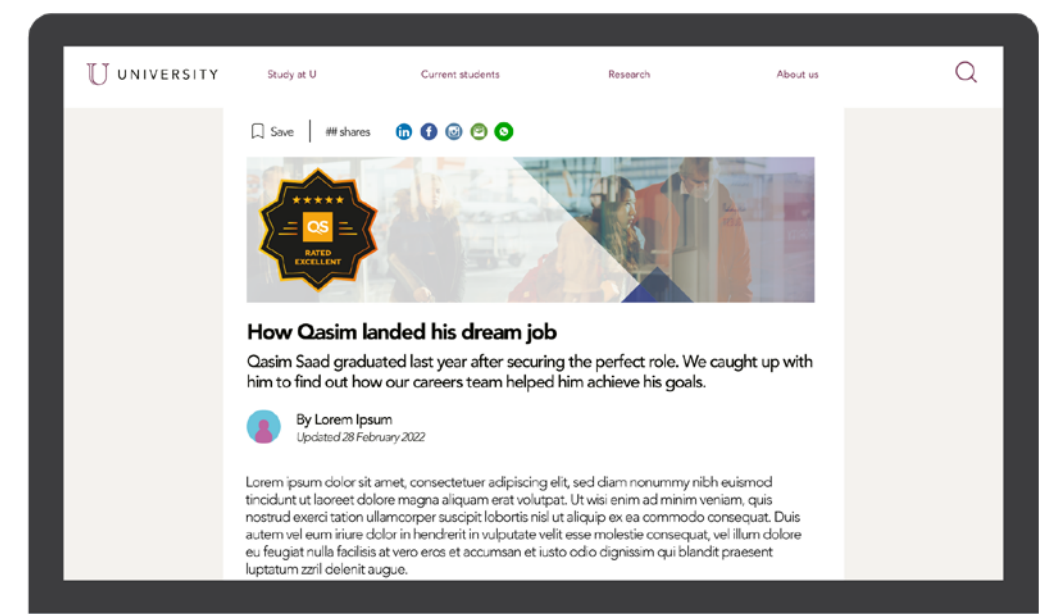
- Establish a dedicated landing page that prominently displays your QS Stars rating, coupled with detailed information about each category.



- Prominently display QS Stars rating badges throughout your website, including homepage, course pages, and admissions sections.



- Weave your QS Stars ratings into your overall branding and messaging, ensuring they align seamlessly with your university's unique identity.
- Share compelling content that highlights your university's accomplishments in areas assessed by QS Stars, emphasising your commitment to excellence.



Elevate your digital footprint with search engine optimisation and targeted advertising

- Conduct a comprehensive search engine optimisation (SEO) audit of your website, optimising it for relevant keywords related to your QS Stars strengths. This will make your institution easily discoverable for prospective students and other stakeholders.
- Expand your online presence by leveraging reputable third-party websites and directories, such as TopUniversities.com and TopMBA.com. This will help you gain backlinks and boost your digital footprint.
- Use targeted online advertising to reach prospective students who are actively seeking information about your QS Stars-rated strengths or courses.



