

**VMC**  
The cashless  
experts

Case Study:

# UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON

## Transforming the student experience

*Since 2010 VMC have been providing Brighton with the cashless element of their campus payment systems, and this latest project builds on that strong partnership, with a major upgrade to the cashless and a complete replacement of the EPoS systems*



“The relationship with the campus development team was key to this project, and VMC worked with us in a collaborative way and always with a sense of purpose – nothing was too much trouble. We wanted a step change in the customer experience, and the installation of the VMC Flex system has helped us to achieve that.”

*Graham Davis, Information Services Manager (UniCard Services)*

# UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON

## Transforming the student experience

Student engagement is high on the agenda with the University, and the catering and hospitality department play a vital role in building a community on campus serving around 83,000 students per month. There has been great investment in refurbishing and re-branding many of the outlets on site to enhance the customer experience, and the installation of the VMC Flex cashless system added the finishing touch to these plans.



**“Education and the student experience is at the heart of everything we do at Brighton. It is also important that the environment we provide in areas where students and staff relax, eat, socialise and work informally meets and exceeds their expectations and needs. Our range of hospitality outlets are designed to provide quality products and services whilst maximising accessibility, comfort, choice and value.”**

*David Hicks, Head of Residential & Hospitality Operations*

## The challenge

The University wanted a more modern and flexible cashless system that would enable them to move away from a 'stored value' UniCard, where cash had to be manually loaded onto the card via a fixed payment terminal on campus before it could be used. They also wanted to streamline the card activation process, integrate more services onto the student account and ultimately change how they were able to offer the scheme on campus.

Their main objective was to create a one account solution, that was simpler for students to use and also offered benefits to the back-office administration.

## The VMC solution

The new Flex cashless system installed on campus included brand new tills and EPoS software, with customer facing marketing screens to make transactions clearer and provide a prime placement for meal deals and promotions. Installation was a smooth process thanks to a double test environment being run at both VMC and on campus beforehand, allowing any final tweaks to be done before launch day.

For the students there is a completely new online user portal, allowing access 24/7 to their account to view all spending and make use of features like auto top-up to avoid running out of funds. The University is also trialling the new VMC app with a view to rolling it out across the whole campus as soon as possible. The app puts key account information straight into the student's hands, and with additional features such as VPay mobile payment and virtual loyalty, it provides the University with extra opportunities to increase usage of the UniCard versus debit cards.

The new system has transformed the capabilities of the UniCard and provided the University with more flexibility around what they can offer to students and how they do it, with the ability to add payment for other campus services into the scheme in the future.



**“It was clear early on in the tender process that VMC had a good understanding of what we required, plus an openness to developing those ideas further to better meet our needs – the end result has exceeded our expectations.”**

*Mike Hornsby, Systems Manager, Accommodation & Hospitality Services*

## The benefits on campus

- All devices are live and online in real time giving better visibility of overall performance
- New card activation is now immediate – no lengthy registration process
- Transaction speeds are much faster – just tap & go with the UniCard
- New virtual loyalty scheme to encourage more spend on campus
- Web based management portal enabling quicker system changes and fast trouble-shooting
- A streamlined user interface for outlet staff
- New system can integrate other non-catering payments on campus
- Improved student experience – visibility of all spend on the go, auto top-up & virtual loyalty

