



## CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

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# The University of the West England Delivers Unified Communications with Polycom®, Microsoft® Lync™ and HP Collaboration to Save £100,000 in Annual Travel Costs.

### Industry

Education

### Daily Use

- Staff and student meetings
- Global course validation meetings

### Solutions

For UWE, video conferencing functions have made it easier for staff and students alike to collaborate through a fully interoperable unified communications solution.

### Results and Benefits

- Increased student and staff productivity
- Reduction in 'double teaching'
- Reduced travel costs

### Overview

The University of the West England (UWE) is one of leading universities in UK and the largest provider of Higher Education in the South West of England. With 30,000 student and 3,000 staff, spread over four campuses in and around Bristol, it offers over 600 courses at Undergraduate, Postgraduate and short course levels.

### Challenges

The UWE wanted to develop new and effective methods of learning and teaching to train "industry-ready" innovators through three "presences" of physical, virtual and web. The UWE also wanted to enable people to work with and interact through all three in rich and dynamic ways. In order to progress, the UWE needed to overhaul its IT infrastructure and upgrade to a High Definition UC video solution that would enable collaboration throughout its global network of partner universities and colleges located throughout Europe, Vietnam, Malaysia and the USA.

With a student village of about 2,000 study bedrooms on campus, the University had already started to see some bottlenecks in the network through the use of social networks and media sites. Research had already shown that network traffic would continue to grow with 80% of the traffic forecasted to be video traffic, rather than just text and data.

In 2010, the UWE entered into a five-year collaboration as part of a larger investment to improve the student experience and create a new program of study, internships, and state-of-the-art Education Innovation Centre. The outcome is an ICT transformation program providing simulated work and home settings for students and faculty to educate "industry-ready" innovators who can quickly make a contribution to the UK workforce with their advanced skills.



University of the  
West of England

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Steve Grive, Director, Information Communications Technology, University of the West of England

## Solutions and Implementation

Through the ICT transformation program the university worked with ‘best in class’ vendors to purchase equipment and developed strategic partnerships with its tier one technology vendors to form a consortium. This included electrical systems provider Schneider, partnering with HP for network infrastructure, Microsoft for Microsoft® Lync™, and Polycom for video collaboration solutions. The goal was to share the university’s IT development plans so that the consortium could provide input and share best practice examples achieved in other business sectors.

HP deployed a next-generation network and integrated the Polycom and Microsoft offerings to provide a standards-based, interoperable unified communications solution. One of the program’s major focuses was to improve video facilities and to make it easier for staff and students alike to collaborate through a fully interoperable unified communications solution.

“As a large organisation with many international partners, we needed to connect our diverse communities with technologies that would help save time and costs,” continues Steve Grive. “With HP’s help, we were able to use Polycom video solutions and Microsoft Lync to transform communications across our global network, as well as between students and staff for an enhanced learning experience.”

The delivery of both Microsoft Lync and Polycom solutions provide an end-to-end unified communications solution. Staff are now able to access video on their desktop by clicking a name within the Lync contact list and instantly meet with a colleague face-to-face via video on the Polycom® RealPresence® Platform. This highly personalised unified communications experience has allowed staff to conduct online meetings easily, which in turn has boosted productivity.

The UWE extended their video collaboration to include nine video conferencing suites featuring Polycom® RealPresence® HDX® 7000 and HDX® 4000 Room Telepresence Solutions as they provide unmatched performance over congested IP networks and are strategically placed in every campus facility around Bristol and Gloucester.

By using the video recording, archiving, and streaming playback capabilities of the Polycom RealPresence Platform, the UWE has eliminated the costs associated with “double teaching,” where a lecture has to be held twice to accommodate all interested students. Lectures are now able to be recorded and streamed from one lecture theater to another through the use of Polycom® RMX® 4000 and CMA™ 5000.

## Partners



**Microsoft®**

### Product Listing

#### Video and telepresence systems

- Polycom® HDX® 7000 Room Telepresence Solution
- Polycom® HDX® 4000 Room Telepresence Solution

#### Infrastructure

- Polycom® RealPresence® Resource Manager CMA™ 5000
- Polycom® RealPresence® Collaboration Server (RMX® 4000)

#### Partner Solution

- Microsoft® Lync™ Server 2010

“We want to work with ‘best in class’ vendors when purchasing technology for the University. In relation to video conferencing solutions, that would be Polycom. The primary reason is the quality of Polycom’s video solutions; the second was due to the strategic relationships with both HP and Microsoft.”

Steve Grive, Director, Information Communications Technology, University of the West of England

Polycom video collaboration solutions are core to UWE’s distance learning and video-on-demand initiatives. Although used predominantly for interaction between UWE staff and other institutions staff, video conferencing is also used for interactions between UWE staff and international students, for distance learning where an international college is running a master’s program associated with UWE and a student wants an interview with their tutor.

Through video conferencing the university communicates with partner universities around the globe for course validation meetings. There can be more than six validation meetings a year, with as many as five university staff flying out to help develop material and validate the degree. By meeting virtually using Polycom video conferencing instead, UWE have reduced validation costs by around £25,000, and in addition reduced the costs for associated regional agents, offices and ad-hoc partner arrangements, totaling about £100,000 per annum in travel savings. These results have helped the UWE to consistently be rated as First Class in the People and Planet Green League and to be certified with the Carbon Trust Standard.

### About Polycom

Polycom is the global leader in open standards-based unified communications (UC) solutions for telepresence, video, and voice powered by the Polycom® RealPresence® Platform. The RealPresence Platform interoperates with the broadest range of business, mobile, and social applications and devices. More than 400,000 organizations trust Polycom solutions to collaborate and meet face-to-face from any location for more productive and effective engagement with colleagues, partners, customers, specialists, and prospects. Polycom, together with its broad partner ecosystem, provides customers with the best total cost of ownership, interoperability, scalability, and security for video collaboration, whether on-premises, hosted, or cloud-delivered. Visit [www.polycom.com](http://www.polycom.com) or connect with Polycom on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

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