



AI That Students Trust

Combining Data, Community and
Human Reassurance

Led by: The Student Room

2026



Drew Crawford

Account Director

The Student Room

- Spent the last four years working in strategy for higher education
- Trained in journalism, content creation and media buying
- Highly excitable

The UK's **#1** student platform



The UK's largest
online student
platform



25 years
supporting
students in
their education



1.5M
Monthly active Users

The TSR ecosystem



The Uni Guide



AI Powered
Uni Coach



CAMPUS Lens™

A connected platform that helps students ask questions, compare options, build confidence and make decisions.

More Information isn't The Problem



If students already have UCAS, Prospectuses and Google, why are they still anxious?"

Students don't lack knowledge, they lack confidence.



Source: TSR Futures Survey 2026

students feel clearly confident about their future

Confidence drops sharply when decisions feel high-stakes or irreversible

When surveyed, students repeatedly ask for:



Clear explanations and next steps



Practical, personalised guidance



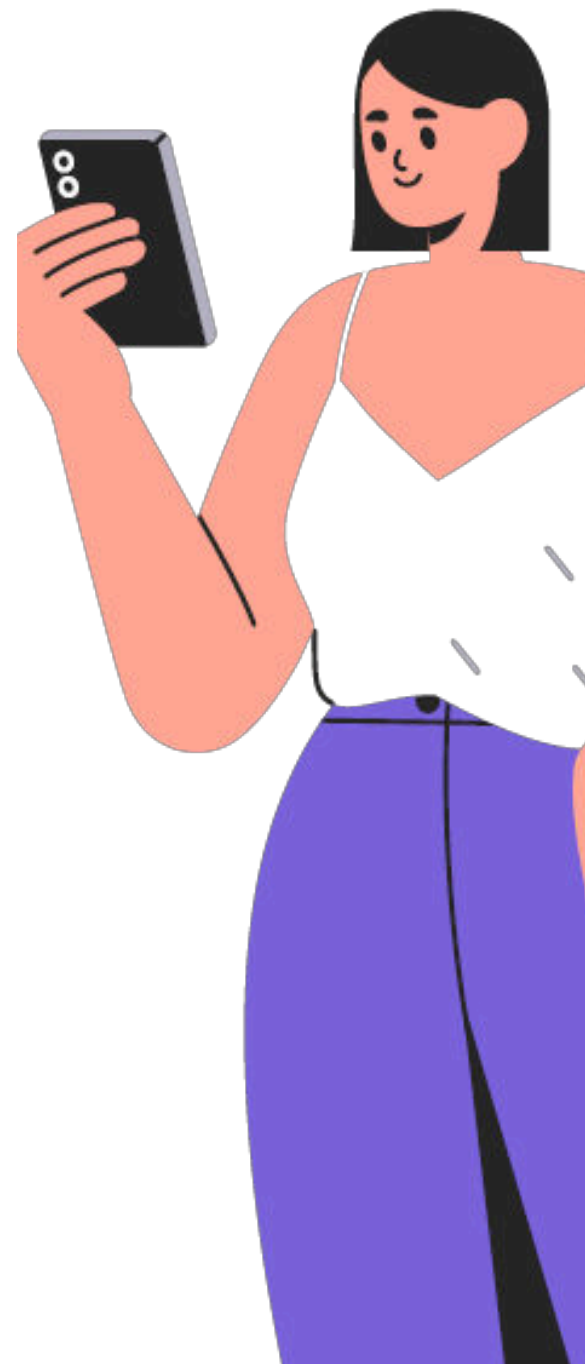
One-to-one conversations



Reassurance that changing direction is allowed



Guidance that feels human, not generic



Key message: AI in student recruitment shouldn't be judged on producing answers faster, but rather if it reduces uncertainty.



The problem with Most AI Approaches

- Optimise for speed and scale, not reassurance
- Collapse nuance into generic answers
- Replace human sense-checking rather than enabling it
- Leave students unsure whether to trust the output
- Perpetuate reputational and size bias

This creates what TSR defines as the “AI Trust Gap”

Students receive answers, but lack confidence in acting on them.

