



# The Nation Station: Bristol

July 2019

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Introduction

## THE NATION STATION

SPEAKING TO YOUNG PEOPLE  
IN THE NATIONS & REGIONS

# What's the Nation Station?

An initiative by Channel 4's *Advertising Research & Development* team to take a proactive approach in visiting 16-24s throughout the country. We'll be getting the downlow on what young people think about Channel 4, our content and whole other host of subject areas through meeting young people and running focus groups up and down the country.

We'll be able to gather verbal feedback as well as video clips to, give a well rounded view on what young people are thinking.

*Our first visit began at The University of Bristol...*



# Methodology & Sample

We ran 3 focus groups at the University of Bristol, speaking to 16 students. This gave us insight into how students felt about television, reality TV casts and authentic celebrities.

Students were split across the 3 focus groups depending on their living situation, so we could unpack how their living situation impacts content discovery and viewing.

Group 1 – Living in University Halls

Group 2 – Living with friends (in student houses)

Group 3 – Living with family

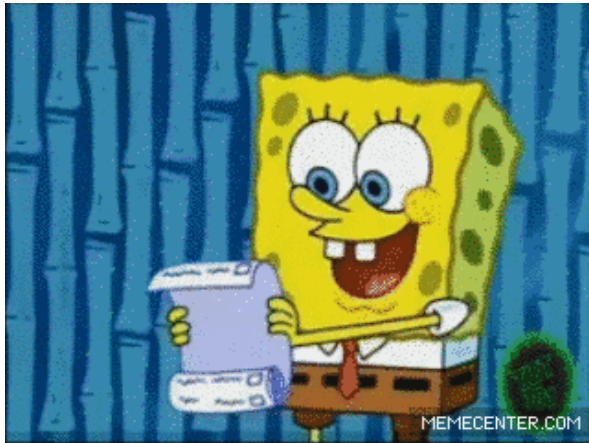
02

TV viewing habits:

# TV Viewing Habits & Young People



Once a show is discovered, there are a range of things students will look into, to help decide whether a show is worth watching.



## How students tell if a show is worth watching (*in no particular order*):

- Diversity in the show
- Online reviews
- Social pressure
- Reading blurbs
- Watching trailers
- The talent
- Thumbnail pictures
- Social Media

*"I always watch the trailers"*  
(Living with family)

*"I look at ratings... Like on Sky and Netflix they have stars, so the higher it is the better"*  
(Living with family)

*"I'm LGBT so I like a bit of LGBT. If there is really good representation that usually hooks me in."*  
(Living in University Halls)



## LIVE TV:



Students described the excitement and joy they felt when being part of the communal spirit of watching live TV – the feeling they can contribute to the hype of a show. Students also spoke about the anticipation and looked forward to waiting for an episode to be released each week. Some of those living with other students found that having a busy social and work life meant they couldn't always stick to a specific time – this was where on-demand viewing was useful.

## VOD PLAYERS:



It was evident that for students living with friends, this is where streaming services were used more often than other groups, with the likes of Netflix, Amazon Prime, All 4 and BBC iPlayer all being mentioned. Whilst some of this is of course down to their life stage where a TV isn't always accessible.

## BINGE WATCHING:



Binge-watching shows is a popular pastime amongst some students, with many using the opportunity to watch comedies and sit-coms that consist of shorter, digestible lengths of content. They tend to binge watch shows that are easy to watch, as this allows them to dip in and out of programming.



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**Popular shows  
amongst students**

# A diverse range of shows are popular, with current big hitters and old favourites coming through

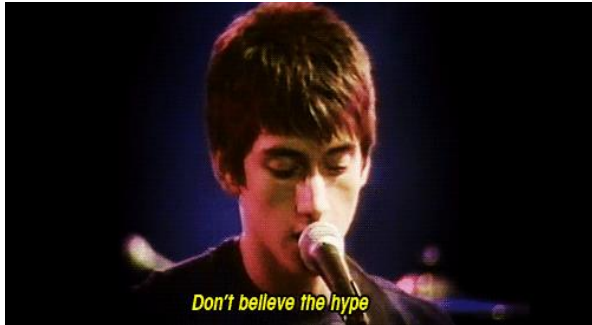


Students living in university halls or with friends are more likely to **prefer newer, more edgy shows**. Whereas, students living at home with their families tend to watch more family-friendly shows, like Friends & Britain's Got Talent.

# C4 Content & Young People



# Being part of the hype...



## Recommendations & word of mouth drive viewership heavily by creating 'hype' around a show...

Feeling a part of something and making friends at University is hugely important, particularly for those living away from home. This means that recommendations and word-of-mouth become important for creating hype around a show's popularity for two reasons:

1. Hype indicates that a show is good quality content if everyone's raving about it.

*"Conversations are like, "I'm watching that", "I'm watching that as well, let's watch it together!" (Living in University Halls)*

2. TV shows can allow students to make friends easily, and those not watching a certain show can feel left out of a social group.

*"I guess with Made in Chelsea and Game of Thrones, they're all over social media. If you're not watching them you kind of feel out the loop" (Living with friends)*



There is less of an inclination to 'be part of the conversation' amongst those living at home. Due to their living situation, TV is used as 'family time' or – in some cases – 'background noise'. TV is less about socialising for those at home.

# The other ingredients to a popular show

## Easy to watch:

Easy to watch shows allow the viewer to properly relax, and are shows that don't hugely emotional moments.

*"All of my favourite shows are kind of like trashy sort of ones. I guess because there's exams, it's easy to watch. You don't really have to think"*  
(Living with friends)

## Relatable:

Relatable shows are those with characters in them that are similar to the student watching/or have situations that mirror their life.