#1

global market leader for student insights and guidance

GOOGLE TRENDS 2023

54+

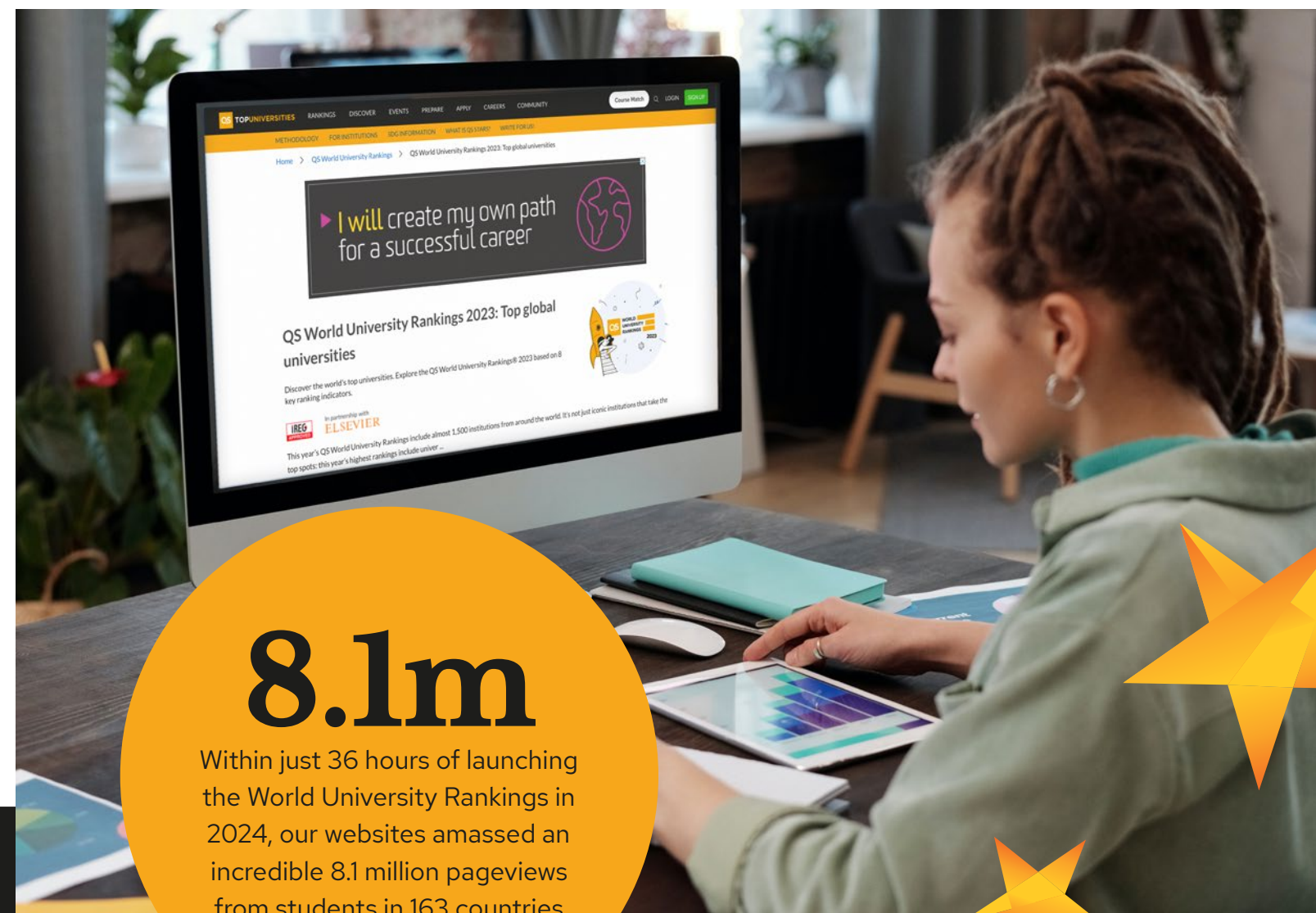
million visitors to our websites, TopUniversities.com and TopMBA.com each year

250

our digital adverts generate 250 million impressions per year

Harness rankings to establish your reputation

- Make sure your university's profile is up-to-date and accurate on all relevant rankings and course-finder websites.
- Engage with stakeholders and network with key decision-makers by actively participating in ranking events and initiatives.



8.1m

Within just 36 hours of launching the World University Rankings in 2024, our websites amassed an incredible 8.1 million pageviews from students in 163 countries

