



University of Salford

Employee Benefits & Recognition Case Study

Ensuring their people
thrive, so everyone can
strive for a brighter future!





My team and I wanted to help the people who needed it the most, but unfortunately, they were the least engaged with our platform."

James Walsh, Reward Analyst, University of Salford

The journey to becoming unstoppable!

"Arrive a student, leave an expert and become unstoppable when you study with us." University of Salford

This is the message the University of Salford shares with its potential students. It's a promise - a commitment to their relentless dedication to doing their best for the people who put their trust in them.

Whether you're a student or a member of their over 2,800 'core' colleague team, the University is committed to making life as bright and your future as promising as it can be.

People create a culture, nurture talent, and share experiences, which is why the University of Salford developed a People Plan with wellbeing at its core.



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

The People Plan in Action

“We will assess our impact, using data to give us information and insights into what works well.”

University of Salford, People Plan

This core principle, taken from the University's People Plan, is fundamental to employee wellbeing initiatives.

The truth is always in the data, and it's not enough to just set a plan in motion. Reviewing progress and understanding what's going well or needs improvement is essential.

The University had bold ambitions for their 'Your Rewards and Benefits' initiative to make a positive improvement to their colleagues' lives.

However, when James Walsh joined the University as a Reward Analyst in 2022, the data didn't reflect the intention.

James and his team identified a significant proportion of colleagues in these grades working within the Estates Department. Typically, comprising non-computer-based roles, 9% of the colleague population wasn't regularly accessing the University's digital communications channels.

We live in a digital world, and HR professionals face growing demands. Streamlining and digitalising communications via email or intranets is essential for operational efficiency.

When it becomes a case of efficiency vs. effectiveness... something has to give.

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Results to be proud of...

- ✓ Discounts platform usage up by 150%
- ✓ Employee savings up by 129%
- ✓ 94% of employees actively using the reward and recognition platform
- ✓ The University saved **£187,689.40** 2024 due to salary sacrifice scheme uptake and employees using the Annual Leave Purchase Scheme.
- ✓ The University of Salford was a **FINALIST** in the *Best Alignment of Benefits to Business Strategy* category in the Employee Benefits Awards 2025.



Delivering More... The Pluxee Partnership

The Salford Experience

Powered by Pluxee UK

The University of Salford has ambitious ideals and a solid People Plan to back them up. What they needed was a like-minded, people-first partner to help bring it to life.

Bring it to life, we did, with an inclusive and comprehensive range of employee benefits and reward offerings that enhance financial, mental, and physical wellbeing.

The Pluxee Package

- ✓ The University gives its employees access to the following employee benefits.
- ✓ Employee Discounts Platform
- ✓ Employee Assistance Programme
- ✓ Gym & Fitness Discounts
- ✓ Cycle to Work salary sacrifice scheme
- ✓ Green Car salary sacrifice scheme
- ✓ Annual Leave Purchase Scheme
- ✓ Childcare Vouchers
- ✓ Bespoke Reward and Recognition Platform.





Boosting Employee Financial Wellbeing

✖ Education and Awareness

Since online communications plans unintentionally excluded the people needing financial support the most, James and his team cut technology out of the equation when it came to financial education.

The University's Your Rewards & Benefits is home to a variety of financial wellbeing tools, so the communications plan went beyond ways to make the most of money-saving employee benefits.

Planning for the future. An equitable approach to awareness.

- ✔ In 2024, The University hosted eleven pension overview sessions, two financial wellbeing webinars and two pre-retirement seminars.
- ✔ For those harder-to-reach colleagues in the Estates department, they held two dedicated in-person workshops during regular working hours to allow all colleagues to attend and receive the same information.
- ✔ They also launched a free mortgage advice service.



✖ Employee Discounts Platform... Everyday Savings, Every Day!

If you give your employees the chance to save money on the weekly shop, a meal out, or a cup of coffee... they'll take it, right? Not necessarily.

Lack of awareness or understanding of how to use employee benefits commonly hinders uptake.

