



Security-Data and Collaboration in Education





The single biggest challenge in higher education is the attraction and retention of the brightest students from home and abroad.

Together with Cisco, SCC can help organisations create a modern, reliable and secure IT infrastructure that enables delivery of advanced digital learning and enhances the overall student experience, both on campus and remotely.



Background

Students are demanding access to reliable and fast networking technology for research and leisure, as they get to grips with higher education on campus and at home. Universities are battling to attract the best young minds and can only do so by offering the best student experience, requiring an IT infrastructure to match.

Many student activities require high bandwidth networking technology, whilst critical and high-profile research projects require the same high bandwidth in order to secure funding. There is also a major shift towards flexible study and remote digital learning, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in significant disruption to the academic year and the necessity for widespread remote delivery to be stood up with little-to-no notice.

Not many universities were able to react quickly enough – and even fewer were able to effectively ensure security protocols remained robust enough to cope with the sudden change in circumstance. At a time when malicious cyber-attacks are more prevalent than ever, as

hackers look to take advantage of vulnerable organisations put at higher risk by the global pandemic, it is critical universities stay ahead as they reimagine how education is delivered under a 'new normal'.

Challenges

Remote working – Students and lecturers require more flexible work and study structures, including remote working and access to learning materials.

Collaboration – Students and lecturers want a better work/life balance through the use of digital learning delivered via video and web conferencing.

Data protection – Universities handle significant volumes of sensitive and personal information. They must ensure data is protected from malicious attack.

Cost savings – Like most organisations, universities are under pressure to reduce cost whilst improving services to students.

Pandemic response – Universities are facing the possibility of some campuses remaining closed following the Covid-19 pandemic, requiring continuity of education and on-going communication with employees and current and prospective students.

Clearing – Ensuring virtual call centres and services are in place to help staff and students navigate a new administration and clearing process.

Digital learning – Universities need the right partner and technology to allow them to deliver remote lectures and tutorials to their students which are inclusive and interactive.



Cisco DNA

SCC can help universities by deploying an end-to-end Cisco Digital Network Architecture (Cisco DNA). Cisco DNA architecture helps empower students and teachers to explore new forms of education with a network that is constantly learning, adapting and protecting. Cisco DNA Centre is an open intent-based network platform with 360-degree extensibility, unlocking the network's full potential.

Cisco DNA delivered by SCC will help you save time and reduce complexity through policy-based automation across your campuses. It enables advanced artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) to proactively monitor, troubleshoot, and optimise your network, real-time analytics to deliver personalised experiences to students, faculty, and visitors, and uses your campus network to identify threats, even in encrypted traffic, and rapidly contain them.

Intent-based network security includes providing continuous visibility into who and what is on the network, contributing to a complete zero-trust access security model and building threat prevention, detection, and response in, not on, the network fabric for constant protection.

Distance Learning

With SCC and Cisco's distance learning solutions, teaching, learning, and administrative decision-making don't have to take place in-person. Equipped with laptops, tablets, and mobile phones, students can tap into technology driven engagement outside of physical classrooms and campus spaces. Educators can collaborate seamlessly with fellow educators and administrators and can facilitate meaningful communications with and between students through remote access and distance learning.

Delivered by SCC, Cisco's distance learning solutions include cloud-based online classes and cross-functional collaboration in any location, while securing your connection through Cisco AnyConnect. Cisco Umbrella blocks threats as you scale cloud application use, and the Cisco Webex Education Connector integrates Cisco's cloud-based collaboration solutions with your learning management system.

An Intuitive Campus

Cisco DNA delivers faster innovation with actionable insights, lowers costs with network automation, and reduces risks with security everywhere, laying the foundation for digital transformation on your campus. Key to the success of an intuitive campus is the application that sits in the centre and brings all the different functions and datasets together.

Living – From getting to class on time, accessing learning resources, collaborating with other students, attending online seminars, to receiving useful notifications and providing security, anywhere on campus, at any time, students expect a seamless user experience on and off campus.

Education – Providing remote learning, enabling new ways of teaching, flipping lectures, virtualising field trips, collaborating internationally, and increasing teaching capacity are just some of the ways an intuitive campus can improve the delivery of education.

Campus Economy – Real-time information enables the efficient deployment of resources, whilst refining buildings and facilities management, boosting enrolment through reputation, growing research capabilities and saving money. All of this can be achieved on an intuitive campus.

SCC Security Lifecycle

SCC's Security Lifecycle helps universities to align their security strategy with risk management and business requirements. The lifecycle is based on our continuous review and adaptation of technology and processes, using a four-stage model: PREDICT, PREVENT, RESPOND, DETECT.

Our PREDICT stage is a consultative approach where we offer assessments to evaluate and understand your current security posture. We work closely with you to define, supply and implement the most appropriate solutions and services to ensure the consistency and effectiveness of your security strategy. At the PREVENT stage we provide security solutions that assure of customers' security across cloud environments and on-premise infrastructure.

The DETECT stage brings to customers the services that will address fundamental challenges around security operations and potential breaches. In the RESPOND stage, our services provide you a remediation plan for you to act upon with our support minimise the impact of a security breach that could be a cyber-attack. We provide the flexibility to align security services and solutions to the different levels of maturity that organisations have around their security strategy.

Our Security Lifecycle relies on a continuous improvement throughout these 4 stages, providing the flexibility for processes to react to new threats and also helping with an organisation's structural changes and overall business positioning. This lifecycle approach is powered by our people who are specialists in each area, with knowledge that bridges the operational, commercial and technical processes.



The Benefits

Academic freedom – With SCC and Cisco, universities can reach new audiences, locally and internationally. Students can dial into lectures from anywhere in the world, without the need to travel, reducing the cost of their overall university experience and integrate learning into their lives around jobs and family life.

Attraction and retention – Universities can attract and retain larger numbers of students by offering greater collaboration and flexible learning, enabling students to absorb course materials in a way that works for them.

Technology innovation – Fly up the university rankings the Teaching Excellence framework and Cyber Essentials Accreditation, helping to attract new students and additional funding.

Security – Keep the university and its staff and students protected as remote users connect to internal resources and collaborate via cloud applications.

Why SCC and Cisco?

SCC is a leading Cisco UK Gold partner with a long-standing partnership spanning two decades. With a dedicated Cisco technology specialist team with experience working with higher education customers, providing consultancy, design, implementation, post-sales, and on-going management services to meet our customers’ business and technology needs.

SCC’s dedicated audio-visual services business works closely with Cisco and other partners and has proven experience delivering for a number of the UK’s leading universities. SCC is part of several relevant education centre frameworks including JISC and EMSCU.

Contact the team today to find out how we can help.