*"I think First Dates is so popular because everyone can kind of relate to it. It makes you laugh and it can also make you cry"*  
(Living with friends)

## Escapism:

Shows that offer escapism are popular because they feel so removed from reality, taking them away from the stresses of University.

*"It's the TV in the background that makes things more relaxed I think. We have something to talk about"*  
(Living with family)

## The drama:

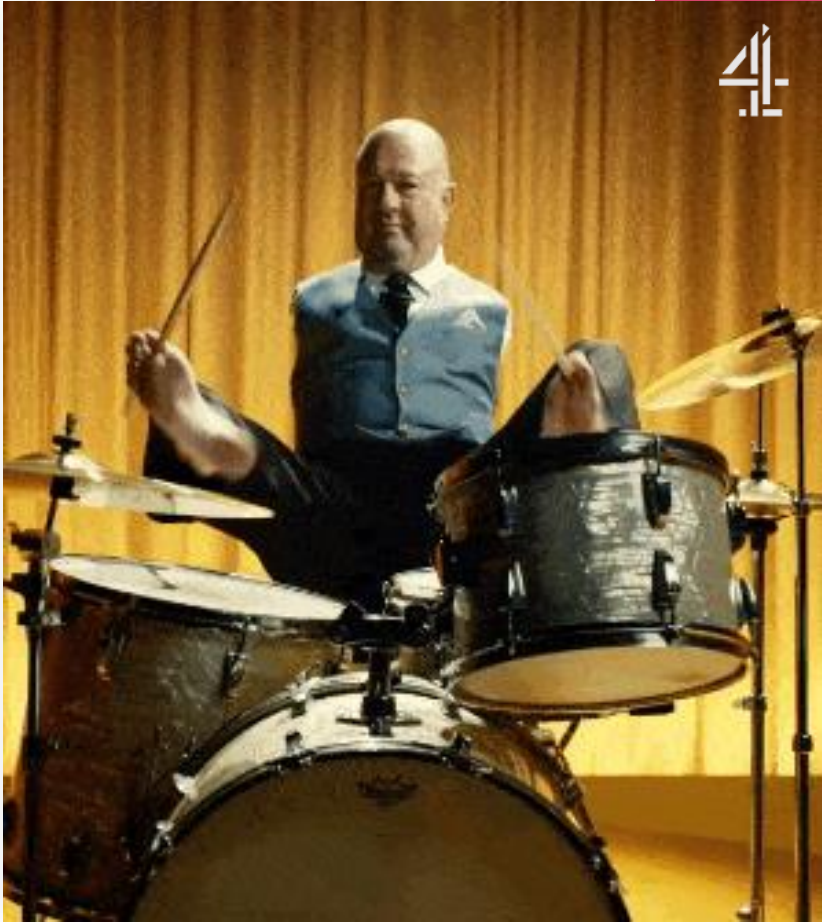
High drama shows are those with epic cinematic storylines and production. Students felt invested and gripped when watching dramas.

*"I say Hollyoaks...it gets very intense very quickly, you just get invested in the drama."*  
(Living with family)

## Humour:

Shows that are particularly funny can also attract a strong following of students – particularly humour that feels natural.

*"...like on Googlebox if something's funny, it isn't scripted"*  
(Living with friends)



## It's all ad-ding up...

For those that had more exposure to watching traditional TV channels, they were more likely to accept adverts as part of the experience as they perceived them as the norm. In fact, some students praised ads for helping them discover new shows. There was a sense of loyalty, that some liked the idea of watching adverts as they felt they were supporting broadcasters they had grown up with.

*"If the advert is showing a TV program that I'm already watching, or even if they are coming soon, then I get so excited and you just can't wait for the full trailer to come out. I like when it tease little bits"*  
(Living with family)

*"I tend to make it a game. Where I run and see if I can make a cup of tea before the adverts end. It's like the quickest snack preparation ever!"* (Living in University Halls)

*"I want to support the company more than anything, because you know they get their funding mostly from advertising!"*  
(Living in University Halls)

**We then got the downlow on what ads they were engaging with...**

# Advertising & Young People



04

Authenticity of celebrities  
and influencers



# In order for celebrities and influencers to appear authentic, students say they must...



## Have flaws and imperfections -

Students don't think authentic celebrities and influencers have perfect personalities or perfect bodies. Students recognise that even celebrities and influencers must have flaws, and this makes them more relatable.

## Have problems in their lives –

Students like to know that celebrities and influencers don't lead perfect lives, but have problems in their lives (that they're open about!) just like them.

## Have interest in topical issues –

Students find celebrities and influencers who care about topical issues going on in the world (e.g. climate change) more authentic.

## Have realistic personalities –

Students don't want celebrities and influencers to be putting on an act when they are on TV or social media. Instead, they want them to be the same person at home with their family as they are on TV or social media. Celebrities and influencers should not 'play up to the cameras'.

# In their own words....

## Have flaws and imperfections -

*"If they have stutter, they're not trying to hide the stutter for the sake of the TV show. Embracing the fact that they're not perfect" (Living with friends)*

## Have problems in their lives -

*"They're not superhuman. You don't feel like you're miles away from where they are in life but you also admire them at the same time" (Living with friends)*

## Have an interest in topical issues -

*"I did David Attenborough as using his career to do good for the planet. He's not doing it so that he can get paid to do another TV show. He's doing it because he's generally concerned about our actions towards our planet and stuff" (Living with friends)*

## Have realistic personalities -

*"I guess that they need to be realistic too. You don't think that they're really different with their family compared to on TV. Just a normal kind of person." (Living with friends)*



Kevin Abstract



Other traits of authentic celebrities and influencers that came up less often were: funny, humble, aspirational and laid back.





Stacey Solomon



Maisie Williams



Donald Glover

# Authentic Celebs



Ru Paul



Kim Woodburn



Lorraine Kelly



Thank you!

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