



CASE STUDY

University of Hertfordshire

Network Services Solutions in the Education Sector by GCI, delivering a full migration to SIP (Session Initiation Protocol), ensuring the University's Clearing process now runs smoothly, securing future communications.

THE OVERVIEW

The University of Hertfordshire is the UK's leading business-facing University and an exemplar in the sector. It is innovative and enterprising and challenges individuals and organisations to excel. The University is one of the region's largest employers with over 2,700 staff and a turnover of over £238 million. With a student community of over 24,800 including more than 4,100 overseas students from 100 different countries, it has a global network of over 210,000 alumni.

THE CHALLENGE

The rapid development of the University has seen it placed in the top 100 Universities in the world under 50 years old. With a constant and growing demand for places, the University needed to be able to keep track of all potential students who applied through their Clearing process:

- Split over a number of campuses and geographic areas, the University was catering to around 25,000 students with increasing demands, on staff and infrastructure.
- On Clearing days, the University's Call Centre often came under severe strain as a result of the sheer volume of calls it was receiving.
- The University were seeking to appoint a single supplier for all landlines, calls and SIP trunking, as well as to maintain and migrate the existing PABX platforms.
- The University wished to rationalise, monitor and improve their communication costs, sticking to their closely controlled budget.

THE SOLUTION

- SIP, also known as SIP trunking, is a cost-effective replacement for traditional ISDN connecting the PBX to the PSTN via broadband, Ethernet or private circuit into GCI's national network.
- Prior to and throughout Clearing, GCI provided an onsite engineering resource to be on hand, immediately responding to any challenges or difficulties.
- Ideally placed to assist in controlling costs, GCI also leveraged University of Hertfordshire's technical investments by providing a flexible and scalable contract, whilst ensuring the best possible service to students. In doing so, GCI helped to ensure that the University remains a thriving and successful Higher Education provider.
- GCI now proactively manage the University's portfolio of services including the GCI SIP Solution, whilst providing an excellent level of service. The University's contract is designed to enable a flexible and efficient system for adding services.

THE BENEFITS

By designing and maintaining a resilient solution in partnership with the University, GCI can ensure that students can contact relevant departments as and when they need to, especially during key times such as Clearing and Accommodation selection.

- The University's callers can always get through. GCI's SIP solution simply diverts published numbers to backup locations or mobile phones – instantly and from anywhere.
- SIP provides the University with the opportunity to make real operational cost savings through free calls to UK 01, 02, 03 numbers, whilst at the same time improving service flexibility.
- GCI work with the University to adopt and use new and innovative technologies that can bring real value to the staff and students, digitalising the classroom and allowing students to access a new way of learning.
- The University has also futureproofed their infrastructure, meaning they're ready to adopt technologies such as Skype for Business at any point in the future.
- Thanks to GCI's Active Support culture, the University have peace of mind that GCI regularly review services to find improvements and cost reductions for the University.

"With applications numbers ever increasing, we required a telephony solution that could support our high standard of service and support. GCI's expertise in all areas of Unified Comms meant they could design and deploy a solution that not only delivered on today's needs, but importantly one that can support our future requirements alongside helping us to bring down costs."

David Ford, Chief Information Officer
University of Hertfordshire

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