



JS Group serves as an ideal team-mate for UA92

Overview

University Academy 92 (UA92), a groundbreaking higher education institution co-founded by the Class of '92 and Lancaster University, has operated a high-speed growth strategy over its four-year history.

Its student population is increasing by a third every year and it now has an in-reach target of 5,000 students across its two campuses in Manchester and Salford.

UA92 is committed to making higher education accessible to all no matter the background, through its founding principles of accessibility, social mobility and inclusivity. It prides itself on freshness, flexibility, and fast pace, meaning it needs partners that can not only make an immediate impact, but also mirror its transformative and high-energy ethos. This is why it regards JS Group – and their Aspire solution – as an ideal team-mate when it comes to supporting students with **fast** and **effective** access to funding.

A higher-than-usual proportion of students (versus sector norms) depend on additional funds in the form of bursaries and hardship payments throughout their studies. **This is where JS Group comes in.**



It's an exciting, sudden and dramatic change and the instant response has been tremendous.

The previous way that we provided our student payments was very much like a start-up: it involved me calling out to students to let them know that their vouchers are available when they happened to pass me by in the corridor.

When we found out about Aspire, we just realised that there is a much more efficient way for us and a better way for our students."

– Steph Drivear

UA92's Head of Student Experience



TO FIND OUT MORE

Please visit www.jsgroup.co.uk or contact David Marshall – david.marshall@jsgroup.co.uk

JS Group serves as an ideal team-mate for UA92



A modern futureproof system in just seven days

UA92 has adopted JS Group's Aspire Platform to transform a paper-based voucher system into a modern, instant, and student-centric service – making full-use of open banking to pay students who really require this help and need it quickly, safely and effectively.

To meet our ambitions there are a couple of major things that we are trying to do.



One is to make sure we're really looking after our students in the best possible way. The other is to ensure that everything we do is future-proof so we have a long-term and sustainable set of operations that can cope with being scaled-up.

I think that Aspire has solved both these problems for us and probably much quicker than we expected.

It strikes me as an exceptionally slick way of doing things."

– Mike Rimmer
Chief Financial Officer at UA92

This transformation took just **seven days** from UA92 identifying the need and discussing the solution - to JS Group setting in place a fully functioning operation with the first payments flowing out to students.

"What made the JS Group and Aspire even more compelling," says Mike Rimmer, Chief Financial Officer at UA92, "is that it has a delivery partnership with the NatWest Group and we found this out a time when we were already exploring open banking with the same bank. It suddenly emerged as a perfect blend and signalled that it was a seamless partnership that was just meant to be!"

Improved data insights and student experience

The introduction of Aspire has also been a game-changer for UA92 students in terms of their ability to manage their own finances better, **says Steph.** *"Students feel like they can really own their bursaries now. They can log-on when they want to, get the money when they want to, and they can use it like a savings account. It just makes it a lot more flexible and easier for the students."*

Another benefit has been the ability for UA92 to track the use of such student funds more precisely. *"One of the best things is the ability to produce reports. Before we had Aspire, we had to manually get together with the finance team and check the figures. Now we can just immediately download a report and know exactly what has been spent and what is remaining. We can spot trends in terms of the timings and when students want to use the money. We can see our student behaviours."*

Mike adds: *"From a Finance point of view, we can plan better. Previously we'd see payments go in and out and thought that we'd be done but then be hit with new requests in the Finance Office. Now we have direct and shared access as well as instant visibility."*

"Overall it is very creative and it will allow us to develop our new Access and Participation Plan with more scope for new energy, opportunities and ideas," says Steph.



TO FIND OUT MORE

Please visit www.jsgroup.co.uk or contact David Marshall – david.marshall@jsgroup.co.uk