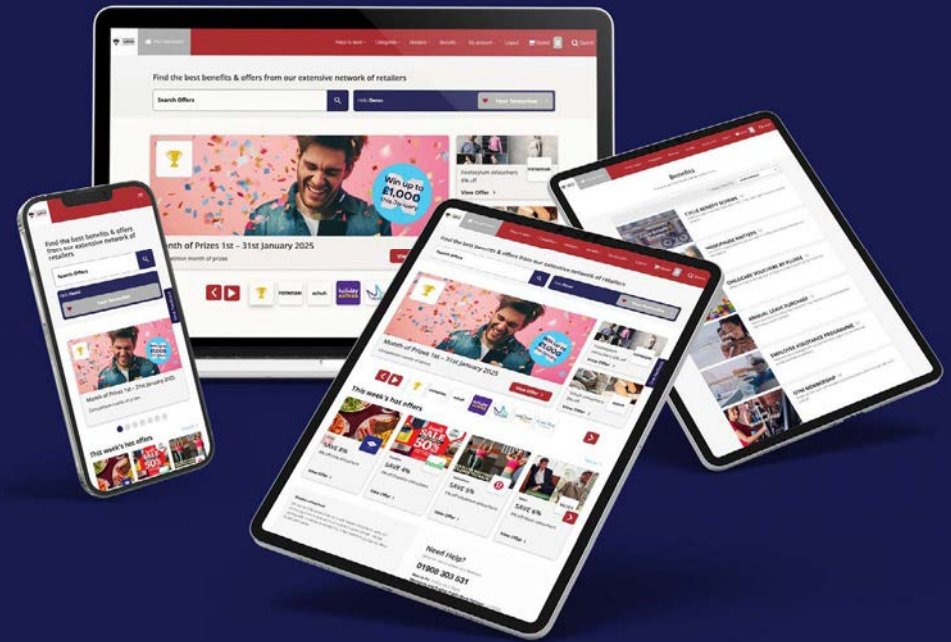
It's a good thing that the University has such a **robust induction plan** and that we help **drive usage with marketing support**.

The results...

	2022	2023	2024
Discounted Voucher Orders	822	1,993	2,059
Total Employee Spend	£90,982	£209,839	£233,486
Total Employee Savings	£5,601	£12,568	£12,855

Between 2022 and 2024...

- ✓ Platform usage increased by **150%**
- ✓ Employee spending up by **156%**
- ✓ Employee **savings up by 129%**



99.06% (over 2,000) of the University's employees are active users of our Employee Discounts Platform!

In 2024, the University's employees have spent £233,486 across the platform, saving £12,855!

As you can see from the results chart, there was a steep rise between 2022 and 2023, and we've sustained that growth between 2023 and 2024.

✖ How Does Our Discount Platform Work?

Employees can save up to 20% with over 100 retailers!

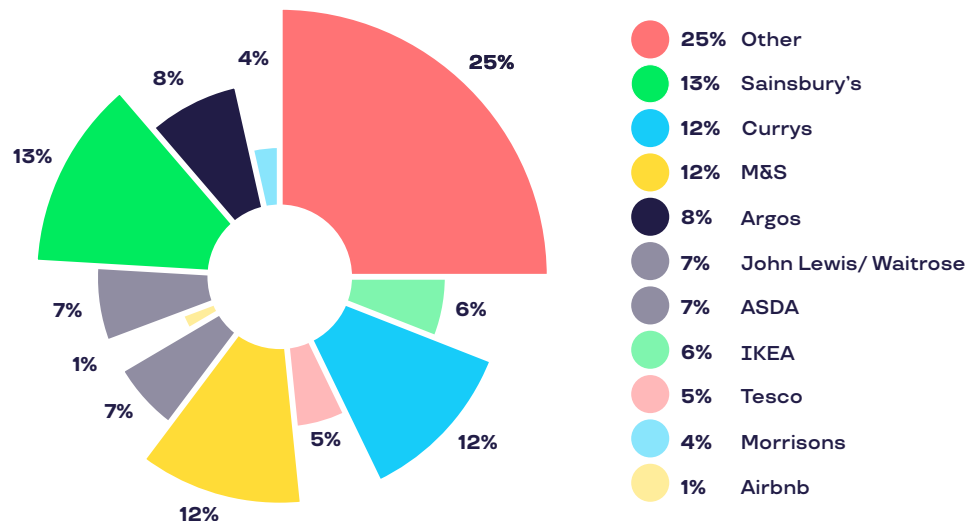
Your employees can save on everything from the weekly shop to top tech, holidays, and more!

