

academia
the technology group

West Herts
College



WHY ACADEMIA MOBILE?

WEST HERTS COLLEGE GROUP

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About this Case Study

The Academia Mobile Team were able to support The West Herts College Group with simplifying their billing process and ensuring their mobile phones are safe from Cyber threats.

This article has been written in collaboration with Mary Hinks, Operations Manager at West Herts College Group and the Academia Mobile Team.

What is Academia Mobile?

Academia Mobile provide mobile contracts tailored to your specific needs, simplified for education on one contract, one order and one bill – all managed via a dedicated online portal with reliability service and unrivalled support.

Our flexible mobile contracts are designed specifically for education and provide connectivity across the 3 major networks, with no penalty for moving – providing the best possible network coverage for your team.



Flexible Mobile Contracts



Exclusive Pricing for Education



Dedicated Account Management



Lifecycle / Recycling Service



Unified Endpoint Management



* Saving based on device plan, contract length & connections.



Who are the West Herts College Group?

West Herts College and Barnfield College merged to become the West Herts College Group (WHCG) in 2019. The WHCG now has 4 campuses located in Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Luton. Currently, there are approximately 7,500 students enrolled at WHCG, with learners coming from a wide geographical area that includes West Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Luton and parts of North London.

Before you spoke to Academia Mobile, what was the set-up of your mobile communications at WHCG?

Across our 4 campuses, we had invested in 240+ mobile phones for staff, with connectivity originally provided by Vodafone, and by O2 from 2011 – plus a smaller number of devices used for students’ field trips throughout the academic year.

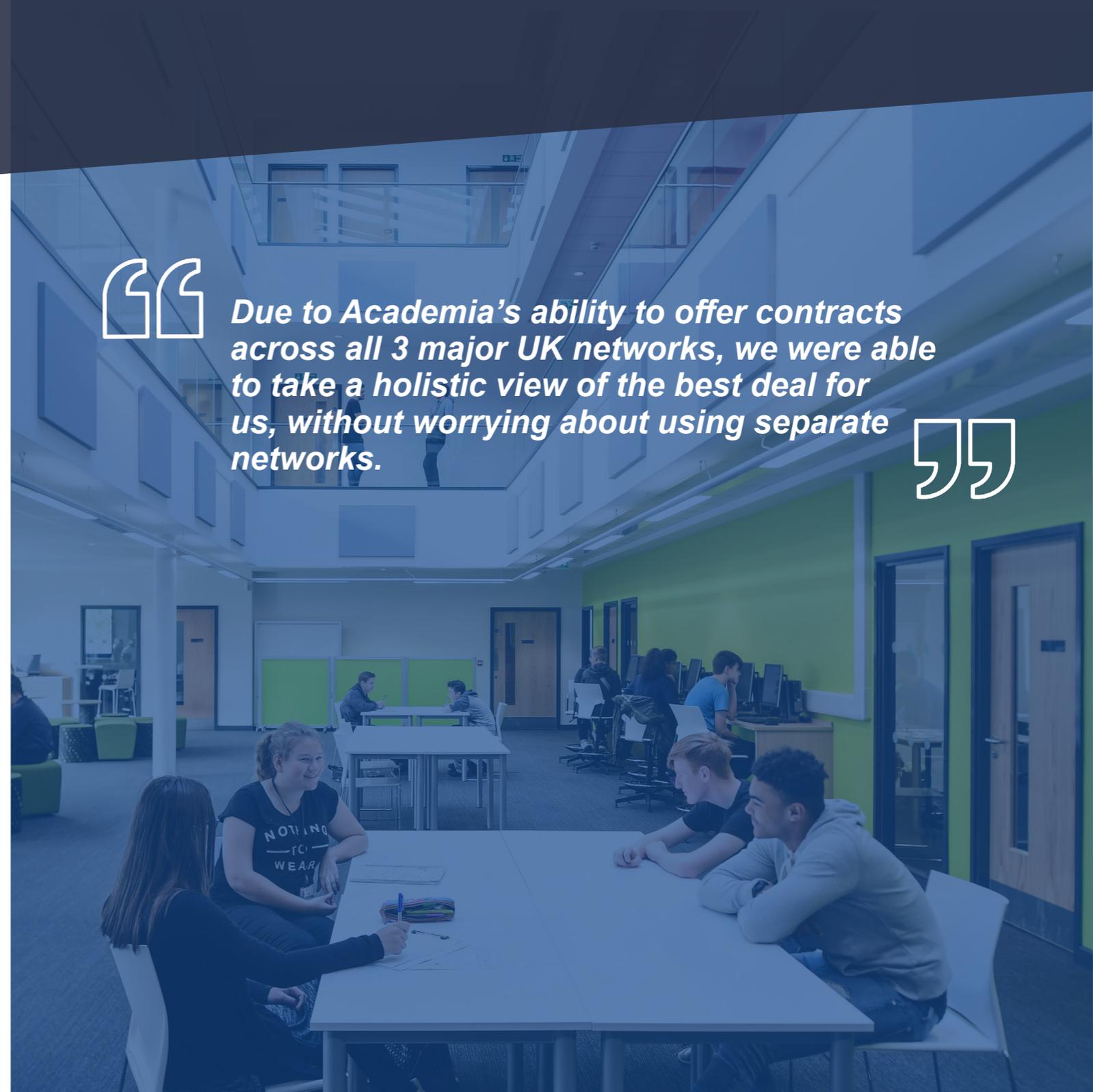
What were the challenges in your existing set-up, and how did this impact staff?

