



## Automated system handles expense claims for 20,000 students

Having worked with a restrictive and cumbersome financial management system for several years, the University of Nottingham Students' Union (UoNSU) set out to upgrade to something that could automate processes and streamline workflow more easily.

Advanced Exchequer was chosen for its intuitive reporting capabilities, the richness of data it provides and ease of use. But the advantages did not end here. Advanced Exchequer offered something quite unique to UoNSU - the ability to automate student expenses via an innovative app, created specifically to deal with the challenge the Union had regarding its sheer volume of student claimants. Although originally developed for UoNSU, the eXchequer365 app is now used by other student unions with similar challenges and is proving to increase efficiency by up to 35%.

The UoNSU's finance team were looking for a way to automate the processing of 20,000 student expense claims per year associated with its clubs and societies. After road testing eXchequer365, Advanced Exchequer's mobile app for accessing financial information on the go, UoNSU saw that it had just the functionality it needed. However, what it needed was an app tailored purely to process expenses that could also integrate with its front-end system from Membership Solutions Ltd.

Working with the Advanced Exchequer team, UoNSU were able to create a bespoke student expenses app, which has since become a standalone product called eXpense365.

Finance Manager Maria Brown comments, "eXpense365 empowers our club or society organisers to electronically submit their expenses at any time of the day or night using smartphones or tablets. They can attach supporting documentation, such as receipts, then expenses are automatically routed to the relevant authoriser for approval.

Previously this was done by filling in a form, taking that form to accounts, waiting for payment then we had to manually add it to the ledger."

In order to fully integrate eXpense365, Advanced Exchequer also had to work closely with Membership Solutions Ltd (MSL) who provide digital membership support solutions including website, e-commerce, clubs and societies and venue management for some of the largest student unions in the UK.

Students' Union  
UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

### Client >

Nottingham Students' Union (UoNSU)

### Sector >

Student Unions

### Project >

Upgrading existing financial management system.

*"What we did with Advanced Exchequer to create a much more simplified and streamlined system for managing expenses was quite unique."*

Maria Brown >  
Finance Manager >  
Nottingham Students' Union

# Reports take minutes rather than hours.

Chief Executive of MSL Colin Watson comments, "Our system and eXpense365 needed to talk to each other in order for the collaboration to be a success. We are pleased to have been involved at the inception of an exciting project that furthers our vision of improving the student experience. It shows how, as organisations at the forefront of technology, we can adapt our offerings to create multi-layer solutions that answer the needs of the client."

UoNSU is now fully up and running with both Exchequer for financial management and the mobile expense app. The finance team has a consistent view of accounts for each society and club, which increases financial visibility and transparency across the organisation. This makes it easier for the charity to comply with evolving statutory reporting requirements, such as Statement of Recommended Practice. Exchequer also interfaces with their electronic point of sale system, providing financial insight into the revenue performance of the campus shops.

"Advanced Exchequer's solutions will transform the efficiency of the finance department

by automating manual based procedures," continues Maria. "The mobile app will reduce the time and cost to process student expense claims by 15%, allowing my team more opportunity to work with club organisers in other areas such as gaining sponsorship, running events and other commercial activity."

Advanced Exchequer's integrated project, job and time costing module enables union managers to easily self-serve by extracting real-time financial information into Excel. They can analyse current spend instantly which improves budget control and replaces the need to collate, print and post financial reports.

*Maria concludes, "We are not a mainstream organisation when it comes to our requirement for software applications, so many suppliers are unable to adapt their offerings to our needs. What we did with Advanced Exchequer and MSL to create a much more simplified and streamlined system for managing expenses was quite unique. We have had a very positive response from students and they can't quite believe the difference it makes. In fact other Student Unions are queuing up to come and see the system in action!"*

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Maria Brown >  
Finance Manager >  
Nottingham Students' Union

\* Saving based on 15% compared to manual processing with the average expense claim taking 15 mins. Average salary of £30k per annum (equal to 25p per minute)

## More information

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