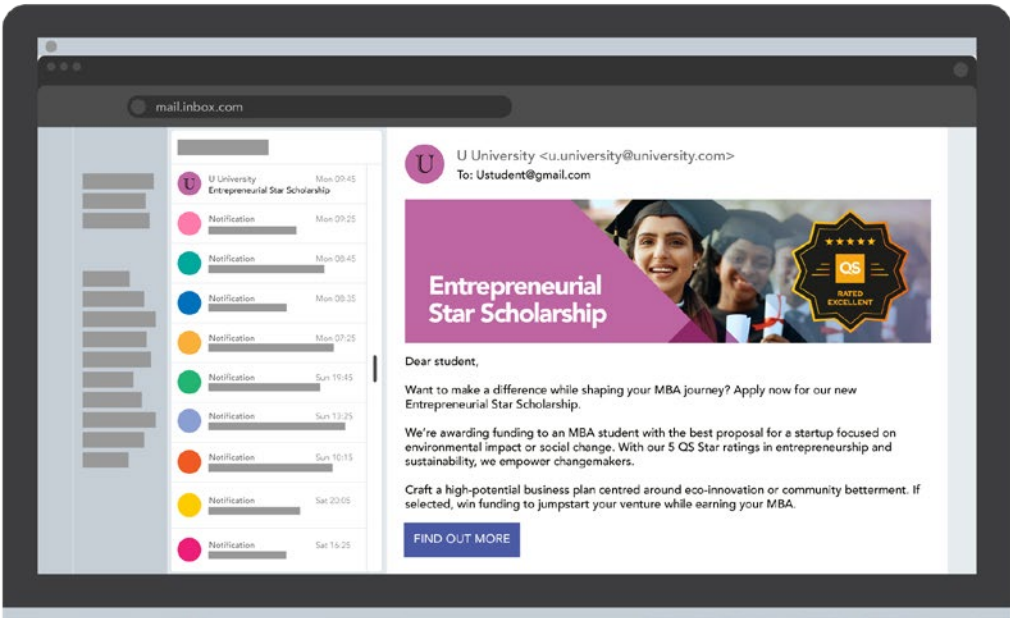
Connect through social media

- Build a strong social media presence across platforms popular among your target demographics by sharing engaging content that highlights your university's culture, achievements, and unique offerings.
- Use targeted social media advertising to reach specific segments of your audience based on demographics, interests, and online behaviour.
- Share news articles and achievements related to your university, reinforcing your QS Stars reputation and credibility.
- Harness the power of user-generated content (UGC) by showcasing student-produced videos, photos, and testimonials. This authentic content resonates with prospective students and builds trust in your institution's brand.
- Identify and collaborate with student and staff influencers who can serve as credible advocates for your institution, reaching a wider audience and amplifying your messaging.



Use email marketing for direct and targeted promotion

- Launch dedicated email campaigns about your QS Stars achievements, sending strategically timed messages before, after, and long-term following your rating announcement. Segment and customise emails to resonate across demographics, interests, and engagement levels for maximum impact.
- Integrate QS Stars badges, statistics, and other relevant achievements into existing email content where appropriate to reinforce and celebrate this recognition. This natural incorporation reminds subscribers of your commitment to quality.
- Encourage faculty and staff to add QS Stars badges to their email signatures. Include QS Stars badges in email banners and footers to provide a subtle visual reinforcement of your university's strengths with every communication.



978k

active users in the QS
email contact database
including 220K candidates

36%

average open rate

6.3%

click-through rate

Bring your Stars to life with video

In a world driven by visual experiences, it’s no surprise that video-friendly platforms like YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn and Facebook are among the most popular social media channels for higher education. For universities, these channels offer a powerful opportunity to connect with audiences and showcase achievements in a captivating way, unlocking brand expansion, exposure and engagement.

Why use video?

- Immersive and engaging: It breathes life into your university, showcasing personality and evoking emotion.
- SEO and conversion booster: Improve search ranking and landing page conversions by 86%.
- Highly memorable: Viewers retain a whopping 95% of video content, compared to just 10% for text.
- Measurable impact: Track views, engagement, and conversions to demonstrate success – 92% of marketers say they get a positive ROI on video content.
- Versatile and shareable: Easily repurpose and share across platforms, sparking audience interaction.

Not sure where to start? Here are just a handful ways you could capitalise the power of video in your QS Stars marketing.

Celebrate your journey

- QS Stars achievement video: Share your pride, highlight key areas, and feature faculty, staff, and students.
- Behind the scenes: Reveal the initiatives and values that underpin your success through testimonials.
- Evolution of excellence: Showcase your path to QS Stars with historical footage and milestones.



