HIGHERDIGITAL®

CASE STUDY

University of Greenwich Migrates Assessments from its Legacy System to the Newest Product Platform with the Help of Higher Digital

The University Migrates Millions of Academic Marks whilst preserving Academic Outcomes' Integrity

UNIVERSITY of GREENWICH

The success story:
Migrating millions of academic marks to a more robust platform

The University of Greenwich is a public university located in southeast London. On top of more than 3,000 staff and 20,000 on-campus students, the university has 17,000 students whose enrolment is fully digital.

Recently, the university migrated millions of academic marks from its decades-old legacy system to a more robust platform—both to enable greater enhancement of the whole assessment process and to decrease overhead.

"The core of any university is its assessment system: how students are effectively assessed at a module level all the way down to exams and coursework, and then how that adds up over a year and their whole degree. We had to build that system twenty years ago." Butler said identifying this for replacement as part of the university's digital strategy. He added. "It's the beginning and end of the full academic assessment process."

To complete the migration, the university relied heavily on Michael Agnew, SVP of Higher Digital, for everything from the initial project evaluation through analysis and design to product testing.

Higher Digital leverages existing processes and administrative tools to make transformation as efficient as possible. The company delivers measurable results that both drive progress and help organisations achieve their KPIs.
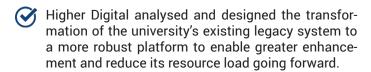
Customer

University of Greenwich

Challenges

The university needed to migrate millions of academic marks from its legacy system whilst preserving its academic outcomes' integrity, as part of its broader digital strategy.

Results

✓ Higher Digital analysed and designed the transformation of the university's existing legacy system to a more robust platform to enable greater enhancement and reduce its resource load going forward.

✓ Higher Digital then formulated a project and worked with an on-site team at the university to migrate seven full years of academic data in less than 12 months.

"The problem for organisations like us is not finding people to press buttons and write code. It's finding thinkers: people who understand how functional levels map to technology and solutions. **Higher Digital understood our products, processes, and tech stack, and was able to help us navigate this entire journey.**"

Paul Butler
Director of Information & Library Services
University of Greenwich

('The success story' continued)

"Originally, they were tasked with the evaluation, impact analysis, and the business case. Once we triggered the project in practical terms, Mike (Agnew) still had a hand in everything: designing the migration scripts, spinning up the baseline systems, testing them, running scenarios, working with our users, and so on," Butler explained.
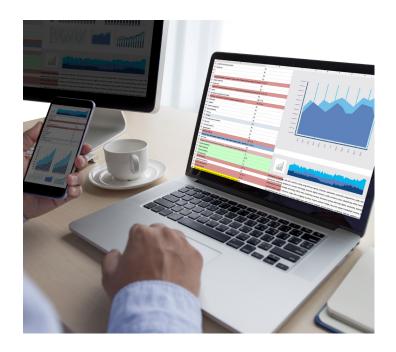
Better serving the students

Simplifying digital processes and offering a consistent user experience are both key components of the university's digital transformation strategy. By migrating millions of academic marks to the new, more robust platform, the University of Greenwich can better serve its students.

"One of the things we try to avoid at all costs is loading students up with a lot of assessments at the same time," Butler said. "We try to distribute assessments over time—and we do that planning very early."

With the help of Higher Digital, the migration was done in time for such planning to take place this academic year.

Assessment in particular has many moving parts: lecture capture, virtual learning environments, online submissions, online assessment, electronic feedback, peer assessment, and more. The migration has enabled these components to become more connected in a tight lifecycle.

Within the next year or so, the University of Greenwich expects to be free of its legacy technology writ large. "We've got projects going on all over the place," Butler said. "Higher Digital supports us as we take things from ten processes to two and helps us rationalise those processes. Organisations like that are hard to find."

Cloud-first, a step at a time

The plethora of digital transformation projects taking place at the University of Greenwich feed into a long list of goals, notably being cloud-first by 2022. Migrating the assessment system, which took 18 months overall, is one component of that systematic effort.

"I didn't want to use resources to keep maintaining and managing a bespoke system," Butler said. "Those resources could be used in more beneficial and productive ways that could help the university move forward."

Additionally, Butler wanted to make the university's entire operation much more streamlined and efficient. "You don't spend significant amount of money to migrate unless fundamentally there's a real business need," he added. "The need here is to remove the downstream commitment. Getting rid of technical debt is a key part of our strategy so we move to products that enable us in due course to move to the cloud."

In order to decrease the cost of ownership and ease the absorption of future upgrades, Agnew and Higher Digital had to take into account the myriad downstream systems that were impacted by the project while acting as a liaison with countless business users.

"The strategic value of this transformation effort is massive, which is why we've put such a phenomenal amount of resources and people into it," Butler said. "Ultimately, it's about providing students and staff with a much better experience, and Mike and Higher Digital have helped us do that."

HIGHERDIGITAL®

Higher Digital   +1 833 344 4437
1775 Tyson's Blvd.   + 44 (0)7544 659109
McLean, VA 22102   +31 (0)6342 06036

https://higher.digital/   info@higher.digital