Vision: The 4th campus - Online

West Herts College

West Herts College is a large Further Education College operated across three campuses in Hertfordshire. The College educates over 12,000 students aged 16+, offering a wide range of vocational and non-vocational courses.

In today's market, expectations of FE colleges are much higher, with lack of funding there is increased pressure on the way in which colleges are delivering teaching and learning.

It was identified that in order to remain financially robust in the future they needed to invest, develop and grow the college and start thinking and operating differently.

Overview

• To create a 4th campus - online
• 96% students on short qualifications succeeded
• 93% of students taking degree studies achieved their qualifications

2015
Year Implemented itslearning

“itslearning demonstrated a deep understanding of what we wanted to achieve. The innovative Learning Platform can be put to work straightaway, creating learning experiences for our students which are motivating as well as informative.”

Cath Gunn
Deputy Principal, West Herts College

Hertfordshire
3 Campuses

12,000 Students

Over 2 years
£700k Savings
Implementation
West Herts College was guided through a thorough implementation planning process to identify their goals and priorities, design a training model and set out the project’s time-line.

itslearning fast-tracked the launch to staff by taking on the initial setting up of courses and creation of user accounts.

In the first year of implementation the college wanted to ease staff into the new Learning Platform. They invested in training and time to create new courses in itslearning, before moving across from Moodle, the former provider. Rather than migrating existing documents, the leadership team were keen for tutors to review their material and took advantage of the tools within itslearning to introduce interactive and multimedia experiences.

Teaching and learning leaders received a programme of training sessions on a ‘train the trainer’ model, to lead their faculties and develop staff use of a more blended approach to teaching and learning. On-going, ad-hoc, on-line consultancies have also been provided to grow the knowledge of the college’s in-house training coordinator.

The use of assignments and self-marking tests in itslearning has meant that the college has been able to achieve their Year 1 goals of having all assessments ready to be accessed and marked online in the current academic year.

Year 2 of the implementation project has seen the college grow their offering to over 400 courses in itslearning, including their innovative Modern Britain life skills course, which all students in the college complete. The former Learning Platform Moodle was switched off by the second year.

The Technical Support team continues to work in partnership with the college’s IT team to develop the integration of third party solutions into itslearning.

An Online Campus
West Herts College’s vision: To create a 4th campus online, utilise skills of tutors, support personalised pedagogy, maintain their outstanding tutor-student relationship and deliver differentiated learning.

Their vision was to be in a position where they could start to develop their own courses and qualifications as this would enable them to enter new markets. They needed to become flexible, enabling their students to access courses from anywhere without the need to attend campus, the flexibility would allow them to become more attractive to students, especially to adult learners.

To be able to deliver the vision they needed accessibility, a system that works on all devices, familiar curriculum environments, a system that delivers personalised and differentiated learning, an environment that enabled their teachers to develop their own content easily.

Why itslearning?
“We looked at several Learning Platform’s and the core priority was that we needed an environment that was compatible with our teaching and learning strategy. We like itslearning because it is accessible and can deliver what our students required, it’s intuitive, interactive and completely scalable.

The itslearning team was another reason we chose itslearning, we found that we could have conversations with them about our pedagogy, vision and student expectations and that really mattered to us. We feel real value on our investment, we want our teaching and learning to be personalised, differentiated and familiar and itslearning delivers this”.

Gill Worgan, Principal

“We are developing a strong partnership with itslearning. We were very impressed with their professional approach at all stages of the selection process and their deep understanding of what we wanted to achieve.”

Gill Worgan
Principal