Insight from TSR’s community model

For 25 years, students have used TSR not to be told what to do, but to:

- ✓ Compare experiences
- ✓ Ask “awkward” questions
- ✓ Validate decisions with peers
- ✓ Sense-check official information against lived reality



Introducing Diggory

Your AI powered uni coach



Built on trusted UK higher education data



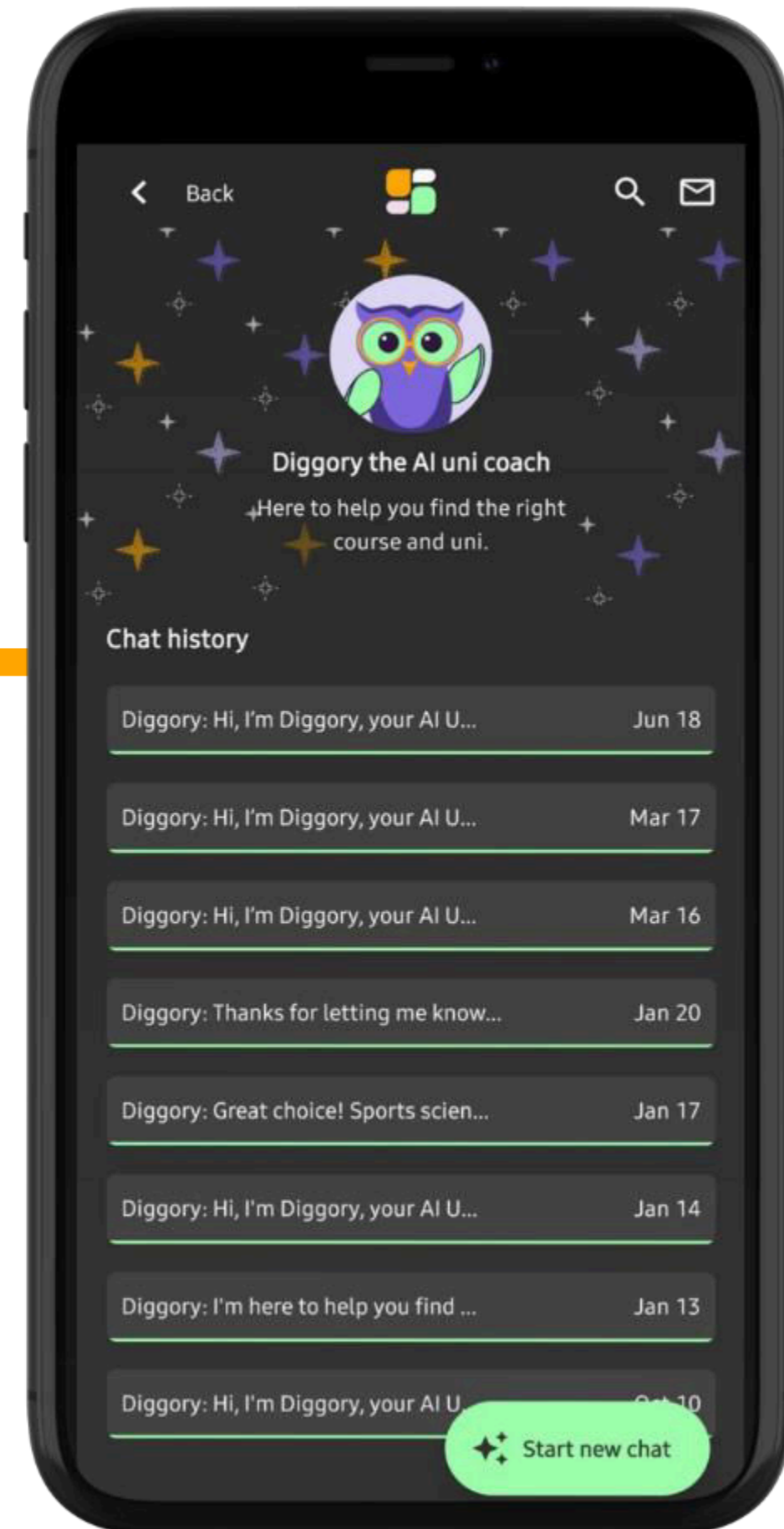
Grounded in real student conversations



Connected to The Student Room and The Uni Guide



Designed to explain options, not dictate decisions



A different model: AI that routes to humans, not away from them

Diggory is positioned not as an answer engine, but as a **decision companion**:



Built on **official UK data** (UCAS, HESA, NSS, Graduate Outcomes, LEO)