Showcase diverse strengths

- Impact stories: Film how your QS Stars strengths benefit people, from research breakthroughs to thriving alumni.
- Spotlight on innovation: Highlight unique programmes, facilities, or projects that set you apart.
- A day in the life: Offer immersive glimpses into student, faculty, and staff experiences.

Connect with your audience

- Student and faculty voices: Let testimonials showcase what makes your university special.
- Future focus: Show alumni success stories and how your university prepares students for the future.
- Global community: Feature diverse perspectives on your welcoming and enriching environment.

Interactive engagement

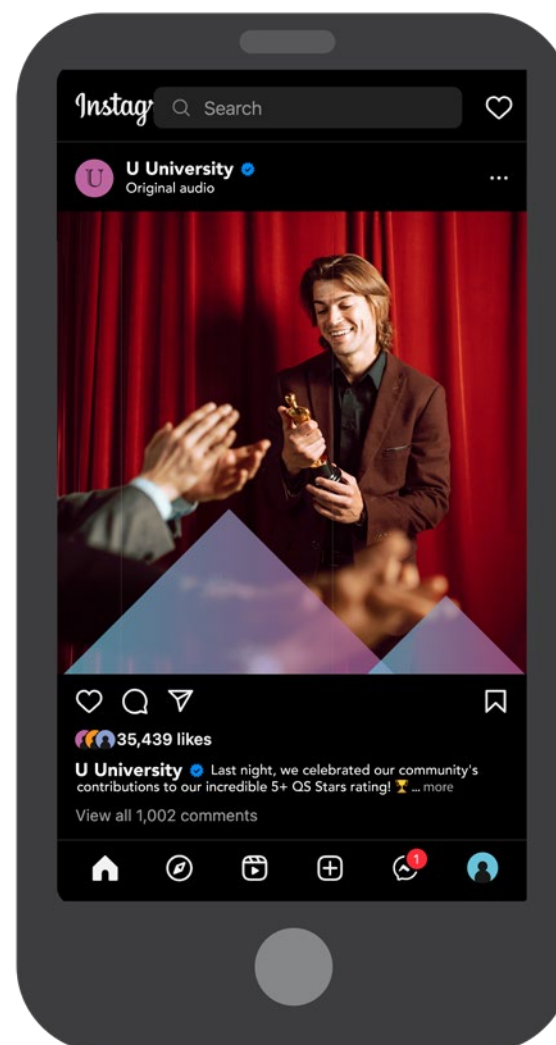
- QS Stars Q&A sessions: Answer audience questions live about your rating and its significance.
- Interactive campus tours: Host live virtual tours, encouraging questions and real-time exploration.
- Webinars on academic expertise: Share thought leadership in areas you excel in, like research or teaching.

Offline and online promotional tactics

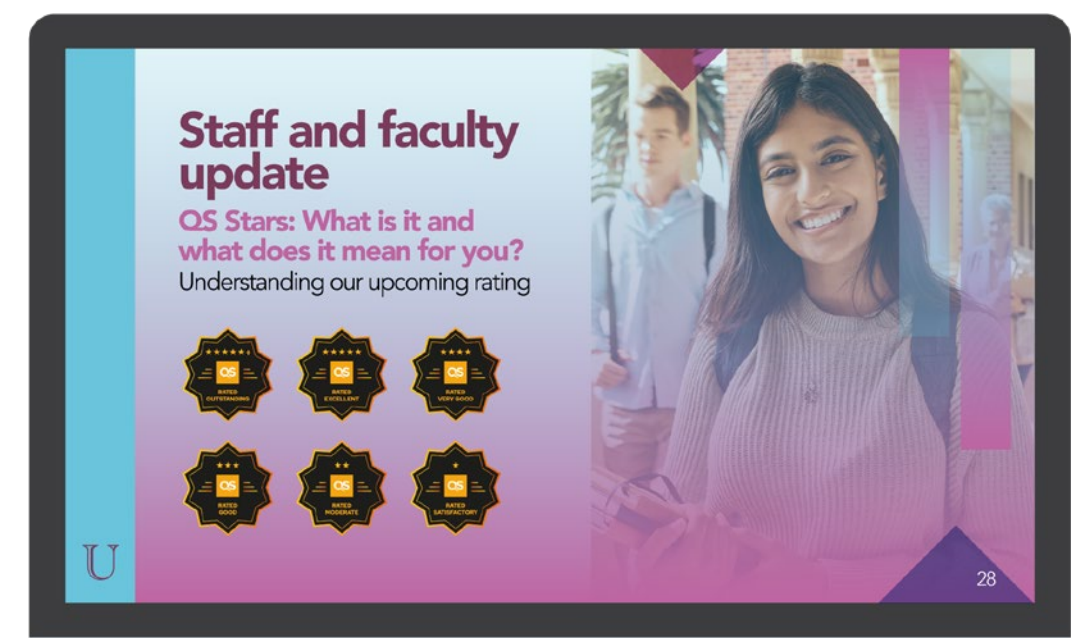
The following channels can be in-person or virtual, allowing you to reach a wider audience and maximise the impact of your QS Stars achievement. By strategically using these tactics, you can effectively communicate your success and attract prospective students, faculty, and collaborators.

