

Case Study



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER



CASE STUDY



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Salford
MANCHESTER

Solutions

3 modules

Industry

Education

Size

26,000 students

Location

Greater Manchester
United Kingdom



The University of Salford strengthens risk management with HSI Donesafe

Overview

The University of Salford is a public research university located in Greater Manchester, UK. It serves over 26,000 students, including around 7,500 international students, and is recognised for its strong links with industry and practical focus across disciplines such as engineering, media, business, and health sciences.

The University's Digital IT Division, with over 140 staff, plays a vital role in maintaining critical platforms across the university.

Aware that spreadsheets and manual processes were no longer sufficient for managing information security and risk, the team sought a more integrated solution.

Challenge

Improving risk management with the right system.

Traditionally, the University had used Excel spreadsheets to record and manage risks, which had become increasingly limiting as their needs evolved.

“We were working with Excel spreadsheets. We couldn't implement the data structures we needed, so people struggled with it and the process just lost momentum.”

— **John Green, Transformation Lead,
The University of Salford.**

The limitations of Excel made it challenging for the team to implement the necessary data structures resulting in additional time and resources being spent. These challenges highlighted the need for a unified, more capable solution - one that could provide essential risk management functionality but also grow with business needs as they evolved.

Achieving the right balance was key.

As John explains, “*We were looking for something that didn't overwhelm us to begin with - something which did the basics well and could scale going forward.*”

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The Solution

Finding a fit-for-purpose platform.

Following an external audit that identified opportunities for improvement, the University decided to strengthen its risk management framework with a unified system.

After reviewing over 10 systems, HSI Donesafe stood out as the best fit. Other platforms were often too basic, overly complex, or lacked the necessary maturity and reliability. HSI Donesafe struck the right balance of risk management functionality, configurability, quality, and affordability.

"We were looking for a solution that we could configure, but didn't want one that was so customisable that we would paint ourselves into a corner. We wanted something with just the right level of configurability... HSI Donesafe lent itself readily to the demands of risk management functionality and data structures," John tells us.

Importantly, the decision to implement HSI Donesafe wasn't technology-led. The team first defined their ideal risk management process, then looked for a tool that could bring it to life. While they initially considered basic tools, it soon became clear that a dedicated solution would accelerate progress and provide a more sustainable foundation.

"When we started the project, we didn't really have it in mind that we would buy an enabler like HSI Donesafe. We wondered if we could get by with just basic tools, but it soon became clear that something at the right price would accelerate the journey for us substantially."

The University needed a platform that was easy to implement, scalable, and cost-effective. Many options were deemed either too advanced to be practical, too limited in capability, or raised concerns about quality and reliability. HSI Donesafe in contrast, offered the right mix of functionality, flexibility, and value, making it the clear choice.

"Our aim was to turn a risk framework into a real, working management system - something process-driven, structured, and supported by a reliable platform."

— John Green, Transformation Lead
The University of Salford

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Implementation

Co-creating a tailored solution.

Implementation went smoothly, and the University went live in January 2025, more than two months ahead of schedule, adopting two standard modules and a custom multi-module solution:

- **Corrective Actions**
- **Controls Register**
- **Risk Management**

The implementation was guided by a collaborative, hands-on approach. The University worked closely with HSI Donesafe's implementation lead to co-develop the system, ensuring it was tailored to their specific needs. Throughout the process, the University team felt well-supported, with clear guidance, demonstrations, and expert input that enabled them to configure the system effectively and with confidence. As John explains:

"Chris, who led our implementation from HSI Donesafe, was very accommodating. He gave very clear explanations. He gave us demonstrations of how he might do something and from that we were able to implement to our requirements."

Notably, the implementation was completed much faster than anticipated - delivered two months ahead of schedule, even during a period when many staff were unavailable over the festive break. **This success was due to the strong partnership established early on, with both teams aligning on requirements, training, and best practices from the outset.** By building a solid foundation and making full use of the platform's flexibility, the University was able to accelerate progress and achieve a smooth rollout well ahead of expectations.

**"It wasn't train, train, train then implement.
We learnt by doing.
It went very well; we had a sounding board, an
instructor, an advisor and it worked perfectly for us."**

— John Green, Transformation Lead
The University of Salford

Today, the University of Salford uses HSI Donesafe to proactively manage organisational and operational risks within its IT Division. A centralised risk library, digital risk assessments linked to controls, and a consolidated dashboard of risk metrics enable the team to monitor, track, and mitigate issues efficiently.

Results

Structure, clarity, and restored momentum.

The University of Salford now has a risk management system that aligns with their process, delivers real structure, to help ensure that nothing slips through the cracks.

*"It is saving time. **By spending less time on administration, we are freeing up more time for productive risk management.** And there's far more value being yielded from that"*

— John Green, Transformation Lead
The University of Salford

HSI Donesafe has supported the team to formalise a full risk lifecycle - from identifying candidates to triaging, reviewing, and where appropriate retiring risks. Notifications and overdue tracking ensure timely action, while the structured process ensures alignment across teams. The system also frees them from admin and allows them to focus their energy on proactively managing risk.

Though early in its journey, University of Salford's implementation has already proven its value, and it's also showing its potential. The system has been designed around a defined process and provides a strong foundation for future expansion.

For the University, **HSI Donesafe has become an enabler.** It has transformed a static framework into a dynamic, living process that empowers people, reduces risk, and delivers real insight.

"It worked for me. It worked for us. We've found our sweet spot. The implementation was lean, effective, and suited the way we work. HSI Donesafe has turned our risk process into something we can trust and scale."

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