



Edge Hill University

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Edge Hill University is a modern, high performing institution based in the Northwest of England, widely recognised for its award winning campus and commitment to delivering an outstanding student experience. The University provides a diverse portfolio of teaching, learning and residential environments, set within a 160 acre estate comprising over 120,000m² of built space and approximately 2,500 residential bedrooms. Facilities span contemporary academic buildings, specialist learning environments, social spaces and extensive accommodation, supported by an operational model that blends teaching excellence with strong, student centred campus services.

The University employs more than 320 facilities management staff across 13 service areas, supporting almost 12,000 FTE students and 2,000 FTE staff, as well as visitors, partners and the wider community. Its facilities portfolio includes a mixture of new developments, including buildings completed as recently as 2024, alongside older assets with varied condition profiles, each contributing to a diverse estate landscape and a wide range of operational requirements. The FM Directorate plays a critical role in ensuring the campus remains safe, sustainable, efficient and welcoming, delivering services that directly support the attraction, recruitment and retention of students.

The University continues to invest significantly in enhancing the estate, improving resilience and creating environments that nurture wellbeing, inclusivity and high quality learning. Its FM vision is “to be recognised as contributing to an outstanding campus experience that drives the attraction, recruitment and retention of our students and wider Edge Hill Community,” underpinned by values of creativity, excellence, responsibility, integrity, adaptability and collaboration. These values are evident in the University’s commitment to modern approaches to service design, sustainability and continuous improvement across FM operations.

Background

The University identified a strategic need to review the sourcing, structure and delivery of Site Services, including cleaning and portering, to ensure the operating model remained aligned with sector expectations, regulatory requirements and evolving patterns of campus use. With services predominantly delivered in house and frontline teams deeply committed to student wellbeing, there was a desire to understand resilience, resource alignment, productivity and value within the current arrangements. The University also wished to gain a clearer understanding of cost drivers, service quality and future requirements across a geographically dispersed and operationally varied estate.

A significant motivator for the review was the recognition that operational pressures, legacy processes and varied working patterns had created complexity that was increasingly challenging to manage. Alongside this, the University was mindful of forthcoming organisational changes, talent gaps within management roles, and the need for enhanced governance and service consistency. Taken together, these factors created an opportunity to undertake a detailed assessment of current service delivery and explore how structure, capability and capacity could be strengthened for the future.

Brief

Litmus FM was appointed following a competitive procurement process to carry out a technical review of Site Services, with a remit covering cleaning and portering. The review was to evaluate the entire service, including, but not limited to, management structures, processes and procedures, job descriptions, value for money, compliance, and the University’s alignment with sector norms. The project required a comprehensive assessment of resilience, productivity, service design, and the clarity and completeness of operational arrangements.

Specifically, Litmus FM was asked to deliver:

- A thorough review of operational efficiency, including task allocation, supervision, working patterns and quality standards.
- An assessment of compliance, supported by a structured gap analysis and RAG framework.
- Evaluation of human resources factors including structure, resourcing, training, induction and absence management.
- A financial and value for money assessment, testing the efficiency and sustainability of the current model.
- A full Target Operating Model (TOM) with tactical and strategic recommendations.

Approach

Litmus FM worked closely with the University's FM leadership, embedding the consultancy team within the campus environment to engage with key stakeholders, frontline staff and management. Workstreams included mobilisation, data gathering, multiple site visits, in person and virtual meetings, and examination of a substantial volume of operational documentation.

The review applied recognised industry standards including BICSc, TOCS, RICS and BCIS, alongside Litmus FM's benchmarking database. The analysis explored cleaning productivity, resource deployment, management controls, service resilience and estate-specific demands across a varied portfolio. On site assessments provided objective insights into current service performance, identifying strengths, constraints and opportunities for enhancement. Productivity, cleanliness quality, staff deployment patterns and equipment utilisation were all assessed from both a tactical and strategic perspective.

This comprehensive diagnostic process enabled the development of a detailed baseline, highlighting where services were performing strongly, where inefficiencies existed, and where structural changes could deliver improved performance, clearer accountability and greater resilience across the estate.

Outcomes

All findings were consolidated into a detailed report, providing the University with:

- A clear understanding of where services were meeting expectations and where improvements were required, enabling the FM leadership to focus on the highest impact areas.
- An evidence based view of how Edge Hill's in house model compared to sector norms and peer institutions, supporting informed decision making.
- A structured framework for progressing a change programme, contrasting current delivery with redesigned TOM options aligned to the University's needs and long term objectives.
- Tactical and strategic recommendations that offered immediate improvements in governance and efficiency, as well as longer term pathways to modernise Site Services in line with best practice.
- A 500-hour weekly reduction in labour hours.
- A significant increase in the quality of services.

●●● *"The insight Litmus FM provided has been invaluable. Their review gave us absolute clarity on where our services were performing strongly and where we could strengthen resilience, consistency and value. What stood out most was their ability to understand our people, our culture and the unique expectations of our campus. The recommendations they delivered were practical, evidence based and immediately actionable, exactly what we needed to support the continued development of an outstanding student experience."* ●●●

Adrian McGillion, Director of Facilities Management, Edge Hill University



For more information about the services that LitmusFM provide, please get in touch:

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