

Cintra Case Study

Varndean College, Brighton



Varndean College is a co-educational college in the further education sector in Brighton and Hove, catering for approximately 1,195 16 to 18 year old students on full-time courses, 60 adults on full-time courses and around 1,000 adults on part-time courses. They employ around 220 staff in teaching and support functions.

Situated on an impressive site at the head of a large campus, the buildings were originally built in early 1920's and opened as a Grammar School for Boys in 1926. Today the college shares the 60 acre site with Varndean School, Dorothy Stringer School and Balfour Infant and Junior School.

Varndean College had been with their previous payroll provider for many years, so in mid-2005, they made the decision to investigate alternative payroll providers that could give them a system with greater flexibility and better reporting than their old one.

As with all public sector organisations, best value was high on their agenda. However, they also wanted a supplier with a proven track record in running college payrolls, so following a thorough analysis of the market, Cintra were invited to present to the College, along with a number of other potentially suitable payroll providers.

Varndean's Director of Resources Nicholas Carr said, "Cintra stood out from the very start, responding reassuringly quickly to our enquiry, putting together a solid presentation, and most importantly, providing us with good references from several other Sixth Form Colleges. Two other East Sussex Colleges, BHASVIC and Bexhill got involved in the exercise. Once we were positive about the possibility of such a significant change, we all decided to go for Cintra's Online payroll. We went live in February 2006 with the others going live at the start of the 2006/07 tax year".

As we all know, payroll is a very emotive subject and despite having carried all the necessary due diligence in making their decision, like most organisations, Varndean were still a bit nervous about the implementation of their payroll. Would the system work? How would the College's own people take to the new system? Would the system be reliable and how good would Cintra's support be? "We had nothing to worry about" said Nicholas. "Cintra's implementation systems and procedures are well documented, so all we had to do was follow the instructions. Cintra's Senior Implementation Consultant Cavell Weatherley was also on hand to guide us through the process every step of the way - all we had to do was provide them with the information they asked for, accurately and in a timely fashion."

"Once the software had been installed on our server, Cintra's Field Trainer Gill Casey came to the College to teach our Cintra users how to use the system, using the college's own payroll data, while Cavell was busy doing our parallel run. Having done all of our inputs for our first month of live running, we waited with bated breath on payday, but once again everything went like clockwork.

When asked what benefits Nicholas and his team have observed since the switch to Cintra he replied, "I can honestly say that our Cintra Online payroll solution has more than lived up to the sales promises and there are too many benefits to mention" He did however highlight the fact that they now have full control over the data entry, they can create and run their own reports and they have the ability to access and report on every single piece of payroll data and its history held in the system.

Nicholas also felt strongly that Cintra's support team should get a mention. "For the first time" he said, "we really feel valued and respected as a client and we would have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending Cintra to any other college".

When asked what, with the benefit of hindsight, he would do differently given the opportunity to go back in time, he replied "If I knew then what I know now, I'm sure we would have moved to a private sector payroll provider much earlier. Once we'd made that quantum leap, we've never looked back."

**For further information please contact:
Nham Lee, Sales Manager**

Cintra HR & Payroll Services Ltd
Computer House | 353 High Street | Gateshead | Tyne & Wear | NE8 1ET | T: 0191 478 7000 | F: 0191 478 6060

www.cintra.co.uk