



## 📄 CASE STUDY

# An enhanced self-service solution for Imperial College London

In September 2019, Advanova responded to a tender for an upgrade to the existing self-service machines at the Imperial College London libraries.

Founded in 1907, Imperial College London is a public research university in London, renowned for its four main disciplines of science, engineering, medicine, and business, and attracts undergraduates from more than 125 countries.

With seven sites throughout central London and one in Berkshire, each campus has an associated library to provide resource for the college's 17,000 students. In autumn 2019, the college wanted to upgrade their existing self-service equipment to allow easier issue and return and provide a more intuitive customer experience.

Kevin Sontag, Advanova Account Manager comments, "We were delighted to win the tender in December 2019, and our proposed solution was to install V5 self-service kiosks and RFID book security across all eight sites."

The installation work was initially planned to begin in early 2020, however, the lockdowns caused by the Covid-19 pandemic meant that the project start date was deferred to the summer.

The V5 kiosk is usually operated via a touchscreen system, but as a result of increased hygiene awareness due to the pandemic, we developed and launched a Kiosk User Interface that required no screen interaction. The student simply presents their card to the machine reader, puts their books on the counter and the RFID reader checks them out. More books can be added to the pile if required, and when they are lifted from the counter the kiosk acknowledges the end of the session by producing a receipt.

James Garry, Systems Manager at the college said, "The touchless self-service kiosks have helped enable the libraries to open safely by restricting the amount of contact the students have with the machines. Our staff and users of the library feel better protected from potential Covid-19 transmission as a result.

Having the ability to adapt our products to best meet the needs of the project is one of the things that we know our customers appreciate about working with us. The eight library sites vary in size, so we were able to reduce the normal size of the kiosk shelf in order to accommodate the kiosks in each setting."



So that items can be more easily returned, the library staff were provided with RFID pads for their desks, that work by reading the RFID tags of books placed on to them and automatically updating the student's account. In addition, we installed an RFID letterbox-style returns chute, that discharges the item from the user's account when a book is posted through, saving the library staff 'double returning' the book, and streamlining the process.

Due to the disruption caused by Covid-19, the college needed to amend their rollout plan for the libraries. Initially James and his team had planned to carry out the installation at all sites at the same time, but due to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic we suggested that the college took a different approach.



With other companies you can sometimes feel as though the work is being carried out on their terms, but with Advanova they were always really helpful and on site if you needed them. It was a pleasure working with them on this project and we will continue to enjoy the wonderful service they provide on future projects!

James Garry, Systems Manager, Imperial College London

"Advanova proposed a staggered rollout," explains James, "starting with the smaller sites and building up to the central library in South Kensington, where three kiosks were being installed."

Once the rollout plan had been agreed, we worked with the team at the college to prepare the sites for installation. "We met with all the stakeholders within the library who had a part to play in the refurbishment," explains Kevin, "including the contractors for the college, and ICT, to perform our site surveys and ensure that all sites were modified to meet our requirements."

James comments, "Logistically it was a challenge, as Covid-19 affected delivery dates, but Advanova were really good. They were very flexible in working throughout the pandemic and helped us install the new equipment as soon as it was humanly possible, given all the obstacles."

The project was completed over the summer of 2020 across all sites. Now the new system is in place, James comments on working with us, "Everyone was working under really difficult circumstances. It was a big logistical effort for us and for Advanova, but their communication was excellent throughout and they were always available."

**To talk to us about the solutions we would recommend for your specific requirements, please get in touch by calling +44 (0)1582 769991 or emailing [sales@advanova.co.uk](mailto:sales@advanova.co.uk)**