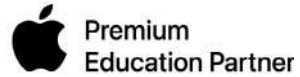


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University of
HUDDERSFIELD
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Managing Macs at the University of Huddersfield



The Context

The University of Huddersfield features a diverse community of over 15,000 students from various backgrounds. A welcoming and friendly campus hosts individuals from all around the world, where renowned academics collaborate with students at all levels to ensure they are well prepared for the workforce and highly desirable as graduates.

The university has an Apple estate of 400 iMacs and MacBooks with approximately 300 devices in Mac labs across the campus and 100 devices for staff.



The Challenge

The university previously depended on in-house resources to manage and support its Apple estate through Jamf. Although it was functional, it relied on only one staff member and the university had limited internal capacity to maintain or develop the platform to modern standards.

The in-house IT team was facing numerous challenges, such as:

- A requirement for improved compatibility with newer macOS releases and more complex software.
- Increasing pressure on budgets and staffing resources due to the ageing solution.

These challenges impacted users through inconsistent experiences across staff and student devices, as well as delays in updates and deployments caused by gaps in knowledge and resources. This led to a rise in the need for manual workarounds.

The Solution

An Academia managed service

The university decided to switch its internally managed Jamf environment to a fully Academia-managed Apple estate via Jamf. As John Clayton, Head of Second Line IT Services, says “Academia’s support has ensured longevity, resilience and access to specialist knowledge that the university could not sustainably maintain in-house.”

Academia’s expert team provided substantial technical expertise to support the migration of the Jamf environment. The team participated in technical project meetings, offered guidance and delivered tier-one support during crucial phases of the migration. With the university facing tight deadlines as the academic year approached, Academia’s support ensured these deadlines were met.

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Technically assured. Nothing was too much trouble. Academia were a dependable partner throughout a complex, high-risk project.

John Clayton

Head of Second Line IT Services
University of Huddersfield

Testing and problem solving

The Academia team developed a series of testing environments that replicated the staff and student setup. This enabled the university to operate within a secure and controlled testing space. Academia’s IT specialists also played a key role in resolving some longstanding issues related to complex software installations that the university had been facing for a long time.



The Impact

Consistency and uniformity

Academia has helped create a Mac environment that guarantees all students, regardless of school or course, access to consistent, high-quality devices and software applications. This diminishes disparity and promotes fair access to specialist software and learning resources.

John Clayton said, “The value of investing in an Academia fully supported, modern management Mac platform cannot be overstated. It reduces risk, improves consistency, and ensures that staff and students can focus on teaching and learning rather than technical distractions. This project demonstrates how a partnership with a specialist provider accelerates progress.”

Reassuring university staff

The new Academia-managed Apple estate has helped reassure university staff that they can still access specialised software on their Macs, and they can still maintain a good level of control over their devices. The university had some anxious staff members, but they are now much more confident thanks to the smooth rollout of software applications and a much smoother start to the academic term experience.

The university IT team are also reassured knowing that staff members can make changes to their Macs but within a secure and managed environment.



Freeing up IT resource

One of the biggest benefits for the university is the time returned to the IT team to focus on transformational projects and the reduced operational risk in relying on a small in-house team. **The university is now saving approximately 960 hours of IT resource every year.**

App packaging efficiency: Previously, app packaging required a combined 60 hours of staff time per week during peak deployment periods. Centralising and automating this has **eliminated 360 hours of effort annually.**

Accelerated device reimaging: With 300 Mac devices reimaged annually across the campus labs and staff offices, automation has shaved 2 hours off the deployment time per machine. **This saves an additional 600 hours per year.**

Reclaiming 960 hours a year is the equivalent of handing roughly 26 weeks of full-time staff capacity back to the team.

This is exactly what has allowed the university to mitigate the operational risk of a small in-house team and shift their focus to major, transformational digital workplace projects.

The IT team at the university has received very positive feedback from the different schools about how quickly software updates now occur and how great it is to see some legacy software issues resolved.

What's next?

Moving forward, the university is working with Academia on Apple refresh and lifecycle services, where Academia helps manage the rollout of new devices and recycles the old, providing a residual value where possible.





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