

Rethinking the Workplace: How a University Transformed with SharePoint

We worked with a major University, undertaking a number of change programmes. They decided it was time to leave their ageing systems behind. They needed a smart, scalable plan and a partner who could help them figure it out quickly.

The advantages, including ready-to-access collaborative tools within Office 365, increased scalability, flexibility, improved security, lower maintenance, and simplified intranet creation, were key motivators for the transition.



SharePoint/University

Moving an entire university's data estate to the cloud is no small feat. Especially when you're dealing with millions of files, tight academic deadlines, and departments that all operate a little differently.

The University knew it wouldn't be possible to implement across all departments at once and so they engaged Quorum to build a Proof of Concept for the migration.

Together we chose a practical route: start small with only two departments, learn fast, and build a model that could be reused across the organisation.

This model would act as a template, learning, and cost guide for subsequent departmental migrations for the University's ~30 departments.

This approach saved time, reduced stress on their internal teams, and created a repeatable model for future success.



The benefits of using Quorum for this transformation included:

1**Cost-Efficient Delivery****2****Uninterrupted Operations****3****Scalable Change Management****4****Trusted Expert Delivery and Support**

The Project

The University's on-premises SharePoint 2016 environment was approaching end-of-life, with support due to end in 2026. Migrating to SharePoint Online was essential not only to maintain support and security, but also to unlock the benefits of cloud-based collaboration, scalability, and integration with Microsoft 365.

However, the scale and complexity of the migration posed significant challenges. The University's departments held millions of files and tens of thousands of folders, each with unique metadata, permissions, and usage patterns. A successful migration would require retaining this structure and value, while enabling a more modern, self-service model for site management.

- The average department in the pilot phase had over 3.5 million files and 65,000 folders - far too much for traditional analysis tools like Excel.
- The project needed to be delivered within a 12-week window to avoid key academic calendar clashes like exams and change freezes.
- It wasn't just about moving files. Valuable permissions and metadata had to be retained, enhanced, and made useful in the new SharePoint environment.
- The work had to be done without placing undue strain on the university's internal IT teams, many of whom were juggling day jobs alongside their involvement in the project.

Key elements of our approach included: Discovery and Planning, Design and Configuration, Migration and Governance, and, finally, Knowledge Transfer.

Committed Partners

In collaboration with Quorum, the university faced their project challenges head-on. We collaborated closely throughout the project, balancing the needs of IT staff and minimising disruptions. The core Quorum team working on the project comprised:



SharePoint Engineer



Project Manager



Senior Architect

Outcomes

The Proof of Concept was a success, it not only met all technical and functional objectives, but also built strong confidence across the University in the viability of a full-scale migration.

The project demonstrated that SharePoint Online could meet the University's needs while delivering tangible benefits:

Preserved value: All metadata and permissions were retained, ensuring continuity and compliance.

Improved usability: Departments gained modern collaboration tools and the ability to manage their own sites.

Reduced IT burden: The solution enabled self-service governance, reducing reliance on central IT.

Scalable model: The PoC now serves as a template for a full university-wide rollout.

This engagement exemplifies how thoughtful planning, technical rigour, and close collaboration can deliver meaningful digital transformation in the higher education sector.