

Chartwells and University of Sussex unveil UK first contactless store

8 months ago



In partnership with the University of Sussex, [Chartwells](#) have launched the UK's first contactless store based at a university, demonstrating a continued commitment to driving innovation and enhancing the student experience. Called the Atrium Market and powered by Amazon's Just Walk Out technology, the store is located in the Student Centre, giving students access to food and drink 24/7 while they study around the clock.

Atrium Market enables students to purchase a range of convenient and nutritious food, including sushi, sandwiches, and coffee from local Brighton brand Redroaster. To shop the store, students simply use their credit card or mobile wallet to enter.

Once inside, Just Walk Out technology detects what shoppers take from or return to the shelves and creates a virtual shopping session. After they have finished shopping, students can leave the store without having to wait in line, and their choice of payment method will be charged for the items they take.

The store has been met with an overwhelmingly positive reception, averaging £3,000 in sales every week, with coffee as the biggest seller amongst students. Atrium Market is particularly successful out of hours, with more than 50% of sales taking place from 6pm-10am and its busiest hour of the day from 12am-1am, helping fuel students' late-night learning in the Student Centre and the campus library.

Atrium Market is the latest in a series of innovations at the University of Sussex. In March, the University's ACCA café became the first campus eatery to introduce carbon labelling, with plans to extend the initiative across all on-campus venues run by Chartwells Universities in the new academic year.

Additionally, the main dining hub - Eat Central - is currently undergoing renovations to become a flexible,

eco-friendly space for both daytime and evening activities, with a refurbishment including recycled worktops and upholstery, waste separation bins, and a bio processor to convert food waste into fertiliser.

Helen Power-Hosking, Head of Commercial Services at the University of Sussex, said: “We are really proud to be introducing the first frictionless store of its kind in a university here at Sussex.

“Since we launched our new contract last summer, our catering partner, Chartwells Universities, has been working hard to deliver what our campus community wants. One of the things that we heard in our 2022 consultation was that students wanted longer opening hours, so we hope that this new store is a quick, easy and convenient option for anyone working late in the Student Centre or in our residences.”

Mark Lawrence, Contract Director at Chartwells Universities, said: “It’s fantastic to bring this technology to the University of Sussex. We are always seeking to innovate and improve the student experience across campus, and we are confident this latest opening provides flexibility and choice for students. We’re delighted to hear that it’s already had such a positive impact on their university experience.

“We work closely with the University to implement student feedback by introducing modern food concepts, including Atrium Market, Eat Central and the campus’ fully vegetarian café, The Veg Bowl @ Dhaba. Students can also use our Uni Food Hub app to click and collect food, purchase meals from their table to avoid queuing, order food straight to their halls of residence, and more.

“This is just the latest in a series of on-campus innovations, as we continue in our mission to deliver our food offerings with care across our universities, in ways that make sense to students.”

Jon Jenkins, Vice President of Just Walk Out technology, Amazon, said: “We’re excited to open our first store at a UK university powered by Just Walk Out technology, building on the technology’s incredible momentum this year. In 2024, we will triple the number of Just Walk Out technology stores in the UK, and we look forward to bringing our effortless shopping experience to universities, hospitals, stadiums, and more across the country.