

Bournemouth & Poole College evolves partnership with CoSector – University of London to increase engagement with its Digital Learning Platform

Overview

Bournemouth & Poole College is home to 10,000+ students from across the region, the UK and the world. The college supports a range of [values](#), among them a passion for learning and success, within a supportive and caring environment. In order to uphold these values, it is important that the college offers the best learning experience that is supportive to the needs of every student.

Situation

Bournemouth & Poole College (BPC) is the largest provider of Further Education (FE) and Apprenticeships in the surrounding area. Its core focus is on developing the work skills of students to ensure that at the end of their study, they are well placed to start or to progress in their chosen career.

The college has a strategic plan 'The Bournemouth & Poole College strategy 2019-2022': Through inspiring teaching and learning, the college develops its students' work skills, life skills and knowledge, as well as helping to build a thriving local economy and community.

To help achieve its mission, the college has a number of areas of focus including; offer flexibility in delivery, developing its curriculum to meet the skills needs of the local economy; value and



empower its staff and unlock their potential and make the college an attractive place to work; and foster innovation and be prepared to take risks, whilst ensuring a high trust culture.

To this end, the college needs to offer an attractive, learning proposition that will enhance and enrich the student experience.

The need for a more flexible learning environment

In 2018 following cross-campus feedback from its students, the college decided it was time to modernise its digital learning environment (DLE) with more engaging features to encourage more interaction with the platform for both staff and students. The college found that it was sharing the latest news and events through the main website, while this was effective for external website visitors, current students at the college did not visit this website while accessing the DLE. This meant that candidates were not exposed to the latest news announcements from the college when accessing the online learning platform.

For the 2019 / 2020 Academic year, the college sought an update to its existing Moodle DLE platform to support the features it needed, such as a new learning resources section to support online innovation, as well as providing a modern looking front end, that staff and students could interact with quickly and efficiently, whilst enabling a seamless, hassle-free learning and teaching experience.


The DLE also needed continued hosting and support so it could continue to be used by different individuals in a variety of ways. For example, students needed to be able to upload their work from different platforms, be able to make edits, and submit it for marking within a particular timeframe. Teachers needed to be able to access work submitted from any location, at a time that suited them.

BPC were keen to engage with a third party to help with the update and continued hosting of the new DLE and implementation needed to be as quick and seamless as possible to avoid disruption to learning, and on-going support and technical assistance was vital.

Solution

The college enlisted the consultancy of its current DLE provider CoSector – University of London and its Digital Learning team in order to advise on and implement and support the hosting of its Moodle platform which manages data specific to students, teachers and other college staff.

CoSector seamlessly managed the migration process ensuring all content on the platform was secure whilst it installed the upgrades, such as a new and improved Moodle landing page and a customised learning resources section added to the platform to help increase student and staff engagement. Positioning all important links to key materials in one place means educators and learners can access all the key information in the same place at the same time.

A background image showing a group of students outdoors, with trees and sunlight visible. A blue semi-transparent box is overlaid on the image, containing a quote and the name of the person who said it.

“I had total trust that as digital learning experts, CoSector could deliver on the campus-wide project which has helped both students and staff engage fully with Moodle”

Keith Ball

ILT Technical Officer at Bournemouth and Poole College

Keith Ball, ILT Technical Officer said: "We chose to partner with CoSector – University of London, as the Digital Learning team that manages the Moodle platform has a wealth of experience that we needed to effectively manage, support and consult us on our DLE, the Moodle platform."

Benefits

The Moodle platform stores and hosts all course materials and makes it simple for students to quickly and easily access it remotely. Hosting data in this way with the Moodle has also made it far easier for teachers to mark and grade student assignments, and insert comments and annotations as relevant. With Moodle, data can also be accessed at any time, any location, with a consistent experience regardless of device i.e. phones, tablets or PCs.

The introduction of the Moodle landing page has been a first of its kind for the college and has increased visibility and helped students to better engage with online learning resources. Students now have simplified access to important research materials from the learning resources centre and campus facilities, such as Box of Broadcasts (BOB), which allows students to watch and record TV programmes suggested by their lecturer, that are relevant to the course for research purposes. Information from the student union and college events are now available when students access the DLE, this can be particularly beneficial for career opportunities, as they are notified when organisations


who are recruiting visit the institution and current students can apply for national competitions to better their future career portfolio. Menus from the cafeteria can now be downloaded with important allergy information readily available for both staff and students.

The home page also displays reminders of upcoming surveys and open events.

With help from the CoSector Technical Design team and a college staff member's artistic eye, BPC has launched a bespoke HTML block called Poli (Platform for Online Learning and Innovation) which takes on a slightly different appearance for staff and student logins, offering students new dedicated learning resources, access to Learning Support and Well-being, and the staff version provides links to Quality Assurance information, Moodle help documents and a Teaching & Learning zone.

As part of a wider strategy to encourage staff to interact with the DLE, Bournemouth & Poole College has launched a Moodle maestro scheme to incentivise members of staff to interact with the virtual learning environment. This has empowered staff to engage more with the platform by adding interactive course materials and uploading different types of content such as video, images and courses quizzes to better enhance student interaction with Moodle.

Keith Ball adds: "CoSector – University of London are a true partner. They have improved the learning experience for our students and made it easier for academics, and administrators to do their jobs. Of all



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the systems we've got here at the college and the third-party support teams that are behind those systems, I would say that in my experience, the CoSector team is certainly the most approachable and supportive of the teams through the relationship that we've built up over many years."

Having CoSector – University of London on hand to manage and host the Moodle platform has been beneficial for the college, particularly surrounding the recent updates to the Moodle landing page. It's been a number of years since we've done a change of such scale so it was important that the project ran smoothly with few problems along the way. I had total trust that as digital learning experts, CoSector could deliver on the campus-wide project which has helped both students and staff to engage fully with Moodle and continue to improve learning across the college."

For further information on the range of services we offer, please visit our website or contact us at:

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