The chances to save are endless and can offer the equivalent of an inflation-busting pay rise!

A single sign-on platform accessible via a desktop version and mobile app, Salford's colleagues can buy discounted vouchers in advance or on the go.

Online or in-store, Pluxee UK discounts give you more!

Percentage of total savings



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The best user experience for employers and employees



Fully managed service.



Competitions and giveaways.



Dedicated account management and reporting



Employee savings on everyday essentials and the experiences that bring them joy.



UK customer care team for all employee enquiries.



Increased employee financial resilience.



Marketing and engagement support.



Attract and retain top talent!





Holiday Discounts

As part of our Employee Discounts Platform, the University's employees can get up to 10% off holidays!

We partner with Sodexo Circles, an ABTA and ATOL-bonded travel agency. So much more than offering a saving, consider this a concierge service, giving the University's employees a fully managed experience.

From cruises and package deals to luxury escapes and honeymoons, employees can build the holiday of their dreams without the hassle of researching and finding the cheapest deals.

Between December 2023 and October 2024, the University's employees saved £2,106 by booking their holiday through their Employee Discounts Platform.

✖ Green Car Salary Sacrifice Scheme

Our Green Car salary sacrifice scheme helps your employees afford an eco-friendly car, reducing the cost of their daily commute.

Every employee who takes up our Green Car scheme will save on their monthly tax bill and National Insurance Contributions. There are also great purchase options at the end of the vehicle's lease.

The University of Salford's Green Car salary sacrifice scheme has helped them save 43.14 tonnes of CO2!

The University rolled out its Green Car salary sacrifice scheme in July 2022. To date, they have 17 employees enrolled in the scheme.

All cars on the scheme are 100% electric!



Saving the University money and making employee benefits cost-neutral.

The reduction in National Insurance Contributions due to the uptake of the scheme saves the University **£2,589.63 per month - £31,075.56 a year!**

With the average duration of a Green Car scheme lasting 48 months (4 years), that's a potential saving of **£124,302.24** – money the University can reinvest in other wellbeing initiatives or offset the cost of their employee benefits package.



Childcare Vouchers

The University joined our Childcare Vouchers scheme, helping their employees offset the costs of costly childcare bills.

On the Childcare Voucher scheme, the University's employees exchange part of their salary to pay for childcare before tax and National Insurance Calculations (NIC), reducing what they pay in tax each month.

The scheme also reduces the University's NIC bill, saving money for every colleague enrolled in the scheme.

2024 Childcare Scheme Data

Total Ordered	Total Order Value	Employee Savings	Employer Savings (13.8% NIC)
622	£48,353.62	£15,473.16	£6,672.80

NB: Childcare vouchers are no longer available for new applicants.

Mental Resilience and Work-life Balance





✖ Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Experts believe that mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety trigger 70% of doctor visits and 85% of serious illnesses.

Ensuring there's someone to listen when your employees need to talk, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year – at work, at home – whenever help is needed! With our EAP app, instant guidance, information, and support are just a tap away.

Our BACP-accredited counsellors and Information Specialists can help the University's employees proactively tackle their worries. Using PHQ9 and GAD7 assessments, they're qualified to assess and plan the best care path.

Between November 2023 and October 2024, the University's colleagues accessed their EAP service 278 times.

