

# Staffordshire University improves the student experience and reduces parcel collection contacts with Quadient parcel lockers



Staffordshire University, a site of higher education for over 100 years, combines a strong heritage with a forward-thinking teaching and learning approach. In delivering its core strategies of connected communities, innovative and applied learning, and talented people, Staffordshire embraces innovation and technology to optimise learning and wellbeing for its students and staff. In 2020, the University transformed the way it manages parcel deliveries to reduce contact and improve the student and staff experience.



Residence  
Life



## Challenge

To improve the parcel delivery experience for students, release staff from manual processes and reduce contact during parcel collections.

## Results

Students self-serve to collect items, the time and cost of parcel management has been slashed and wellbeing was supported during COVID-19.

## Solution

Quadiant parcel lockers securely store parcels and electronically notify students to collect.

## Method

The Quadiant team demonstrated the benefits of lockers in meeting the University's goals and provided training and support before, during and after installation.



## The challenge: To automate processes for receiving parcels and reduce person-to-person contact

The University has two halls of residence, comprising 1,200+ rooms, that between them generate around 100 parcel deliveries per day. Couriers delivered parcels to office staff who would fill out paper slips to go into students' pigeonholes alerting them of deliveries. Students collected their items from the office during opening hours. It was a labour-intensive process that took up over six hours of staff time every day.

"Over the years, we'd inherited old processes and ways of doing things that worked fine before the online shopping boom," explains Rhys Stevens, Accommodation Officer (allocations and systems) at Staffordshire University. "As a leading digital university committed to the student experience, we needed to look at how we could transform those ways of working and reduce the risks associated with people coming into the office during the pandemic."

The manual processes were also disruptive for staff who had to stall what they were doing to handle incoming parcels and collections. This was detrimental to productivity and took staff away from providing student support and other activities that contribute to a positive student experience. The situation was exacerbated by COVID-19 when students had to call before collecting so that numbers in the office could be kept low.

"Reducing contact during collections was our main motivation for change," says Rhys. "But improving the student experience and freeing up staff time were also priorities."



## The process: Demonstrating the benefits

Rhys was already familiar with parcel lockers, so when Quadient got in touch proposing an on-site solution, the team were receptive to the idea.

“We could see the benefits straightaway because Quadient parcel lockers are carrier-agnostic,” says Rhys. “All deliveries could be loaded into them and accessed at any time.”

A Quadient account manager stayed in touch with Rhys and the team on a weekly basis and spent time understanding parcel volumes at Staffordshire University, the impact on staff time and cost of managing deliveries manually, and the priorities of the University in deploying a more automated solution.

“The Quadient team was able to demonstrate clearly how the solution would meet our staff and student needs,” says Rhys. “Once we’d looked at how much time we were spending on parcel management, and the cost to the University of that time, the business case pretty much wrote itself.”

Installation went smoothly and, after being trained himself on how to use the system, Rhys was equipped to train the rest of the staff. “Working with Quadient was so straightforward,” adds Rhys. “Communication was great every step of the way and the team responded rapidly to our questions.”

## The solution: Quadient parcel lockers

Quadient parcel lockers provide secure storage for convenient parcel collection with reduced contact. The electronic locker system notifies students when they have a parcel; to collect, they enter the code or scan the barcode in their notification to open the relevant locker. The system supports 24/7 parcel pick-up for the convenience of recipients, and parcel tracking for staff.

In September 2020, two smart locker hubs were installed, one at each student accommodation location, comprising 112 locker box compartments of various sizes chosen to match the profiled sizes of parcels delivered to the University.

“Now, all the parcels go into the lockers,” says Rhys. “We know where everything is, staff don’t have to spend time filling out slips of paper and students don’t have to go to the office to collect their items. They can pick up direct from the lockers, 24/7, whenever it suits them.”



## The results: Students and staff react positively to the lockers

The parcel lockers have contributed to Staffordshire University's ongoing focus on student health and wellbeing and position as a leading digital university.

Levels of contact during parcel collections have been reduced to help keep staff and students safe. Fewer interruptions mean staff can concentrate on other activities for student wellbeing. Significant time has been saved by automating paper-based processes and delivery notifications.

"The lockers have cut time spent on parcel management dramatically," says Rhys. "Before, we were sorting things twice – when parcels came in and when they went out."

The lockers are fully accessible with a check box indicating when a parcel must be loaded into a low-level (comfort zone) locker for easy access. They have proven extremely simple to use with students and staff taking to the new system quickly and providing positive feedback. The data and reporting available to staff from the online portal provide an up-to-date and reliable picture of parcel management at the University to assist with facilities planning.

As the COVID-19 situation progressed during 2020, the University soon realised additional benefits of the lockers as the team worked to deliver excellent student support. "We used the lockers to hold emergency food packs," explains Rhys. "That way, if a student needed to self-isolate, we were ready and able to quickly access a pack and deliver it, contact-free, to their door. That worked too for a range of students' other needs, including medication and loans of equipment such as laptops."



We're really pleased we had Quadient parcel lockers installed. They are simple to use, have improved the student and staff experience, and help us turn parcels around quickly. It's been a great result.

**Rhys Stevens**

*Accommodation Officer (allocations and systems) at Staffordshire University*



## ABOUT PARCEL PENDING BY QUADIENT

Parcel Pending by Quadient is the market leader in parcel management and smart mail solutions for colleges and universities worldwide. With nearly 4 million packages delivered monthly, we have successfully helped thousands of educational institutions preserve their reputation and bottom line with our contact-free intelligent parcel locker solutions.

For more information about Parcel Pending by Quadient, visit: [parcelpending.com](https://www.parcelpending.com).