Make a lasting impression at events and fairs

- Display QS Stars badges prominently on banners, brochures, name badges, t-shirts, giveaways, and interactive displays. Highlight key achievements that contributed to your rating.
- Host a special QS Stars awards ceremony to celebrate your rating and recognise all those who contributed to your success.
- Hold an open house to showcase your achievements, providing information about your Stars rating and what it means for stakeholders.
- Arrange dedicated information sessions during open days and campus tours, delving into the QS Stars rating and its significance for prospective students.



- Incorporate information about QS Stars-rated facilities and services into campus tours, highlighting areas with high ratings and providing real-world examples of their impact.
- Train student ambassadors to speak about the QS Stars rating at information sessions and university fairs. Share personal experiences and stories to demonstrate the rating's impact on student life.
- Ensure all staff and faculty understand the value and benefits of QS Stars with internal training sessions.
- Organise themed webinars, Q&As, workshops, or information sessions centred around your QS Stars strengths. For instance, if you excel in employability, conduct a workshop on career development.
- Arrange panel discussions with academics and students to discuss the university's strengths in QS Stars assessment areas. QS Discover and QS Connect events often have opportunities to participate in additional content sessions and panels.
- Share live updates and captivating snippets from your event to create a buzz on social media.



250,000

QS events draw 250,000 prospective master's and MBA candidates annually – as an attendee, you'll get access to all registrant data

84,000

connections made in 2023

79%

of students discover new institutions they'd not heard of at QS events

78%

apply to at least two institutions they connected with

62%

intend to apply within six months



Showcase your thought-leadership at conferences and summits

- Receive your QS Stars certificate on stage in front of the hundreds of participants from the higher education sector and celebrate your achievement together with QS leadership.
- Participate in panels, roundtables, and interactive sessions related to your academic strengths. Weave your QS Stars achievements into your expertise, showcasing your commitment to excellence.



- Create engaging displays that highlight your QS Stars strengths. Use multimedia elements, data visualisations, and student testimonials to bring your achievements to life.
- Network with potential collaborators and partners, using your QS Stars rating as proof of quality and innovation.
- Share live updates and engaging snippets from your conference participation, including your QS Stars-centric activities. Use relevant hashtags to amplify your reach.
- Make full use of sponsorship opportunities, prominently displaying your QS Stars badges and messaging to improve brand recognition and build your reputation among a highly engaged and influential audience.

Boost your reputation and reach with journals and magazines

- Showcase your expertise in your high-rated areas by contributing academic bylined articles, research findings, and case studies.



- Conduct and publish interviews with influential executives and thought leaders, offering their insights on industry trends and challenges. Feature their commentary in areas where your university excels or wants to improve. This builds your brand as a leading voice.
- Take advantage of advertising opportunities and prominently display your QS Stars badges and messaging to enhance brand recognition and build trust with a wide audience.

