



London School of Economics (LSE): Estate Modernisation

Founded in 1895, LSE caters to c.11,000 students and is consistently ranked among the best universities in the world. With 40 buildings positioned across Westminster, a quarter of which are listed, LSE has an ongoing challenge to maintain and expand its facilities in order to continue its provision of a world-leading student experience.

The solution

Utilising its experience in the education and historic building sectors, Building Solutions (the specialist building and refurbishment arm of VINCI Facilities) secured a £10m four-year contract to deliver the maintenance and expansion plans for LSE's estate. Now complete, the following elements proved crucial to the successful delivery of the diverse works:

Challenging the brief

Building Solutions actively challenged the client's brief and suggested more suitable alternatives when appropriate. For example, when LSE's St Clement's building was due to feature a steel balustrade and handrail, Building Solutions identified that the associated welding presented an unnecessary fire risk, and therefore the firm sourced a cost-neutral glazed alternative that not only removed the need for welding, but also removed the need for ongoing repainting.

Being a considerate contractor

Keen to not add further congestion to the busy streets, Building Solutions introduced a policy of its team travelling to the majority of works by foot and public transport, with a single central vehicle being utilised if needed.

Flexibility

Thanks to a core team of five staff and ten direct trades permanently positioned on site, Building Solutions was able to rapidly respond to any situation.

For example, when a faulty seal in a surface-level roof caused a basement IT room to flood with four inches of rain water, Building Solutions' team were at the scene within minutes of receiving the call. The team stemmed the leak, preventing further damage, and conducted a full recovery process and refurbishment.

Strong supply chain management

Building Solutions' supply chain of approved sub-contractors and those specified by the client (such as specialist fire and security firms) worked so efficiently together that LSE has subsequently added several of Building Solutions' approved sub-contractors to its own network of preferred suppliers.

Going above and beyond

Noticing that LSE's in-house children's nursery was looking tired and outdated, ten of Building Solutions' staff volunteered their time to conduct a two-day refurbishment, transforming it into a vibrant and modern facility.

SCOPE OF WORKS

- » Planned maintenance and refurbishment works (internal and external) up to £100k.
- » Design and build or traditional construction works from £100k-£2m, run via mini-competition.

EXAMPLE PROJECT

A £2m project at LSE's St Clement's building saw Building Solutions create a new seven-storey stair core while the building remained occupied. Works included:

- » The cutting of staircase openings at each floor.
- » Provision of additional toilets.
- » Major internal alterations.
- » Remodelling the entrance.
- » Installation of a new architectural steel staircase and structural retaining steelwork.
- » Installing high-level windows.

KEY RESULTS

- » 1,150+ projects completed across campus.
- » Zero reportable accidents – no small feat, as 70% of the buildings remained occupied during the works.
- » £6.5m+ invested in the local supply chain.
- » A customer satisfaction survey saw Building Solutions score highly across the board, including in the areas of Professionalism, Passion, Health and Safety, Collaboration and Dependability.



BUILDING SOLUTIONS



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