



## PERSONALISING COMMUNICATIONS AND DELIVERING A QUALITY STUDENT EXPERIENCE

A desire to provide a consistent user experience and more personalised communications led Middlesex University to implement Ellucian Luminis® Platform, the latest release of this portal and web services delivery platform.

“With the increasing fees for education in the United Kingdom, student expectations are going up, and they expect a high level of service and support,” said Lucy Everest, director of marketing, Middlesex University. “We implemented Ellucian Luminis Platform to give our students one environment to access all their resources and to improve the user experience.”

Prior to implementing Ellucian Luminis Platform, students had to log in and out of different systems including Banner™ by Ellucian, and the library and learning management system. Many of the students who participated in a focus group about the portal design stated that the ability to have single sign-on to all their systems would be a great improvement.

“Students had to log in to multiple systems in order to get access to the resources they needed,” recalled Everest. “They frequently forgot their passwords. It was a frustrating experience for them and for staff who spent a lot of time supporting students in resetting the variety of passwords.”



### PROFILE:

- Middlesex University
- London, UK
- [www.mdx.ac.uk](http://www.mdx.ac.uk)

### CHALLENGES:

- Students had to log in to multiple systems to access important resources
- User experienced varied from system to system, causing confusion and dissatisfaction
- Students were overwhelmed with mass communications
- Student service expectations are increasing

### SOLUTION

- Ellucian Luminis® Platform

### RESULTS:

- Students have single sign-on point of entry to all university resources
- Students receive targeted information based on pre-defined roles
- Improved user experience increases student satisfaction



Now, students can login to myUniHub, their personalised password-protected area on Luminis Platform, where they can easily access important information such as their student record, programme and module materials, the learning management system, academic progress, Middlesex emails and much more. The portal is available to the university's 27,000 students. Within one month of going live, 22,000 of the students used the system to enrol. The university is taking a phased approach to implementation and will enable Ellucian Luminis Platform for staff and other constituents at a future date.

"Students use it multiple times a day," said Ambika Kucheria, student engagement marketing manager at the university. "They log in to the portal to enrol, pay fees, look up their timetable, and find all information on all university levels. They can see where they need to be at the start of the term, and can access course work and learning materials and the catalogue. It's a virtual one-stop student centre."

"We've received very positive feedback from some students, especially returning students who see a big improvement in services from last year due to the release of the portal system," added Kucheria.

### **STUDENTS RECEPTIVE TO PERSONALISED COMMUNICATIONS**

Ellucian Luminis Platform also is helping the university personalise its communications to students. In the past, all students received the same mass communications from the university. Because many of the messages did not apply to them, students often ignored all the communications and missed information that was pertinent to them. When the university surveyed its students in 2010, respondents told them repeatedly that they felt they were being bombarded with communications.

"We couldn't segment and target our student base, so they were getting mass communications all the time," said Everest. "Students were becoming overwhelmed by the different communications tunnels and were missing important information."

"With Ellucian Luminis Platform, we are sending students targeted information and they are actually looking at the messages which are meant specifically for them," explained Kucheria. "And we are much smarter now about how we communicate with them. This is giving our students a better experience."

Luminis Platform enables the university to segment users based on a wide range of attributes like enrolment status, campus, residential category, level,

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and more. Attributes can be pulled from other Banner applications and new roles can be created in Ellucian Luminis Platform. Then the university can easily orchestrate and deliver pertinent information and services such as orientation activities, departmental news, new scholarships available, and more.

By identifying and assigning roles for each user, the university can target the right content to the right people for the right reasons. Students can have multiple roles, and the roles can grow and change over time along with the student’s relationship to the university. Within a few months of going live, the university identified 40 different roles. At this point, most are top level, like the campus or level the student is studying at. The university plans to create more granular roles in the future.

“We want to provide students with consistency throughout the time they spend here,” said Kucheria. “With Luminis, we will speak to them in the same format the entire time they are here, and not make them look at different systems.”

The university also expects that the interactive and collaborative environment enabled by Ellucian Luminis Platform will help it build community. Some of its community-building features include the ability to create dedicated “collaboration rooms” and populate them with a suite of collaboration tools. Community members can contribute to wikis and threaded discussions, share resources and information and access associated environments like the institution’s learning management or library systems.

“We are excited about the self-generating nature of the groups and are eager to see how students respond to them,” said Everest. “Rather than have the university impose a group, students can create the communities themselves, and can connect when it suits their lifestyle. We hope the community tools will help students connect with each other more and feel part of the larger university community.”

Realising that students will be able to collaborate more easily and across the university’s multiple campuses in London, Dubai, and Mauritius made the university team work more collectively. The process also helped the university identify unnecessary duplication of work and areas of inefficiencies.

“Preparing for the implementation of Luminis Platform forced us to collaborate in a positive way and think about the university as one collective place,” said Everest. “People had to work together and map out common processes. This resulted in a much better understanding of the student experience. Overall, Luminis Platform is helping us with our goal of putting students at the heart of our efforts, and delivering a quality student experience.”

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Middlesex University



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