4k+ subscribers around the globe

70k+ contacts reached per issue

6.3% click-through rate

Shine across every touchpoint

- Integrate QS Stars seamlessly into your entire brand experience – both online and offline – from digital signage to sustainable swag. Showcase your achievements as meaningful, third-party endorsements of your quality, in ways that are kind to the planet.
- Don't underestimate the power of the bold QS Stars badge as a captivating design element. Let yours take centre stage on the front cover of your digital and physical prospectuses, brochures, and reusable merchandise like mugs and tote bags for a lasting impression.

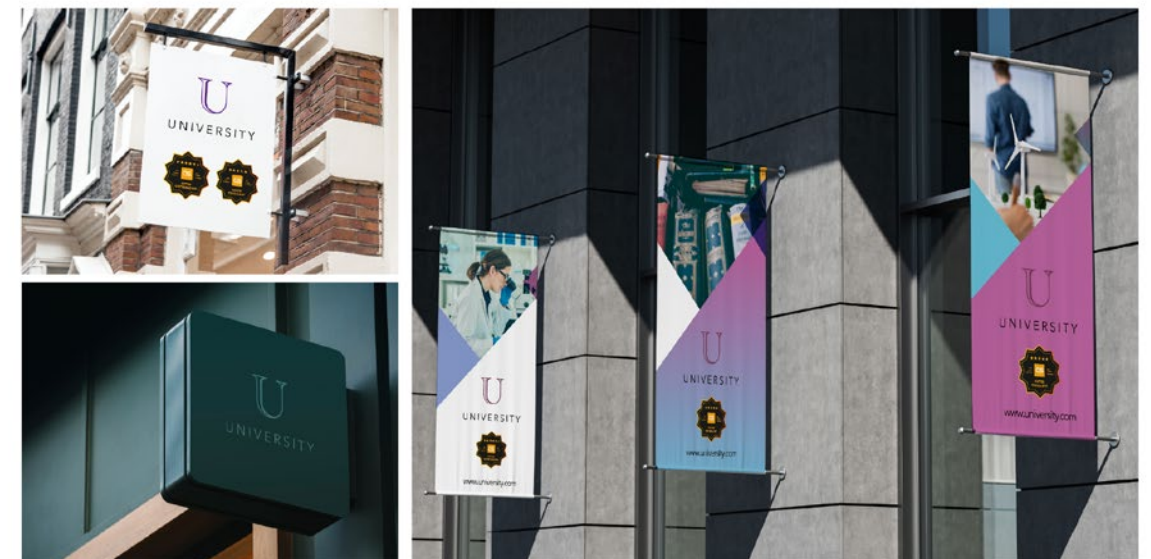


- Use QR codes on any printed material, linking to online, interactive and comprehensive information about your QS Stars achievements. It's an eco-friendly way to offer deeper insights while saving paper.
- Incorporate testimonials and case studies that illustrate the excellence reflected in your QS Stars achievements. Let these stories bring the ratings to life.

