

The University regards the JS Group as a significant partner in supporting this whole social mission



Ravensbourne University London is a specialist university based in London's Design District with a mission to develop and nurture talent for the creative industries and to produce the next generation of innovators to support employers of all shapes and sizes.

A high proportion of Ravensbourne's students are drawn from its immediate catchment area (across East London) and the University has a vital mission to enable social mobility and transformation. Its University Strategy states: *"We will be an exemplar for social mobility, inclusion and equality of opportunity in both higher education and the creative industries, ensuring that every member of our community is able to succeed, regardless of their background."*

The University regards the JS Group as a significant partner in supporting this whole social mission – by enabling those students that are in need of particular financial support to access this funding quickly and effectively, and to ensure that these funds are targeted at generating a fulfilling and enriching higher education experience.

Ravensbourne's students have use of the JS Group's Aspire platform in order to access their bursaries, scholarships and other funding schemes – and to spend this investment wisely on learning resources, equipment, materials and other needs as part of their creative education. As a result, the University is also able to track how this investment is being used and how it is benefiting each student.

"Before the JS Group came on board, we weren't being very efficient and we had a lack of an audit trail for our scholarships and bursaries," says Ravensbourne's Vice-Chancellor Andy Cook. "We had a very broad-based approach, including allowing every student to have a laptop."

"I saw this old way as a risk and I saw the JS Group as an opportunity to gain major efficiencies. There's a process efficiency element to this whole story: from the purpose of issuing bursaries to students and making sure it's used in a targeted way. There's a level of efficiency and assurance that the whole scheme gives to universities."

"The other side of the benefits are really around student engagement and how we get insights from that student spending data to really support us in terms of understanding student behaviour and also engagement. The pattern of the spend is increasingly now directly related to outcomes in terms of student attainment."



TO FIND OUT MORE

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

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In addition to obtaining vital equipment and resources for their creative studies (many of which carry high costs by their specialist nature for supporting subjects such as architecture, fashion, gaming, music, marketing and film), there is also a cash allowance scheme – which is enabling students to cope with the high cost of living in London, especially during the current cost-of-living crisis.

The University regards the data on student interests and spending patterns (drawn from the Aspire platform) as part of the whole transformation of its student engagement. *“We’re getting much better data and insight from things like attendance monitoring and we want to use the JS Group data to complement that and to build an overall picture of student engagement,”* says **Andy**.

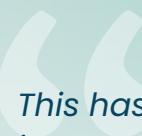
“It also helps us from a recruitment perspective as we can promote this approach to new or potential students. We’ve seen really good growth in terms of recruitment numbers and then being able to draw a straight line between this and retention.”

“If we didn’t have the JS Group on board then I guess we’d still be rumbling along with more outdated or ancient business processes and really carrying some risk there. The money that we have put into the scheme is directly now attributable to our Access and Participation Plan.”

“It’s really helped us in terms of our clarity and reporting around all of that. It has added a lot of efficiency to how we operate, as well as far more important insight on our students and their engagement with the University.”

“As a leader of an institution, it gives me an awful lot of assurance. I’m clear about how we are spending that money. There’s a clarity and openness to our student funding. I’m much more confident about what we are doing and how we are doing it.”

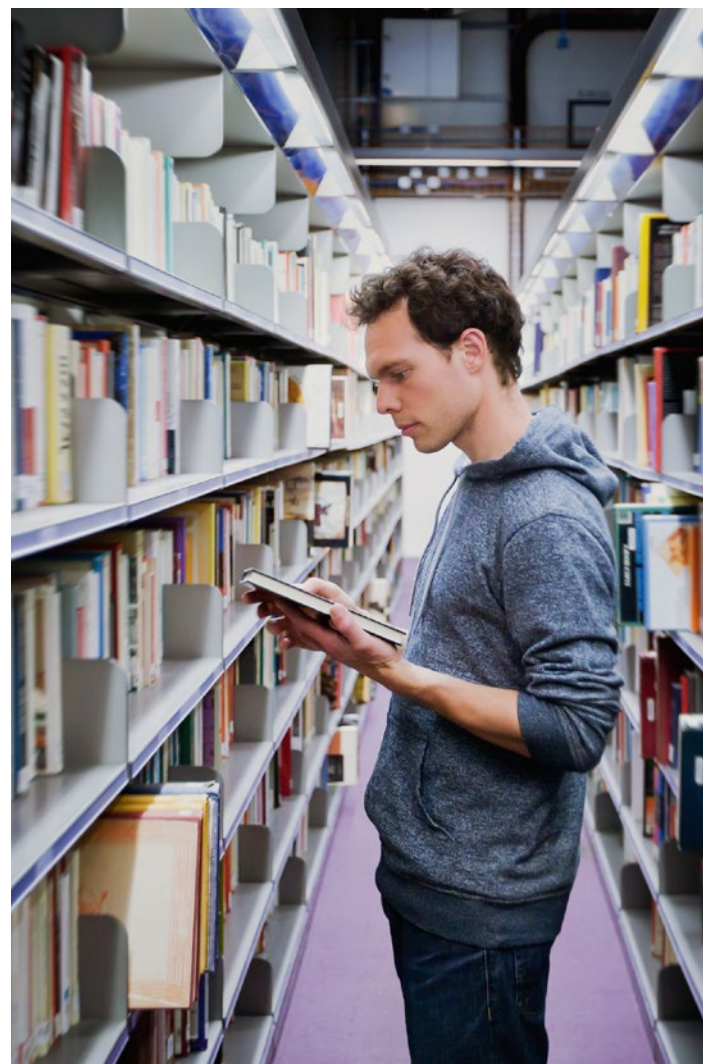
He adds: *“Where we are trying to get is that virtuous circle where we can deliver an excellent all-round experience, both learning and teaching, and also pastoral care and support for students that then drives up our NSS and it drives up our reputation and attracts more students.”*



This has added a lot of efficiency in terms of being able to more immediately make those cash payments into student back accounts.

The students are able to use that money for rent, bills, energy costs and food – at a time of increasing financial pressures.

– Andy Cook



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