Historically, our challenge was the lack of reliability of network coverage – which impacted lectures and communication between staff. Once we made the switch to O2, we were able to rely on a better level of coverage and reliable communication.

Our biggest issue then became how we managed the various contracts across the 4 campuses, which limited our ability to negotiate a better deal for the group. Having in excess of 240 mobile phones was a significant investment for WHCG, but the ongoing costs of varying data plans led us to a conversation with Academia Mobile. We also had to adhere to the mandate of ensuring we were complying with a Cyber Security strategy. Ultimately, we needed all handsets to have at least 3 years manufacturers updates to confidently comply with Cyber Essentials – in turn, keeping our staff and students safe.



Due to Academia’s ability to offer contracts across all 3 major UK networks, we were able to take a holistic view of the best deal for us, without worrying about using separate networks.



What was the recommendation from Academia Mobile to improve your current set up?

The first step was to help us simplify our multi-campus contracts into one, easy-to-manage contract. Due to Academia's ability to offer contracts across all 3 major UK networks, we were able to take a holistic view of the best deal for us, without worrying about using separate networks (if we chose to). The team were able to review and recommend the best way for WHCG to gain greater control on the monthly billing, and in turn, afforded us a stronger purchasing footing.

Given the number of mobiles we have, the team also recommended that we implemented a 'usage cap' - which means that Academia are able to limit any instances of surprisingly high bills. In the event of a user getting close to their allowance, we are alerted by Academia and can then take the required steps to mitigate this type of over-spend.

Part of this review also allowed Academia to refresh the entire fleet of mobile phones, which then automatically assisted us with our Cyber Essentials strategy. Once we were able to do this, we had peace of mind that every device was secure against external security threats.



Rather than feeling like we were being 'sold to', the consultative approach put us at ease and helped us to prioritise the outcomes versus cost savings.



How did you find the engagement with the Academia Mobile team?

The first thing that became apparent was the wealth of experience the team had – coupled with the fact they were clearly impartial in selecting a new network provider. Rather than feeling like we were being 'sold to', the consultative approach put us at ease and helped us to prioritise the outcomes versus cost savings.

Given the portfolio of services Academia can offer, we also felt that the all-encompassing support would be there too. Cyber Security was of particular importance to us, so we were delighted to incorporate this into our plans. The technical knowledge from the wider team only added to the value we received from Academia, as well as feeling that we were in safe hands.

We were also delighted to welcome the Academia team on-site for the actual deployment of new phones and SIM cards. This wasn't something we had expected, so it was very reassuring that the team were with us to ensure that all staff and students had a positive experience in receiving their new devices.

How will WHCG benefit from what has been put in place?

The obvious point to focus on is that we now have a simplified billing system, allowing us to accurately review our monthly spend. Having a single bill for the whole group enables us to manage our budget on a longer-term basis.

Not only do our staff and students have new devices, but we also have peace-of-mind security via Cyber Essentials. With the abundance of security threats in the modern day, we feel reassured that our students, in particular, are kept safe from these threats.

So what we have now is a new, safe and secure fleet of mobile phones – all whilst being satisfied in the knowledge that we have implemented a cost saving and have a reliable supplier to help deal with any challenges we come across.

Why would you recommend the Academia Mobile team?

We know things can go wrong from time to time with connectivity, but by engaging with the Academia Mobile team we have experienced a dedication and passion to ensure WHCG are always put first. Knowledge and experience are vital attributes, but accountability and reliability are equally important – and in our experience, the Academia Mobile team have it in abundance.

To find out more about how Academia Mobile can help you, contact us:

mobile@academia.co.uk
01992 703900

“ **Not only do our staff and students have new devices, but we also have peace-of-mind security via Cyber Essentials.** ”

Academia Lifecycle Services

Our lifecycle service provides organisations with a route to repurpose unwanted technology. Increase your budget by safely recycling your old and unused handsets with the Academia Lifecycle team, including a secure data destruction process.



Your Device

Estimated trade-in value

iPhone 11
iPhone 12
iPhone 13

from £125
from £200
from £300

Contact the Academia Mobile Team to learn how we can help and what savings you can make.

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