

City College Norwich

Destinations

Case Study

Background

J²PROFIT



City College Norwich (CCN) is a further and higher education college with over 14,000 students. Rated as 'Good' by Ofsted (March 2013), the college provides excellent preparation for students' career development and progression – including a strong focus on entrepreneurial skills as one of the Gazelle Group of Colleges.

In the Norfolk region, where a majority of the college's learners are based, the level of those at GCSE attaining five or more A* to C is just below the national average. The proportion of learners at the college from an minority ethnic heritage is broadly in line with the local population, but below the national average. Unemployment in the region is in line with the national average.

CCN has around 8,500 full-time students, the majority of whom are studying vocational qualifications. The College's provision includes over 1,000 students on higher education courses and around 400 students studying A Levels in its Sixth Form Centre. The College has extensive links with employers across all curriculum areas, and continually updates its courses to take account of the current, and future higher skills needed by employers.



“Quality improvement and staff development initiatives... are making a significant contribution to broadening the range of opportunities available to learners, strengthening progression routes, raising the quality of provision and improving value for money across the city”

Ofsted Report March 2013



City College Norwich is focused on providing our students with the skills and attributes needed to succeed and progress on to employment and further learning, including apprenticeships and higher education. To help us to achieve this, it is paramount that we know both the immediate and longer term destinations of our students, to ensure our offer is the best it can be.

Corrienne Peasgood, Principal and Chief Executive

Objectives

CCN provide a commitment to their students to help each and every one of them get closer to achieving their goals, be it as a stepping stone to the next level of their education, or directly into employment.

For the College to ensure it was delivering on this promise, data was needed detailing where the students progressed to. Five years ago, CCN started to measure their success by capturing actual, rather than intended destination data. The College wanted to use this data as a measurement to set institution-wide positive outcome targets and measure performance against them.

CCN believes it is immensely important to know the destination of their former students after three months, and also after 15 months. The College want to ensure they have helped their students progress and after 15 months this would give a more accurate representation.

CCN tried to get actual destinations five years ago

ACTUAL DESTINATION DATA ALREADY PROVIDED

CCN used data provided by Framework for Excellence, UCAS, and their own internal progression data to gain the destination data they needed.

The destination data provided by Framework for Excellence and UCAS was accurate and at a very high level, but missed the breakdown for individual curriculum areas. Often the data gave immediate destinations but was unable to provide the destination after 15 months.

CAPTURING THE DESTINATIONS FROM TUTORS

A majority of the college's tutors had good relationships with their students; therefore they informally knew the immediate

destinations of their students. However, this informal knowledge was difficult to collate across all curriculum areas. The college also wanted to know the destination after 15 months, which in a majority of cases the tutor would be unsure of.

AMALGAMATING DATA

Amalgamating all the destination data from; UCAS, CCN internal progression data, tutor knowledge, and Framework for Excellence, made it almost impossible to produce a data story which was digestible and actionable by the College Leadership Team.

Three years ago CCN decided to approach students directly

To get the destination data they wanted, in a useable format, the college appreciated they needed to contact students directly.

POSTAL QUESTIONNAIRES

CCN tried sending out a sample of postal questionnaires to test the response rate and quality of information. The response rate returned from the sample was extremely low and there were conflicting answers to the questions given.

ASKING STAFF TO CALL

The College is very successful at in-house calling for specific small projects. CCN considered asking their staff to call the former students but this was ruled out. It is really important for CCN to get three month destinations, and doing this in-house would mean asking internal staff to divert their attention from concentrating on the new student intake and experience.

CCN then looked at using an external company to contact former students by phone. They had already used J2 Profit for a number of market research and survey projects.

Three years ago CCN approached J2 Profit

J2 Profit were asked to capture destination data by phone and this is what CCN found.

J2 PROFIT LISTENED & UNDERSTOOD THE SECTOR

J2 Profit listened to exactly why CCN wanted the information and how they were going to use it. From J2 Profit's in-depth knowledge of the FE sector, and their history of speaking to students, they made some recommendations. These recommendations meant the information obtained was richer and more suitable for the needs of CCN.

RESPONSE RATE

CCN needed a high response rate to be able to ensure they had enough data to give an accurate destination data story across all of their curriculum areas. The percentage of responses that J2 Profit achieved was extremely high.

AMALGAMATION OF DATA

As well as supplying the destination data set out in a report, J2 Profit provided the data in an Excel spreadsheet, which meant the College could import the data into their system and investigate any data stories further.

TRUSTED RELATIONSHIP

CCN look at building strong relationships with their suppliers based on trust. They like to know their suppliers are serious about providing a good service to them. J2 Profit has now been working with the College for five years.

FLEXIBILITY TO ADAPT

Five years ago CCN were one of the first Colleges to look at the actual destinations of their students. The College progressively learnt what information they wanted, how they would integrate the information, and whether the College succeeded in their goal of ensuring students ended up in the destinations they wanted. CCN were impressed with J2 Profit's ability to be flexible and adapt with them.

VALIDITY OF AN EXTERNAL COMPANY

A professional external company has no preconceived ideas about what the end result should be and treats each record equally; meaning the data story produced is accurate. When using the destination data captured by J2 Profit for external reports, inspection bodies, or funding bodies, CCN prefers the validity of using an external company.

Impacts

TREND DATA

CCN now has three years of trend destination data both at the 3 and 15 month point. This means not only is the college monitoring their destinations, it also has benchmarks and targets which can be assessed year on year.

EMBEDDED POSITIVE OUTCOME TARGETS

As positive outcomes are paramount to the College's mission, the senior leadership team monitor the destination outcomes and trend data. This means that achieving success with destination outcomes are embedded throughout the college, so positive outcomes and employability are ingrained in CCN's curriculum reviews.

HIGHER PROGRESSION AND EMPLOYABILITY RATES

Everyone involved with students at the college is aware of impacting employability and progression. This has seen employability and enterprise embedded into teaching, college-wide projects, and the development of curriculum. This was accredited by Ofsted, and has enhanced the employment prospects of students at CCN.



At J2Profit we operate exclusively within the education sector. Our unrivalled track record provides a unique understanding of the market and the challenges that colleges and other educational institutions are facing.



Background to J2 Profit

J2 Profit has been working with the FE and HE sectors for over 10 years. J2 Profit specialise in education focused phone surveys for students and employers.

Some of the colleges J2 Profit work with:

City College Norwich	Barking and Dagenham College
The Sheffield College	Myerscough College
Somerset College of Arts and Technology	Newcastle Under Lyme College
Tower Hamlets College	East Berkshire College
College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London	City and Islington College
SEEVIC College	City of Bristol College
City College Brighton and Hove	Warrington Collegiate
Middlesbrough College	Newham College of Further and Higher Education
South Tyneside College	Warwickshire College

To find out more contact Sally Hunt on 01527 596641 or shunt@j2profit.co.uk or visit their website at www.J2profit.co.uk