

Selby College



Description

Selby College is in North Yorkshire but serves a community within a 20 to 30 mile radius of the town, including parts of Doncaster (South Yorkshire) and Goole (East Riding) districts. Selby is a rural market town with traditional 'sunset' industries of coal and power. It has developed mainly into an industrial centre for dyes, cattle feed, chemicals and paper. Distribution is also a growing sector due to the good transport links of road, river and rail.

Selby College is 20 years old and has traditionally been a 6th form centre for the area. It now provides additional programmes with schools for 14-16 year olds, learning in the workplace, roll on-roll off learning and distance learning. It has a CoVE in IT for its innovative work. One project included providing laptops and training to lorry drivers, for use with the working time directive.

The situation

Selby College's provision and delivery of learning is excellent and is meeting the needs of the community. Reliable Management Information System (MIS) software is in place and well used.

The key issue lay with the need to improve information controls for audit, due to the college finding increased local markets for learning delivery: IT in the community, working with partners in industry etc. This diversification of delivering learning meant that the audit regime had become much more demanding and needed a specific set of expertise to support it. The development of learning in the workplace and distance learning created a challenge due to audit controls required for these high risk, contentious provisions commented John Reather, Deputy Principal of Selby College.

Tribal were asked to provide the specialist expertise, knowledge and time to focus on the management of the Individual Learner Record (ILR) and the ILR audit process that the college required.

"The aim is to improve the college processes year on year by using the Tribal strength in the audit regime"

*John Reather
Deputy Principal, Selby College.*

Key Facts

Location	Urban
Turnover 03/04	£7.2m
No. of sites	1 main site, 5 outreach centres
No. of learners	7,000
No. of courses offered	1,300 on site
MIS system	ebs™
Finance system	ebs™eFinancials
Learning environment	Blackboard



Tribal's specialist service, to focus on management of the ILR and the ILR audit process, started at Selby College on the 16th March 2003 and the audit became a tripartite process between the college, Tribal and the auditors.

Tribal needed to provide improved evidence of learning delivery and learner attendance and work on putting control processes in place to address these issues. Also they needed to become the interface between the data entry process, MIS and the auditors to make sure that the management of the audit process progressed more smoothly.

The service level agreement (SLA) has been revised for March 04-05 to reflect the improvements in the control processes set up in the first year at Selby. This year they are concentrating on the management of the audit, which is still a significant area and they are sure that the SLA will be updated next year to reflect the identified priorities.

"A big plus was being able to adjust the agreed service to fit the college needs at the time." John Reather, Deputy Principal, Selby College.



The next step

Now that the core audit needs are being dealt with, Selby are confident that next year (04/05) they will hit their target, deliver timely audit returns and have no audit problems. John Reather concludes, "We anticipate having an internal audit test in September and dependent on the results go to audit early"

Achievements to date

- Controls are in place for audit and have been tested
- LSC return due 1st February 2004 was returned on time
- Improvement in the relationship between the college and the auditors
- Confidence of the Audit Committee in the college ILR data
- Increased skills of staff who are involved in the control of off-site provision
- In year 03/04 the outreach centres enrolled learners remotely
- The audit process is now an ongoing process, part of the college function

Benefits to the college

- Continuity of knowledge and expertise in the college
- Review and streamlining of key business processes in line with the college needs
- Wider and more flexible offering via outreach centres and workplace involvement to meet the needs of the community
- Real-time information to enable quicker decision making
- Delivery of timely and accurate audit returns

Good practice recommendations

- Must build a mutually confident relationship at all staff levels between the college and Tribal
- Need a clear and flexible service level agreement that is responsive to the college and audit deadlines
- The Tribal consultant must have regular contact with a member of the senior management team to provide a strategic as well as operational perspective of the college and to build trust and confidence levels