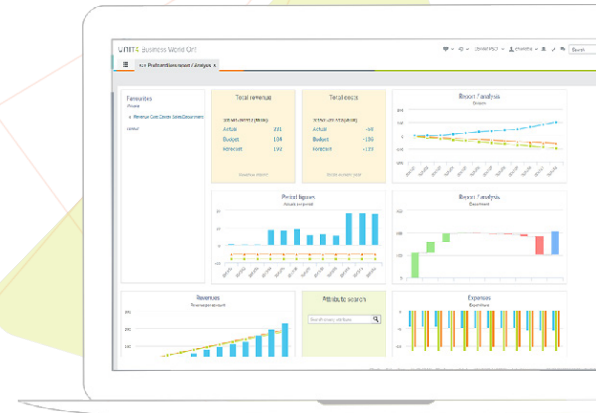


Customer success story:

Agilyx (formally Williams Woodward) assists colleges to save £80,000 a year



The Challenge

Essex Shared Services Ltd is a joint venture by South Essex College and Chelmsford College that was established in July 2014. The idea was that the new organisation would provide both institutions with back-office services for the finance, payroll and procurement functions.

Specifically, the partnership was designed to help the colleges:

- Divert costs from back-office operations to front-line learning
- Develop more financial awareness across both institutions
- Make finance management and collaboration easier

The Solution

As one of its first steps, the new Essex Shared Services organisation established a single back-office finance, payroll, procurement function to serve both institutions.

To make this work, it wanted to source a finance ERP system that would scale with the institutions' needs and help optimise productivity. Unit4 ERP was chosen for its finance capability, inbuilt FE-friendly processes and track record in both the further education sector and delivering shared services. With Agilyx's (formerly Williams Woodward's) help, the colleges successfully implemented the Unit4 ERP system on time and on budget.

Customer name
Essex Shared Services Ltd

Industry
Education

Company Size
1,400+

Headquarters
Essex, United Kingdom



Finance



Procurement



Budgeting



The Results

“One of the key ways we’ve been able to achieve this is by sharing and consolidating the finance management onto Unit4. This is far more affordable for both colleges. It has also helped us to review processes generally and make them more efficient across both organisations, which enables us to operate effectively with fewer staff at both leadership and more junior levels.”

- Peter Moore, Head of Shared Services & Deputy Director of Finance, Essex Shared Services Ltd

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Key takeaways from the project



Established a more ‘commercially aware’ environment



Resulted in savings of £80,000 each year



Provided digitised workflows to increase efficiency

Final Summary

Since adopting Unit4, the Essex Shared Services organisation has achieved a number of important organisational and financial benefits. The new organisation has already achieved savings of £80,000 per year through more efficient deployment of resources. This money is now being made available to improve student experiences.

Essex Shared Services has also improved efficiency in ways that boost productivity. For example, it has replaced a manual process where ‘purchase invoice packs’ were printed and then delivered by hand to individuals across various campuses. Now this information is delivered electronically to the right people at the right time through workflows which gives an audit trail of activity. Budget holders and key personnel can access data through a self-service portal when they need it and make more informed decisions.

“Once the other college saw how this was going to work, they saw immediate benefit for themselves. This simply wouldn’t have happened without the culture of collaborating and information sharing that Unit4 enables and the shared service partnership promotes.” says Peter Moore, Head of Shared Services & Deputy Director of Finance, ESS Ltd.

