

## CASE STUDY

# SERVICE MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME EMPOWERS A NEW EDUCATION ERA AT UK UNIVERSITY

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Head of Information Systems

## BACKGROUND

**One of the largest academic institutions in the UK – with a student population of 25,000 and employing 3,400 staff – this university is transforming its learning and education environment in a mission to deliver education and research that shapes lives and society in the 21st century.**

Alongside a major restructure to invigorate the day-to-day management of the university and ensure continued efficiency and competitiveness, the university is striving to become a leader in the application of technology to education and learning. A major £130 million investment programme is underway to provide state-of-the-art learning facilities across three city-centre campuses and enable the institution's e-strategy vision – to inspire students, staff and other customers in the way the latest technology is used and how IT services are delivered.

For the university to achieve this key strategic goal, it is imperative that the delivery and support of the institution's IT services are underpinned by Best Practice processes that are measurable, repeatable, well-documented, auditable, and are of a recognised quality approach.

### ***The challenge***

The IT organisation is pivotal to the university achieving its administrative and academic objectives. Having enshrined Gold Standard Customer Service as a central mission goal, the university is now forging ahead with the automation of its administration and business processes. In parallel, state-of-the-art e-learning and virtual learning communities are transforming learning and teaching across the entire academic landscape – including the university's world-renowned research centres.

For the Head of Information Services, adopting best practice from the public and private sector is central to ensuring the university's IS organisation is 'fit-to-deliver' against the needs of all customers – students and staff, administration and professional services teams, industry partners, and specialist research centres.

With an eye to attaining the ISO/IEC20000 quality management standard, Head of IS took the decision to initiate a continuous Service Management Improvement programme. The aim would be to develop Service Management practices used throughout the department with the introduction of best practice based on ITIL<sup>®</sup> version 3 guidelines.

Implementing a Service Management culture would represent a major step change for the organisation – moving it from one that provides technology, to one that provides services using technology.

To support the IS organisation through this cultural transformation, and undertake the end-to-end implementation of 10 ITIL processes and a Service Desk function, the IS director turned to ITIL specialists Pink Elephant.

### **The solution**

To enable the IT organisation to get where it wanted to be, the first task was to assess how effectively and efficiently the IT organisation delivers and supports IT services currently. Using PinkSCAN to assess the existing processes against industry Best Practice, Pink Elephant was able to measure the maturity of the university's IT organisation and prepare a staged plan, complete with 'quick wins', to move it towards its ultimate goal – achieving ISO/IEC20000 accreditation. This would mean all ITIL processes would have to achieve at least level 3 in the Capability Maturity Model in a tight timeframe.

Before the ITIL implementation work stages could begin however, it was crucial that all personnel within the IS teams were immersed in ITIL, setting the scene for the forthcoming ITIL implementation project.

Pink Elephant recommended an initial intensive education programme that would both ground people in the principles underpinning ITIL and prepare them for active participation once the project kicked-off in earnest. Winning hearts and minds would be crucial to embedding a cultural change in attitudes and working practices that would characterise the new IS organisation in its role as a service provider.

Designed to provide a broad view of IT Service Management and ITIL concepts in a friendly and interactive environment, Pink Elephant's experiential 'PoleStar' ITIL V3 simulation workshops would give the university's IS staff a powerful introduction to the approaches and concepts contained within ITIL.

Participants attending the one-day on-site events would take part in a high-impact role play simulation game. Facilitated in the fast moving world of global on-line retailing, they would be pitted against teams of colleagues, delivering services against ever-changing business demands. Individual actions and decisions would have a real and visible impact on fast-changing dynamic business situations which participants would manage through an ITIL framework. At the start of the simulation game, the 'players' experience how working in silos, lack of communication and chaos, can all hamper effective and efficient service delivery.

As part of their preparations for each new game session, teams would work together to evaluate past performance, plan process improvements and discern the importance of process interrelationships. As the game progressed, teams would discover how implementing best practice Service Management processes can positively affect both above and below the line activities.

In parallel to the simulation workshops, Pink Elephant delivered a communications programme to keep staff informed of the ITIL project and the benefits these would deliver. This would further enforce the readiness of staff for the change.

### **The outcomes**

The workshops and communications programme prepared the way for a new way of thinking in relation to service delivery, embedding a service culture that would be the bedrock of a successful transition to a true Gold Standard Customer Service approach to working. What's more, the workshop programme provided an ideal opportunity to bring together teams from all three campus sites, creating valuable relationships and breaking-down historic silo working practices that had previously been prevalent.

"The education programme was a key first step," confirms the Head of IS. "The simulation game gave everyone a practical but fun experience of ITIL, and a real opportunity to see for themselves the benefits of improving and maturing processes."

The organisational structure of the IS department has now been examined, process owners identified and a road map for the creation of the new IT Service Support and Delivery model defined. To support the fast-tracking of ITIL within the IS organisation, Pink Elephant ITIL experts are working alongside process owners, providing guidance and documentation expertise as process owners develop and implement processes and toolsets.

End-to-end implementation of 10 ITIL core processes plus the Service Desk is expected to be completed in a rapid 15-months timeframe, delivering the benefits of reduced costs, enhanced customer satisfaction, and improved performance that spans the entire IS organisation.

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