Trained and structured around **real student conversations** from TSR



Designed to **produce a transparent shortlist**, not a single “right” answer



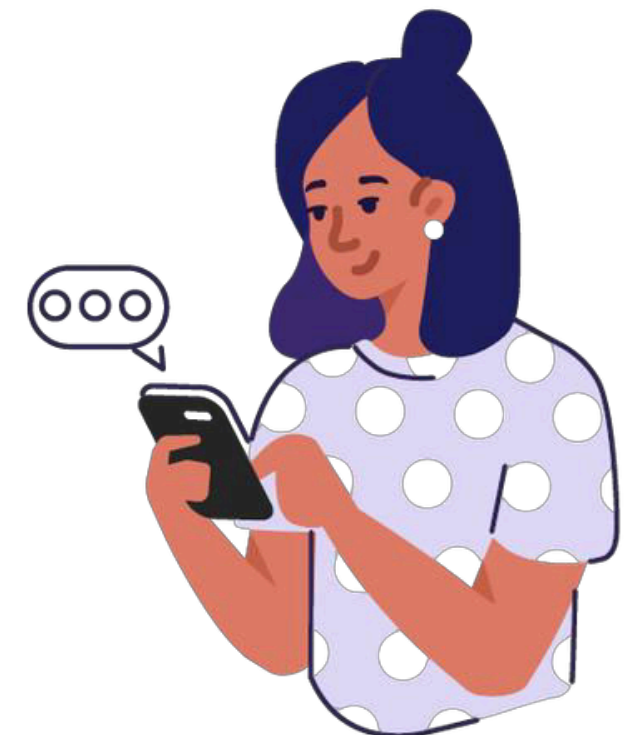
Explicitly encourages **peer validation via the TSR community**

What Diggory does

- Asks structured questions about interests, grades and preferences
- Produces realistic, stretch and insurance options
- Explains why a course fits and why it might not
- Links directly to The Uni Guide for authoritative data
- Prompts students to post and sense-check with real undergraduates

What Diggory does not do

- Replace teachers, parents or advisers
- Guarantee outcomes or offers
- Present itself as the final authority



Students aren't just searching for courses, they're seeking assurance.

Will I fit in?

Is it safe?

What is campus life like?

Can I still change my mind?

Will I make friends?

What support will be available?



Routed to humans and backed by our community



Diggory

Students don't just compare courses and universities.

- ✓ Student life
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Belonging
- ✓ Employability
- ✓ Making the right choice



☆ Watch

1 week ago

Do unis accept lower in Clearing?

 Anmolx
2

I'm looking at Law in Clearing and I've noticed some unis list offers like BBC-AAB, but their "typical accepted" grades can be much lower (e.g. CCC or even DDD). How common is it for unis to take lower than the published requirements in Clearing, and what usually decides it? Any experiences with Bangor or similar unis would help!

Diggory the AI Uni Coach helped write this post

👍 0 Report

Reply

☆ Watch

1 day ago

Liverpool vs Cardiff vs Chester?

 Fayoon
2

Choosing between Liverpool, Cardiff and Chester for Psychology (want forensic psychology later). I want a big city, walkable life (no car), great nightlife, lots of societies, affordable accom near campus, and ideally a placement year + chance to learn Mandarin. Any honest student opinions on the cities, accommodation, and how good the courses are for employability? 🤔📚🏡

Diggory the AI Uni Coach helped write this post

👍 0 Report

Reply

☆ Watch

3 months ago

English Lit vs Creative Writing for Publishing?

 Mia Reinke
2

I'm interested in working in publishing and love creative writing. Would a degree in just English Literature be better than one that combines English Literature and Creative Writing? Any advice from students in publishing or studying these courses? 🤔

Diggory the AI Uni Coach helped write this post

👍 1 Report

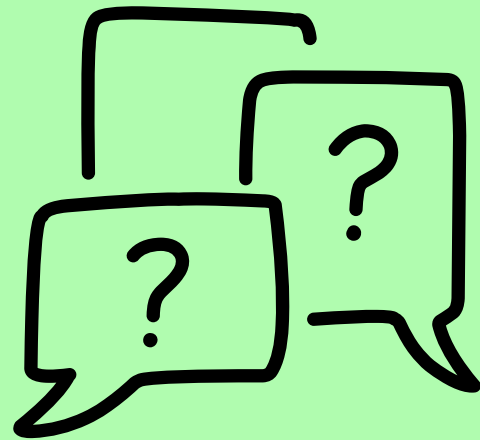
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From uncertainty to confidence



