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How Electronic Document Management Saves Time and Money at Totton College

Key Benefits:

- Saved entire day's worth of work during enrolment process for the admissions team, meaning all 100+ interviewers were able to begin teaching their courses earlier

- Hundreds of hours saved photocopying and filing

- Staff at all sites able to immediately access student information

- Fast and robust compliance with audit requirements

- Security maintained around confidential documents

- Document life-cycle carefully controlled

"We've saved hundreds of hours of photocopying and filing as well as eliminating a whole day from the start of year enrolment process."

Alex Richards, director for customer service, Totton College

TOTTON COLLEGE

When Totton College wanted to replace their electronic document management system (EDM), they worked with Capita to find an integrated solution that would speed up their business processes and save both time and money.

Alex Richards, director for customer service at Totton College, has had many years experience using EDM solutions so was quick to recognise when the college had outgrown their previous system. *"Totton College is one of the most diverse Sixth Form Colleges in the country offering traditional 16-19 provision alongside an extensive post 19 programme, including apprenticeships and work-based learning. We provide more than 700 courses to over 5000 learners and we want to provide exceptional quality of service to all of them. EDM can help us to do that by providing a link between core student tracking and back office systems such as finance, but the system we were using wasn't specifically designed for education and it was starting to show."*

Fast, Functional, Flexible

The college replaced their old system in October 2010 as it lacked the required flexibility. Alex explains, *"EDM is about streamlining management processes so, for us, flexibility was a key requirement in a new system. Education is a fast-moving sector and we are sometimes given final notification that we've been awarded the contract for a new project just days before delivery needs to start. To respond quickly, we don't have the time to call on external software specialists so our internal teams need to be able to adapt the existing systems in short order."*

Switching over to the new system was easier than expected, says Alex. *"We carried out the implementation ourselves and were pleasantly surprised by how straightforward it was, particularly as we had to transfer 54,000 historical documents previously scanned into the old system. The transfer took just two days so, over a single weekend, we swapped everything across without any interruption in service. The end-user interface remained consistent throughout, which saved the need for retraining – another big bonus."*

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Saving Time During Enrolment and Admissions

One department that heavily uses EDM is the central admissions team, and the time saving benefits were immediately clear. *"During the application and enrolment period, staff saved hundreds of hours that they would otherwise spend photocopying and manually sorting student application documents for distribution to each member of staff. We can have as many as 100 staff involved in the interviewing process and EDM gives us the freedom to reallocate interviews in just a few seconds if need be, knowing that access to the stored documents is not an issue. It saves someone spending ages shuffling paper to find copies of all the relevant documents."*

References, application forms and exam history records are all scanned in and yet, says Alex, EDM isn't just about scanning paper. *"We're already storing copies of electronic UCAS application forms, Word documents and web pages on the system – after all, so many things come to us electronically these days in the first place. When physical storage space is at a premium, it's a relief to be able to reduce our archive filing."*

Safe and Secure Access

Easy access to vital documents whenever or wherever staff need them is a key advantage to using the EDM tool set. *"We're a multi-site operation so our staff aren't always in a position to simply walk upstairs and look in the central filing cabinets for paperwork. Providing rapid access is vital; if we need to re-timetable something at short notice, and teacher A is unavailable, teacher B can see the records and be up-to-date straightaway. Conversely, we have the reassurance that only those who need to see student information can see it. Documents are much less likely to be accidentally left out of a file or carelessly destroyed. The system lets you have significant central control around who can see what."*

In addition, EDM can help improve management processes, such as audit compliance. *"Statutory agencies ask to see learning agreement forms signed by a student for funding so we pre-print them using a barcode which means the completed forms are automatically scanned and indexed on return. This saves a lot of time and means that we always know exactly which documents have been issued and which have been returned."*

Development Partners

As an existing UNIT-e customer, Totton College were keen to work with Capita to produce a solution that would answer their individual requirements and offer seamless integration with the UNIT-e system. *"The Capita team was very responsive with regards to our suggestions on how it should work. They listened to what we said and really understood what we actually wanted."*

Alex is now planning how the system can be further developed in the future, *"Later in the year we will be looking to add more functionality, such as allowing teachers to upload documents, either directly from Microsoft Word or via their web browser, into a student's document library. That way, any individual letters home or supplementary documentation will automatically form part of that learner's central file. As part of UNIT-e, we can attach electronic documents to any type of record and the seamless link between them helps us offer a smooth, streamlined process which benefits both the college and our students. We pride ourselves on treating every student as an individual and the capabilities of EDM are helping us fulfil that objective."*

For further information, call your Capita account manager on

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