Think outside the box with alternative promotion techniques

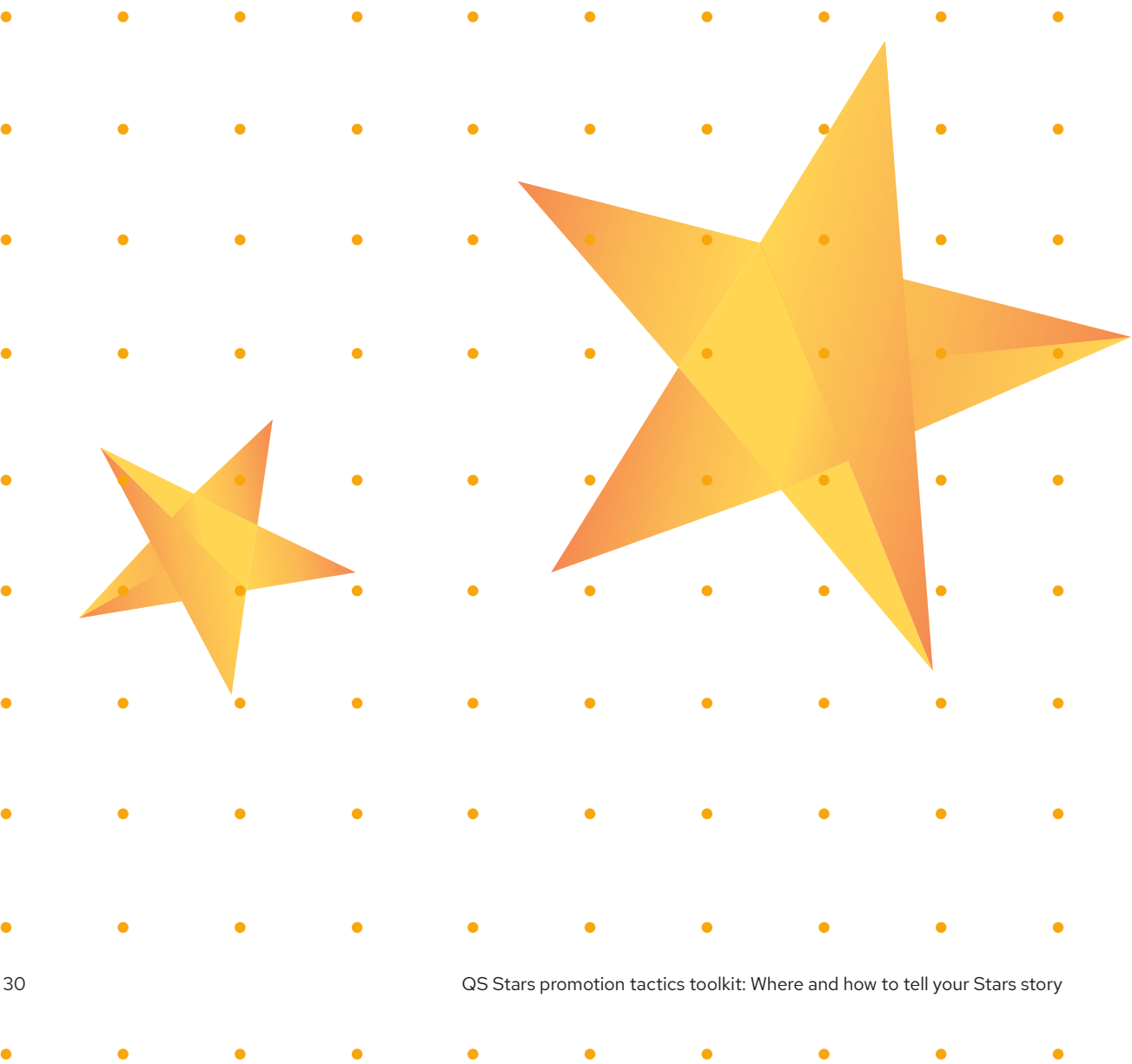
Introducing your brand in a novel, impactful way drives strategic differentiation. Here are some examples of how universities have embraced unconventional techniques to make a bold impression.

- Billboards or transport wraps
- Eye-catching campus signage
- Scholarships, special awards and mentorship programmes
- Creative collateral like branded clothing



The key to success:

- Authenticity: Align your unconventional tactics with your brand’s core values and mission to maintain credibility.
- Measurable impact: Define clear metrics to track the success of your campaigns, ensuring your investments yield tangible results.
- Strategic integration: Leverage social media and digital channels to amplify your unconventional efforts, creating a multi-touchpoint experience that drives engagement and brand awareness.



What next?

You now have the tools to promote your QS Stars achievements. But don’t stop there.