Year 13 student

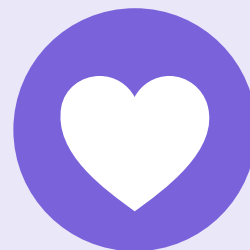
Anxious about
firm choices



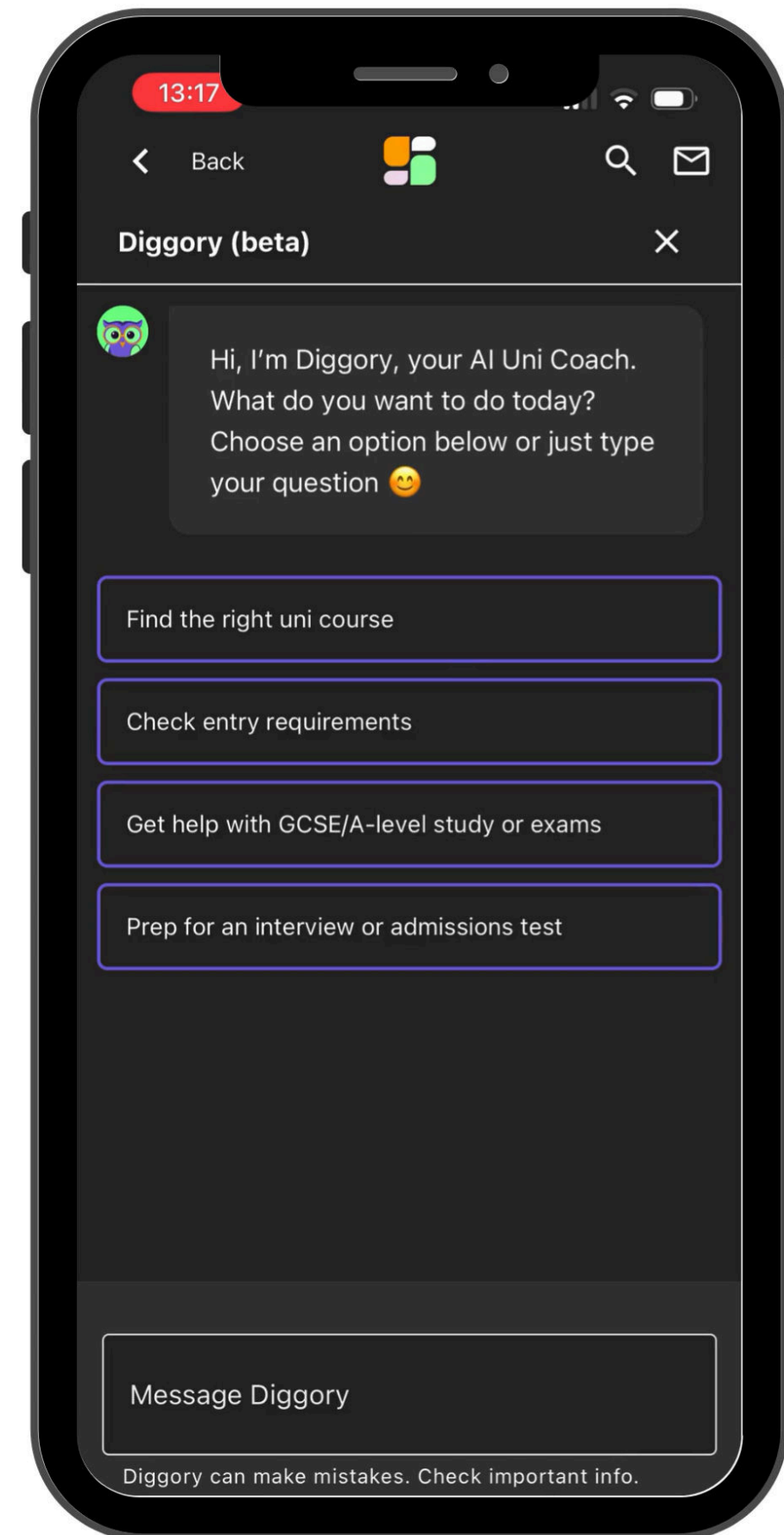
Shortlist



Sense-check



Confidence



Reframing the role of AI in recruitment



Instead of asking “How do we use AI to say more?”, TSR argues universities should ask:

- Where are students most uncertain?
- Where do they seek reassurance, not persuasion?
- How do we show up in decision environments, not just awareness channels?

Trust is cumulative

Students trust data more when it is validated by peers

Influence happens mid-journey

Especially during shortlisting, Results Day and Clearing

Human reassurance scales

When AI routes students to the right people, communities and information at the right time.

The TSR ecosystem

Our ecosystem surface’s real student intent at the moment confidence is being formed, not just when ads are served.



The Uni Guide

**AI Powered
Uni Coach**

CAMPUS Lens™

Designing AI students actually trust

Choose one
high-anxiety moment



UCAS deadline



Open Days



Clearing

Discuss



What are students
really worried about?



What reassurance
are they looking for?



Where could AI help
without replacing
human support ?



Share one insight
with the room



The Future of AI in Student Recruitment

In an AI-first world, trust becomes the differentiator.



AI should reduce cognitive load, not increase doubt.



Confidence comes from data + community + human reassurance



The most effective AI doesn't end conversations — it starts better ones



Data

Trusted higher education data provides the foundation for informed decisions.



Community

Real student experiences add context, perspective and validation.



Human reassurance

Trusted higher education data provides the foundation for informed decisions.



Confidence

Better decisions and stronger outcomes.



Thank you

**Building confidence in every
student decision.**

When students have the right data, real insight and human
reassurance, they can make decisions they feel good about.

Let's stay connected



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<https://tsrmatters.com>



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about Diggory, The
Student Room and
our ecosystem.