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people and
organisations
to achieve
extraordinary
things.

University of East Anglia
Tailored APM Project
Management Qualification

CASE STUDY



A journey towards streamlined Project Management...

The projects team within the Information Services department at the University of East Anglia already had an in-house Project Management framework in place, which was loosely based on the PRINCE2® methodology. However, after reviewing the team's performance they realised that certain changes and improvements needed to be made to improve their approach to Project Management.

Although previous projects completed were deemed 'a great success', some projects did not achieve quite such the desired results. Senior Management recognised APM Project Management Qualification (PMQ) as being a much better fit than their current framework that had been influenced by PRINCE2®. They wanted members of the projects team to be at a uniformed level of capability and wanted to increase efficiency and provide consistency to managing projects, ensuring that all projects are deemed 'a great success'! University of East Anglia required a training solution that would not only provide the knowledge needed to successfully run a project but also to equip those involved with the right tools and guidance. They approached Quanta with this challenge, and we were ready to take it on using a tailored version of our APM PMQ course.

How Quanta helped...

University of East Anglia wanted to bolster their project management performance within their Information Services department; many only needed a basic overview of APM PMQ, with others requiring a much more complex and in-depth understanding. The best solution was for Quanta to deliver two sessions to ensure that all audiences were receiving the necessary level of training.

A tailored three day APM PMQ course designed to provide the practical knowledge of running a project, which was attended by service heads that were potentially going to be involved in managing projects. The projects team had already made the decision to adopt APM and had seen the introduction of a new project managers' handbook and a toolkit. Tailoring the standard APM PMQ course enabled the content to include a focus on their own in-house toolkit to give potential project managers a greater understanding of the tools they will be using in the real-world. Incorporating University of East Anglia's own tools into the content allowed the team to review and improve upon their current processes.

The tailored course provided the flexibility to remove irrelevant topics covered on APM PMQ, allowing for a more focused approach whilst eliminating distractions from unnecessary content. Also, University of East Anglia did not feel the need for certified qualifications; therefore, the exam was cut out and the syllabus was scrapped altogether, allowing for all the required topics to be covered in a shorter amount of time. Therefore, rather than the standard five days, delegates only attended three days' worth of training. Removing the exam also eradicated the added stress of achieving pass rates, which in turn helped delegates to be more focused and absorb more information.

A one day Coaching Academy was the second phase of training for the University of East Anglia. It provided an overview of the APM methodology and was aimed at the department's board of directors who would normally sit as Project Sponsor or on Project Boards. This session was all about improving their understanding on how they can advise, direct and shape a project including their own roles and responsibility within a project. Delegates came away fully understanding the importance of each role within a project team, and the knowledge to strategically overcome problems that occur. Tailoring the content to focus on their specific roles made it possible for the whole overview to be covered within one day, reducing the time away from the office. Splitting the courses into two sessions and delivering them to different roles within the projects team, allowed all of those involved to be on the same level of understanding, which further emphasises the importance of aligning each process and following the steps of project management to ensure projects are completed on time, and within budget.

"We were particularly pleased with the trainer who helped tailor the APMP courses to meet our needs for differing audiences. The trainer was very knowledgeable and had in-depth experience of the subject matter that allowed theory to be presented in a way that was applicable to real world scenarios. People left the course with a greater understanding of the complexities in managing projects and different tools that can be used to tackle potential problems. The courses have contributed in helping us to raise our standards in managing projects."

Paul Hooper, Head of Programmes and Project Support

And the benefits...

The Information Services' project team has gone through a number of developments and improvements as a result of their training experience with Quanta. The toolkit reviewed in phase one has been significantly enhanced with a series of templates and guidance in areas such as communication plans, business cases and project documentation, such as the proposal, plan and RAID logs. These tools are now at their disposal and because they understand why and what they are there for, they can use them effectively when managing a project. Also, a support and mentoring service has been put in place for the team to ensure problems and issues are addressed quickly and the full potential of the team members are met. The training delivered by Quanta, along with the support mechanisms now in place, has not only provided the tools to complete a project, but the team now has the right equipment and knowledge to manage problem areas and improve the experience that project managers are having when running a project. Each role within the process now appreciate one another's involvement within a project, more so than before, which has increased job satisfaction, in hand creating a more efficient a streamlined approach to managing projects. The key change that has been made is in learning from the experience which was only made possible through a tailored training solution.

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