Welcome

One of the first areas to be targeted by the widely publicised government spending cuts was higher education. Universities face their most radical changes for 50 years as reduction in public funding forces a fundamental reshaping of the sector.

As Dr. Wendy Piatt, Director General of the Russell Group, stated: “We are concerned that the cuts will mean it will be tough to maintain the high quality teaching, learning and research environment our universities currently offer.”

At the same time there has been a dramatic increase in the number of university applications, with further increases of between 10% and 20% anticipated this year. And, from 2013, the undergraduate admissions process is turning paperless, a dramatic change to the manual process currently used by many institutions.

In this newsletter, we focus on the challenges facing the universities sector. We hear how the University of Warwick and Glasgow Caledonian University are turning these challenges into opportunities to drive through process improvements and embed Operational Excellence.

In our first article, read how the University of Warwick is turning its undergraduate admissions process paperless by radically redesigning and simplifying it, enabling them to deal with the increase in applications, more efficiently and more systematically.

Our second article turns the spotlight onto Glasgow Caledonian University, which is aiming to achieve essential efficiency savings while ensuring continued growth and the provision of an excellent service to students and stakeholders.

As always, we hope you enjoy reading these shared experiences of process improvement and that they inspire you to improve the way you work.

Streamlining undergraduate admissions at the University of Warwick

Following a successful review of the postgraduate admissions process, Darren Wallis, Director of Admissions and Recruitment at the University of Warwick, asked Processfix back to facilitate the rapid improvement of their undergraduate admissions process.

“With the undergraduate admissions process,” Darren explained, “we faced similar challenges to our previous review, but with a slightly different emphasis. We were taking too long to make decisions on applications. For example, in simple layer an IT solution on top of an inefficient process.”

Lynsey Hopkins, Assistant Registrar, continued: “With such a rigid timetable dictated by UCAS, it would have been quite easy to adopt practices that had worked historically without really questioning them. Instead, we decided to use this opportunity to look at the process afresh, and see if we could identify and embed best practice and work more efficiently, regardless of whether we were working on a paperless process or within our current structures.”

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One of the key lessons Warwick learned when it reviewed the postgraduate admissions process, was that you needed some quick wins to sustain interest and keep things on track to achieve longer term goals and major process breakthroughs.

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NEWSFLASH!

London, United Kingdom – October 2010: Processfix scope first workshop for the Bank of England
In the spotlight: Jan Hulme, University Secretary and Vice—Principal Governance at Glasgow Caledonian University, reflects on their Operational Excellence programme.

The facilitator’s perspective

After 35 years in university administration, Jenny Hocking, Processfix Facilitator, now designs and runs Rapid Improvement Workshops and programmes across the sector. She is currently helping Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) achieve cost efficiencies and embed Operational Excellence approaches into the everyday way the University works.

“Working closely with the Executive Board and senior management of GCU, Jenny is using hands-on Processfix Rapid Improvement Workshops to teach GCU staff the methodology, concepts and tools of process improvement, enhancing their problem-solving skills and ability to cut costs.”

Glasgow Caledonian University

The processes we are examining are key to our strategic objectives

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The early signs are good and I believe our people have enthusiastically embraced this growth mindset. Jenny has been an integral part in realising the University’s ambitious vision of delivering operational excellence alongside access, excellence and adaptability. She has been instrumental in making people the agents of change, rather than being the objects of change.

The benefits of going through the Rapid Improvement Workshops are clear. We see an improved system, but that is not all. We see a change and changing the way we think. Jenny believes our people have enthusiastically embraced this growth mindset. Jenny has been an integral part in realising the University’s ambitious vision of delivering operational excellence alongside access, excellence and adaptability. She has been instrumental in making people the agents of change, rather than being the objects of change.

The Early signs of change...
Processfix are professional facilitators of rapid improvement workshops.

Working with your team, on your burning issues, we will engineer fast solutions that will achieve lasting change and create powerful, sustainable results.

In a risk–free workshop environment we will uncover missed opportunities and chart new possibilities.

As your team experience real process improvement — first hand and at great speed — they will gain a clear understanding of what works, and why.

Your teams will leave each workshop able to apply their skills and knowledge, immediately, anywhere in your business.

Processfix will enable you to unleash the full potential of your organisation.

If you would like to find out how Processfix can benefit your organisation, please contact us at:

Processfix Limited
Exchange House
Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes
MK9 2EA

www.processfix.com
info@processfix.com

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