Refine your messaging and build a compelling, authentic narrative that highlights your strengths and achievements with our companion guide: *Telling your QS Stars story: A practical guide to using QS Stars ratings to build your reputation and boost your brand.*

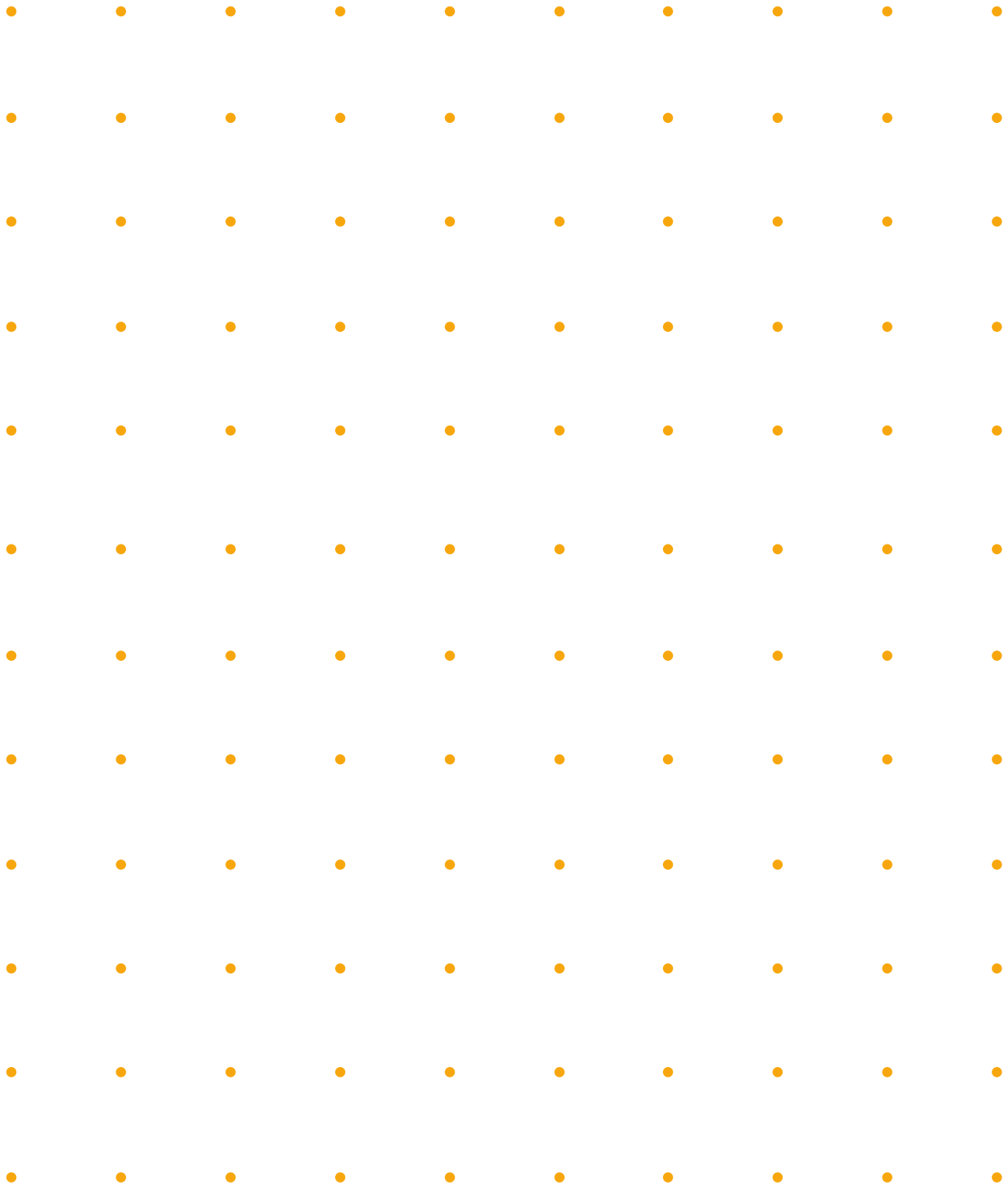
Learn how to craft impactful messaging, showcase your unique value proposition, and engage your community and then track the results. With strategic communication and monitoring, your QS Stars narrative can drive awareness, shape perception, and boost engagement across your community.

Let’s keep the conversation going

We’re here to support you on your QS Stars journey, every step of the way. Our team is happy to answer any questions you have and brainstorm ideas tailored to your institution’s specific needs and goals.







Contact us at
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