



Case Study

University Arts London integrates tuition payment process to deliver big efficiencies and cost savings



Challenge

University of the Arts London (UAL) is home to approximately 18,000 students from 130 different countries. Managing the domestic and international payments from this diverse group presented a number of operational complexities and challenges for the institution.

For students, UAL's payment experience was less than optimal. The process varied greatly depending on the origin of the payment and the method used, leading to confusion and mistakes. There was little visibility into how much was due and when payments were received by the university. For international students paying by direct bank transfer to UAL, there were often surprises at enrolment related to payment discrepancies as a result of various bank charges and foreign exchange differences.

This situation created a number of challenges for the university's finance team: a high volume of payment-related inquiries from students; extensive manual effort required to reconcile education payments and handle refunds; and unclear sign-posting to payment options driving more students and families to pay with credit cards, leading to higher fees for the university.

Solution

UAL's goal was to centralise the payment experience for all students through a single experience integrated with its Student Information System – Tribal SITS eVision.

UAL was familiar with Flywire from its work in international education payments, but was not aware of its extensive work in the area of domestic tuition payments. Flywire's comprehensive receivables solution provides a single system for both and enables real-time integration with SITS eVision. This allows students to make payments within the systems and processes they were already using for things like online applications, enrolment, and UAL's student portal.

The Flywire solution created a singular digital entry point and path for tuition fee payments that guides students through the process regardless of where they are paying from or how they want to pay. Flywire's global payment network expands payment options for students including

RESULTS

Frictionless

digital payment experience

Automation

for increased operational efficiency

Secure

processing of 25,000+ education payments

Flexible

payments in 70+ different currencies

Cost Savings

from significantly reduced merchant fees

Time Savings

reduced payment inquiries and manual requirements

bank transfers and local international methods such as UnionPay, Alipay, Boleto and Trustly. With Flywire, students know exactly what they owe in their preferred currency, taking into account discounted exchange rates and fees. Students are also able to track their payments every step of the way through the student portal.

Flywire's integration with SITS also eliminates many operational inefficiencies for UAL by locating unidentified and short-balance payments, collecting information for refunds, automatically reconciling all payment types, and tracking payment status. In addition, Flywire's 24x7 multilingual support team handles payment questions and inquiries from students and families.

Results

UAL's new integrated payment platform, powered by Flywire, has securely processed more than 25,000 education payments in 70+ different currencies worldwide to date, delivering important results for both students and UAL.

Students are now able to more easily enrol, pay and see balance and payment status in real time. This has reduced inbound payment inquiries and increased student satisfaction.

Flywire's automated payment process is also driving significant operational efficiencies for UAL. In addition to reduced call volumes, faster electronic payment allocation accelerates related processes such as student visas, enrolment and credit control. Easier to manage refunds coupled with fewer payment inquiries has also resulted in time savings for the finance team. In addition, increased payment options have reduced merchant processing fees significantly.

UAL has also learned some things along the way that have helped the institution improve the payment experience further. For one, not all international students want to pay in their local currencies. Some students have local GBP or USD accounts that they want to use. Working with Flywire, UAL was able to make this option available. In addition, real-time payment data from Flywire enables the university to understand payment behaviors and adapt communications to ease the process and best support students.



Flywire's ability to integrate with our student information system was a huge advantage for UAL. It enabled a single workflow for all payments and streamlined all the downstream processes related to payments such as reconciliation, enrolments, visas, refunds, student record updates and more. The efficiencies gained by our finance team are substantial. Equally important, it has transformed the payment experience for our students, which provides a whole additional set of benefits for UAL.

ual: university
of the arts
london

FACTS

1986

establishes as the
London Institute

6

world-renowned
colleges

~18,000

students from
around the world

130

different countries
of origin

70+

different currencies
processed

arts.ac.uk/about-ual

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