The University of East Anglia

In safe hands – a 15-year partnership providing security for the future

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The University of East Anglia (UEA) is ranked in the UK Top 30, and the World Top 200 Universities. UEA is an internationally renowned university located two miles from the centre of Norwich, on a campus that provides top quality academic, social, and cultural facilities to students across a diverse range of Undergraduate and Postgraduate degree courses.

UEA works hard to build a diverse and thriving community in everything it does. A community alive with academic innovation, ideas that disrupt the status quo, and research that changes the world. A community of unique people ready to tackle today's biggest challenges, together. The university's Business Systems Team is no different, with 20,000 students, more than 3,500 staff, and 50,000 active users to protect – no two days are the same.

"On a day-to-day basis we look after and support around 50,000 active users and maintain approximately 1,200 access-controlled doors," explains Miguel Rios, Business Systems Manager at UEA.

Many say there's no place like Norfolk with beaches, birds, and beauty in England's most treasured county, it's considered a safe place to live, work, and visit, and the university campus is the same explains Miguel.

"UEA has always been considered a safe campus in the UK. Together, working with Gallagher and Gallagher Certified Channel Partner, Check Your Security, we strive to ensure that our reputation is enhanced and strengthened.

"The Gallagher system is such an integral part of the UEA security delivery. With a campus located across 320 acres of rolling parkland, Gallagher's integrated security solutions provide complete campus control from one central management platform and deliver a seamless experience for our entire learning environment.

"As a long-standing customer of Gallagher products and solutions we love their constant innovation and investment in Research and Development, which enables their security solution to continue to give users like us agility and proactivity. This has been critical during lockdown as we manage the situation fluidly, on a daily basis, and can make required changes in seconds," says Miguel.

Responding to COVID-19

During the global COVID-19 pandemic, Gallagher systems were used to enhance the levels of security on campus by locking down all facilities and only allowing safe passage to those deemed as essential workers or those working on essential research on campus.

"UEA is a 24/7 campus more akin to a small village, Gallagher ensured we could keep a level of security that protected our assets whilst still respecting that a lot of students still live on campus at all times of year.

"As you can imagine, it's a really fine balance between locking everything down, but still providing freedom to move around for the approximately 1,000 people who still called UEA home during the peak of the pandemic.

"The ability to provide anonymous building occupancy data via Gallagher was also invaluable to the support of our infrastructure. Through the Gallagher system, we could report on, and help other stakeholders understand how many people were on campus, building occupancy, and if there were any hot spots. It was extremely useful to be able to get those numbers out so quickly," says Miguel.

Gallagher's security solutions are highly flexible and were used to help the UEA Security Team mitigate the risks to their staff, students, and campus.

"Different schools within the university had different security challenges during this period. Some schools were essential and needed to keep operating – such as our researchers and students who were making alcohol gel hand sanitiser for the hospital next door – and others needed to secure themselves and wait for further restrictions to be lifted.

"There was also a lot of nervousness around COVID-19 in the early days, and people needed to feel safe and secure in their buildings. So, locking the buildings down, and only allowing certain people access through the Gallagher doors, where we created a one-way system to ensure social distancing was adhered to, were measures we quickly implemented to provide reassurance to our people, that they were safe.

"Our Security Systems Technician, Phil, did a lot of that work by himself and turned it around incredibly quickly, which is testament to how efficient the Gallagher system has been for us," says Miguel.

Phil Warnes, Security Systems Technician at University of East Anglia adds: "Our partnership with Gallagher Certified Channel Partner, Check Your Security, was absolutely invaluable during the pandemic.
To have their support and be able to lean on them, when a lot of us were being asked to stay home if we could, was incredible and didn't go unnoticed."

As an essential service, Check Your Security, was able to work throughout the pandemic to support UEA with the installation of new doors, which facilitated the one-way system, along with other critical needs.

"Not only are Check Your Security an extension of the Gallagher family, but they're an extension of my team as well. We work closely with Wayne and Clinton, and speak to them nearly every day," says Miguel.

"Realistically we couldn't live without the system, and Gallagher will play a pivotal role in our building refurb programme, which includes the iconic Ziggurats, and will be kicking off soon."

Miguel Rios,
Business Systems Manager, UEA

> *"Currently, everything to do with Uni life, to a degree, revolves around this piece of plastic [access credential], and in the future, ideally everything will be hosted in the Digital ID."*
>
> — *Miguel Rios,*
> *Business Systems Manager, UEA*

Futureproofing for growth

Gallagher delivers comprehensive yet flexible security from one centralised platform. To support future university growth, Gallagher's solutions are easily scalable for changing student and staff numbers or site expansion.

"One of the things the pandemic has done, is change the way we work. We now have a lot more staff working from home, and students studying remotely more often, so we've ended up amalgamating office space and moving things around.

"When you are moving people from one building to the next, it's the speed with which you can modify the system, to allow certain groups of staff to have access to exactly where they need to be, that has a significant value," says Phil.

Looking to the future

The UEA Security Team has a lot on the horizon – with plans to utilise the Gallagher system even further to facilitate new campus installs, review the lifecycle of existing hardware, replace old hardware, move to green credentials, and synchronise student onboarding.

"Our digital future will see integrations with CCTV systems, providing a new level of convergence and AI analysis for our security team. We are also planning for a plastic free solution, which connects to our mobile devices instead of access cards, to be embedded in our future," says Miguel.

"The university has a mobile first policy in terms of its IT development, and that's why Gallagher's Digital ID is the perfect access credential for us moving forward. This also leads to new and exciting partnerships with companies such as Beep, who further enhance Gallagher's Digital ID offering and add significant tailored content and features.

"Not only will the Digital ID streamline ID provisioning, but it's better for the environment as we won't have to replace lost or stolen IDs or replace a physical card every time it expires. We also know that someone is less likely to lose or forget their iPhone, compared to their plastic access credential."

Trusted by education providers worldwide

"We have also had the opportunity to join Gallagher's TESN (Tertiary Education Security Network) forum and online focus group, providing a digital platform for industry leaders to get together and share best practice. Being part of this group has been hugely beneficial, particularly during the pandemic," says Miguel.

"Through our involvement in this network, it's clear to see Gallagher solutions are trusted by education providers across the globe to: issue student and faculty access cards; manage individual access rights; control campus and dormitory access; secure computer labs, science labs, and other high-value assets; integrate with scheduling and resource booking systems; evacuate or lock down sites in case of an emergency or pandemic; manage access to car parks and key safes; and integrate with postal systems and student union ticketed events."

Enduring partnerships

"Finally, our Gallagher Channel Partner, Check Your Security, works closely with Gallagher's UK team and both parties support all our strategy and planning. We've just celebrated our 15th year with Gallagher, and our 13th year with Check Your Security, and the relationship continues to go from strength to strength," concludes Miguel.

> *"The Gallagher system is a highly prized asset, and it's something that people can trust."*
>
> — *Phil Warnes,*
> *Security Systems Technician, UEA*

Regional Offices

Americas	+1 877 560 6308
Asia	+852 3468 5175
Australia	+61 3 9308 7722
India	+91 98 458 92920
Middle East	+971 4 566 5834
South Africa	+27 11 974 4740
United Kingdom / Europe	+44 2476 64 1234

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