- ✓ 106 structured counselling sessions
- ✓ 155 'in the moment' sessions.
- ✓ 37 calls to Information Specialists who can support with bereavement, tax and benefits queries, debt, separation and more.

Annual Leave Purchase Scheme

An Annual Leave Purchase Scheme allows employees to buy extra holidays and repay the University through salary deduction repayments. Extra time off work to rest or explore is a fantastic way to support a better work-life balance. The more rested and happy employees are, the more engaged and motivated they feel when they return to work.

In 2024, the University approved 116 applications for additional annual leave. Great for employee wellbeing and the University's finances.

The Annual Leave Purchase Scheme reduces how much the University pays in salary and NIC.

2024 Annual Leave Purchase Scheme Employer Savings

Salary Savings	NIC Savings	Total Savings
£133,841	£18,470	£152,311





Putting Physical Wellbeing First

Gym & Fitness Discounts

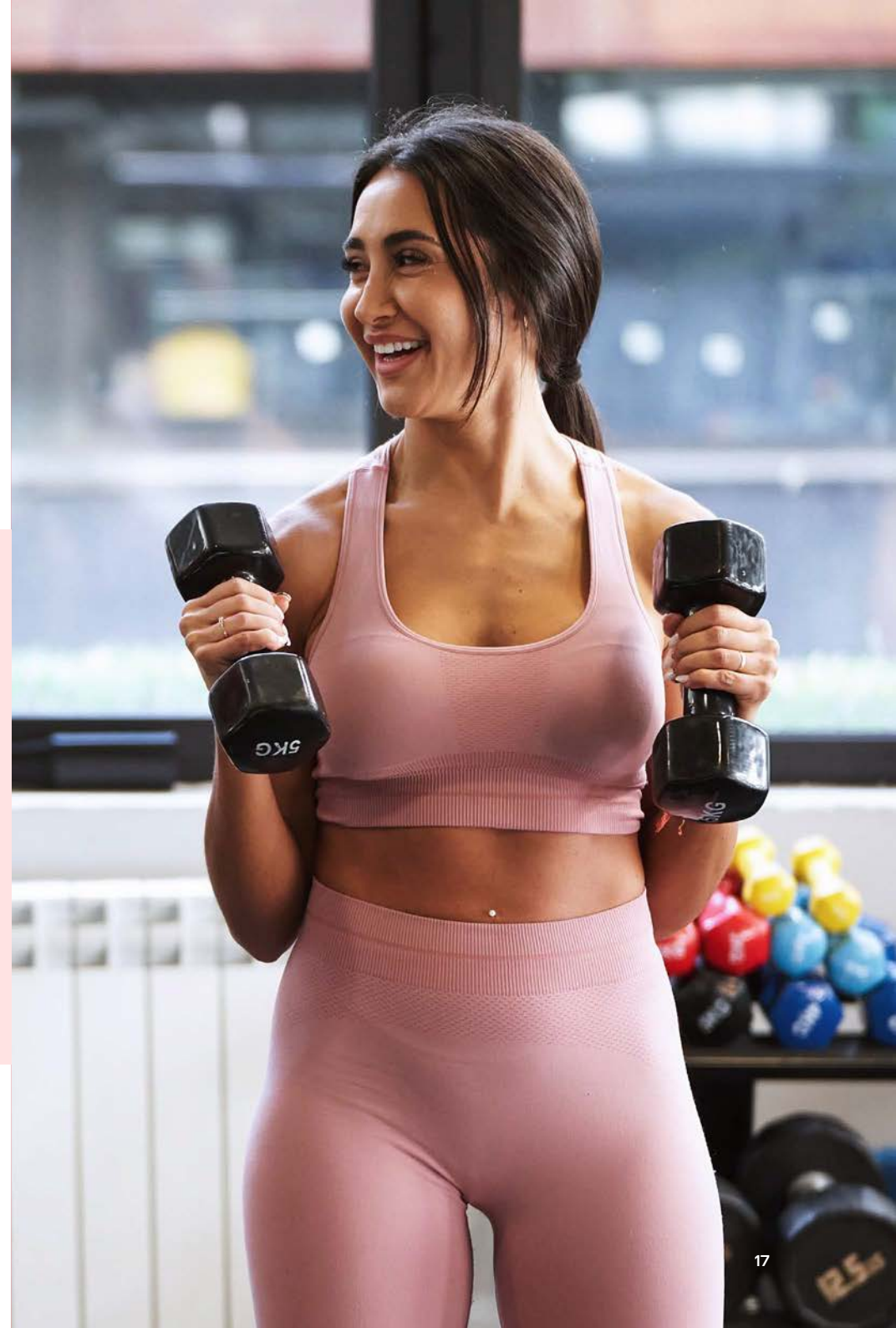
Healthy employees are happier, more energised and more productive. When employers make a healthier lifestyle more affordable, it shows they value their people's wellbeing, which helps create loyal employees.

