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Chichester College Group's HR Department goes paperless with DocuWare.

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Sara Barrett, HR Project Coordinator, Chichester College, Chichester, West Sussex on how DocuWare was integrated with success:

"The goal was to decrease our reliance on paper-based systems and processes whilst exceeding our already high levels of compliance, all within a cost-effective manner."

Location:	United Kingdom
Industry:	Education
Deployment:	Cloud
Department:	HR

Chichester College Group's HR Department goes paperless with Restore/DocuWare.

Chichester College Group, rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, has over 20,000 students aged between 16 and 19 years old, of whom over 5,000 are full-time.

Paper-heavy processes were preventing the achievement of the goal to go greener

Chichester College Group were initially driven by a green initiative to go paperless. But in July 2017, a merger with another college asked stern questions of the current management of the college's paper-based systems. A shift to digital would be a daunting and necessary one, however Chichester College Group recognised that to cope with the rising flow of paper documents resulting from various acquisitions, they would need to digitise fast and find a single solution that incorporated document and content capture, a robust document repository, information retrieval and storage, and track and control of documents across ALL their campuses.

"Our Chief Executive looked at the current environmental conditions and determined that it was our responsibility to make a more concerted effort to go paperless, especially with additional college mergers on the horizon," explains Sara Barrett, the Group's HR Project Coordinator.

Employee and student records had previously been printed, signed, scanned and stored in bulging filing cabinets; consequently, documents were time consuming to process and access. The amount of printing also contributed negatively to the College's environmental commitments.

DocuWare Cloud digitised the HR Department

In 2018, Chichester College Group deployed DocuWare to re-engineer some long-standing, antiquated paper-based processes, improve compliancy, increase storage and encourage some new, greener ways of thinking. The solution was implemented within a busy HR department, to handle employee personnel files and ensure employee data is equally as quick to search as it is quick to retrieve.

"We have streamlined access to documents and improved information flow, all whilst maintaining the ability to track, edit and retrieve documents in a GDPR compliant fashion." Sara said.

The number of documents that are now managed digitally is in the hundreds and thousands, so the college has hit their objective of reducing their negative environmental impact and made huge cost savings on paper, printer cartridges and other consumables.

"Rethinking paper-driven processes really helped us identify inefficiencies and reimagine how different processes within other departments could work more efficiently."

"At our fingertips, is how I'd describe employee data now. Being able to drag and drop documents from Outlook into trays has been a real game changer."

"We had one corridor which was lined with locked filing cabinets. Even though it was a mammoth task to scan all those documents, I'm so pleased that the contents are now stored safely within the cloud."

Mergers with other local colleges mean the requirements for storage change on a regular basis, as do the volume of users. "Currently we have 25 users across all the campuses, but the real unforeseen benefit of DocuWare was being able to access this data from home without using a VPN. A lot of the work just couldn't have been done by staff over the lockdown period, so we've managed to avoid a really difficult situation." Sara said.

A solution that is super easy to use

The Chichester College team regularly share hints and tips with each other and have created a comprehensive best practice document. Sara explains "We've learned so much throughout this journey and things are running more smoothly than they ever have. Of course, we've discovered our own dos and don'ts on the way."

What does the future hold?

We expect to see the College going from strength to strength in their Document Management journey with additional storage and implementations into other departments.

"We have easy access to employee documentation which helps enhance continuity by ensuring documents are accessible in a disaster recovery situation."

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