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## Business expertise: University of Bradford

‘Professionally and commercially, Sodexo offers added value,’ says Chris Spargo, head of commercial services, University of Bradford.

The University of Bradford has 12,000 students and 2,500 staff spread across 23 buildings and three campuses. Sodexo provides catering across all the campuses and in addition soft facilities management services at its world leading business school.

‘Sodexo has certainly improved the quality of delivery, the professionalism and the financial position as well,’ enthuses Chris. ‘Sodexo’s expertise in catering for the education sector meant that the University’s food outlets went from being subsidised to being profitable entities.’

‘We have definitely benefitted from their expertise in direct service delivery. They’re very responsive and flexible in terms of service changes. They’re also innovative in coming up with solutions to problems and in capitalising on new opportunities. Sodexo can also bring in expertise from all areas of their business, and that central support system adds value. This encompasses everything from marketing and promotions to new operational systems, to bringing in successful initiatives that have been developed in other parts of the business - both internationally and nationally.’

‘One example is when a Colombian chef came over and produced a Colombian menu throughout the day. It went down brilliantly. They’re also very good at managing all the details of new ventures, like the new shop development we’re proposing. Sodexo have provided a design, utilised high quality professional shop fitters, and supported the development of a new brand and product range. It’s a really positive experience.’

‘Their strong sustainability principles are also aligned with our own. At the University, there is a thorough awareness and understanding of our environmental and social issues and responsibilities, and this is evident in the approach to direct service delivery. The University’s concept and principles of ‘Ecoversity’ have been fully adopted by the contract operation – and, more importantly, there has been a thoroughly proactive approach to add value to the University, with the exploration and implementation of a range of initiatives.’

‘These range from introducing reusable coffee cups and composting food waste, to making disposables recyclable or biodegradable, or replacing them with crockery and cutlery. They’ve also started making sandwiches on site (which saves 37,000 food miles), converted waste cooking oil into biodiesel, and reduced their gas and electricity use by 18 per cent - the list goes on! These ideas sound simple but they’re quite an undertaking, and for us, strategically very important.’

‘The key for me, managing the contract, is flexibility. We’re forever changing the University environment, and being innovative is key. They’re responsive to change and, from a customer service perspective, that’s absolutely essential. The Sodexo team’s skill is in always doing their best to ensure they are managing the contract effectively to get the best value and constantly improve things.’

### Sodexo services

- Catering
- Housekeeping
- Reception
- Bar
- Facilities co-ordination
- Hospitality – including a sustainable conference menu