Our Gym and Fitness Discounts allow the University's employees to exercise their way – at home, in a gym or with their local club with up to 25% off fees.

Between November 2023 and October 2024, the University's employees:

- ✓ Purchased 137 gym memberships.
- ✓ Joined 107 clubs.
- ✓ Enrolled in 13 digital fitness platforms.

All for a cheaper price than possible without access to our Gym and Fitness Discounts.





✖ Cycle to Work Salary Sacrifice Scheme

Cycle to Work salary sacrifice schemes are a win for both employers and employees.

Employees get a new bike plus the kit to go with it, spread the cost over monthly salary deductions, and enjoy tax and NIC savings each month throughout the life of their repayment plan.

As for the University, they also pay less in tax and National Insurance Contributions during the repayment period.

Here's how the numbers add up...

	2022	2023	2024*
Cycle Applications	28	41	25
Total Employee Savings	£8,302	£15,540	£9,977.60
Total University Savings	£3,580	£6,701	£4,302.84

*Rolling 12 months up to Oct

Cycling is a physical, mental,
and financial-health booster!

**Celebrating the
People Who Drive
Success!**



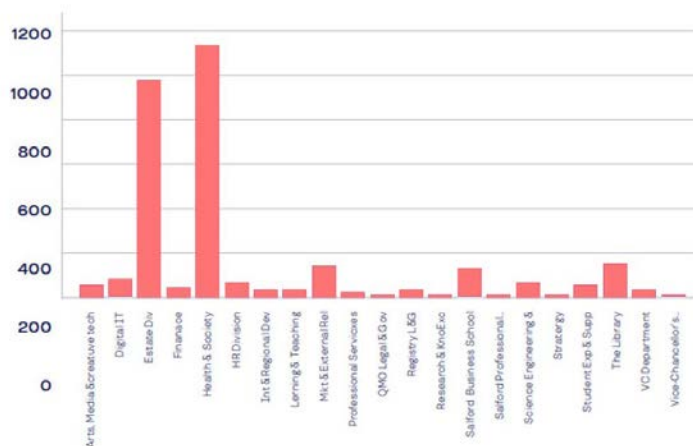
Reward and Recognition Platform

We're proud to power My Reward, My Salford, the University's bespoke recognition and reward platform.

We've learned that the University takes recognition seriously. We've also found that equity is a priority. Centralising employee benefits and rewards into one digital platform makes it easier for people to access their perks. It also reduces admin.

The University put a lot of thought and effort into ensuring all colleagues bought into the importance of reward and recognition, including deskless workers, like the Estates division.

Nominations by department 2024



The results speak for themselves...

Between November 2023 and October 2024, 2,654 University colleagues (**approx. 94%**) were active on the My Salford reward platform.

The Estates division was the **eighth** most active (out of nineteen), proving its efforts to engage this team a success.

In October 2024, the Estates division made the **most nominations**, accounting for 28%.

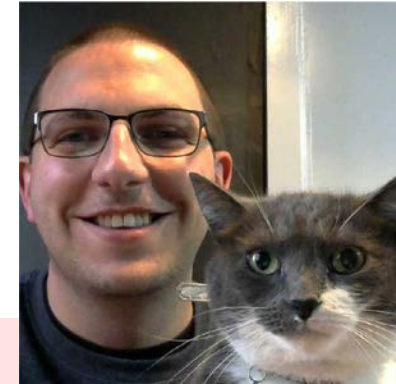
Improving Employee Retention and Satisfaction



Reducing Employee Turnover

Recruiting new employees is a significant expense. An employee benefits package supporting financial, mental, and physical wellbeing is essential for employee retention.

Between December 2022 and December 2023, the employee turnover rate reduced from 8.6% to 6.4%. In December 2024, this dropped again to 5.9%.



 ***The benefits platform at Salford has contributed significantly to my wellbeing. I like the wide variety of offers available and the selection of options, including prepaid cards, cashback, and general discounts. In a cost-of-living crisis, it's really useful to know that we have lots of options to save even more money.***

I also like that they run regular competitions. In addition to potentially winning prizes, entering these is a great way to break up the working day!

I think the positive impact of gratitude is massively underrated, with a small token of appreciation able to completely make somebody's day. That's why I like to use the University Thank You Scheme to ensure my colleagues know how grateful I am for them and everything they do."

Dean Brown,
Reading List Support Administrator, Library, Careers
and Enterprise Team, University of Salford.

Becoming Financially Resilient



Delivering Tangible Savings

UK Universities are struggling financially.

The Office for Students predicts that by 2025-26, 72% of universities will spend more money than they have coming in. In 2022, the University of Salford published its Corporate Strategy detailing its plans to become financially resilient, sustainably generating investment to support future ambitions and stability.

Total Salary Sacrifice Savings

When you combine the salary and NIC savings for the Cycle to Work and Green Car salary sacrifice scheme with the Annual Leave Purchase scheme in 2024, our employee benefits **saved the University £187,689.40!**



Adding Value and Driving Engagement



The University of Salford was a finalist in the Best Alignment of Benefits to Business Strategy category in the Employee Benefits Awards 2025.

This case study and the information included formed the basis of the awards submission, celebrating the University's success in improving financial wellbeing, increasing employee retention, and becoming financially resilient by generating salary sacrifice savings that they can reinvest elsewhere.

Competitions and Prizes

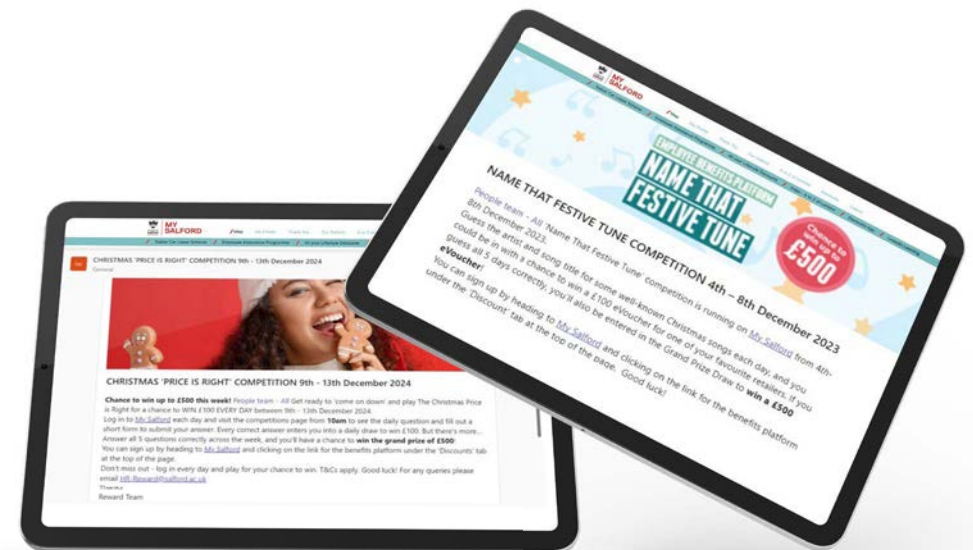
In 2022, the University found that their colleagues weren't using their employee benefits package effectively. When people don't use their benefits, they miss a chance to enhance their financial, mental, and physical wellbeing.

For the University, poor benefits uptake meant they weren't seeing a return on investment or in a position to boost employee engagement and retention.

In situations like this, the **#ThePluxeeDifference** comes into its own!

We run monthly competitions and giveaways across our benefits platform to encourage the University's colleagues to log in to their hub and explore what's available.

The proof is in the data - the **142% uplift** in hub usage between 2022 and 2023 and the reduced employee turnover figures.



Explore our products and services

In today's fast-moving and unpredictable business context, every advantage helps. As a business, you need a trusted partner you can rely on to always be there – even unexpected challenges appear.

Together, we can create a financially, mentally, and physically resilient workforce. From 24/7 physical and mental healthcare to financial tools and savings, we provide the employee benefits that give your people more of what matters most to them.



Financial Wellbeing

[Pluxee Discounts Platform](#)

[Pluxee Card](#)

[Education and Training Tools](#)

[Debt Consolidation and Loans](#)

[Green Car](#)

[SmartPay](#)

[Refurbished Tech](#)



Physical Wellbeing

[Cycle to Work](#)

[Gym and Fitness Discounts](#)

[Online GP](#)



Mental Wellbeing

[Employee Assistance Programme](#)

[My Possible Self Wellbeing App](#)

[Annual Leave Purchase Scheme](#)

Partnerships worth celebrating!

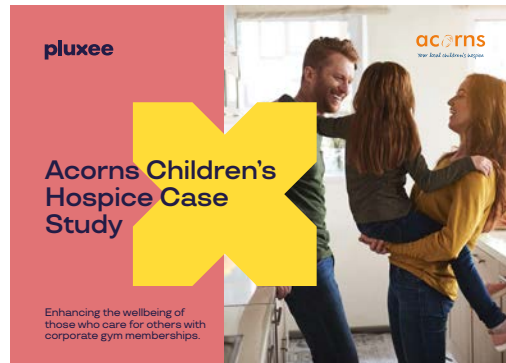
Explore some of our other successful partnerships.



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Rewarding with purpose. Delivering moments of joy.

Giving employees more of what really matters in their lives.



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Acorns Children's Hospice Case Study

Enhancing the wellbeing of those who care for others with corporate gym memberships.



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Blackpool and The Fylde College.
Crown Commercial Services framework and Voucher Select.

Making life's essentials more affordable with free meal vouchers to eligible students



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Northern Education Trust Case Study

Providing for free school meals for those in need through fast, effective, and sustainable voucher fulfillment.



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ONS: Utilising Pluxee UK's Voucher Solution

Agility, flexibility and collaboration: providing critical resource during the pandemic



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SIG UK Case Study

"Benefits engagement has increased year-on-year"



At Pluxee, we're all about making more of life and adding that extra bit of joy that brightens our days. We shape the world of employee benefits and engagement by bringing to life a personalised and sustainable employee experience at work and beyond. For over four decades, we have been contributing to making work not just a place to be, but a place to belong. Driven by people and enabled by technology, we act as the beating heart of a rich ecosystem of stakeholders.

We are a trusted partner to private and public companies, committed to nurturing vibrant workplaces that attract, grow and retain talents. We are a smart companion to employees – our clients' and our own. We continuously evolve our digital and personalised solutions to transcend well-being, helping to build meaningful connections and communities. We are a reliable ally to local businesses, working hand-in-hand to support their success and better serve their consumers.

Moving forward, our goal is to strengthen our positive impact on the communities we're a part of. Whether it's through our own continuous efforts or those of our partners, we are cultivating solidarity, diversity, inclusion and sustainability, in the pursuit of progress for all. Pluxee delivers more than just benefits; it's about paving the path towards a more joyful and meaningful life.

Pluxee: More of what matters to you.

www.pluxee.uk