The Power of Possibility

WINDSOR FOREST COLLEGES GROUP

Case Study — Windsor Forest Colleges Group — Education Digitisation & Archive Case Study

Background

The Windsor Forest Colleges Group was established in 2017 through the merger of East Berkshire College and Strode's College. In 2022, the organisation expanded again by merging with Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA). They have around 12,000 learners and 920 employees.

The group encompasses two Sixth Form Colleges, located at Strode's and Windsor, alongside specialist facilities for technical, vocational, and land-based training at its Slough, Langley and BCA campuses.



Reasons for outsourcing

Windsor Forest Colleges Group has been a SPS, formerly Cleardata, customer since 2010. They initially considered storage offsite following a fire at one of their own buildings which led to some data loss.

It was important to select a company who met their data compliance needs and offered secure premises with enhanced fire detection systems to improve business continuity and back up of paper records.

"Data security and GDPR Compliance is key for our college records and SPS ticks all the boxes as a data protection act registered business. The company has very high standards of accreditation for Information Security - ISO27001:2022, Quality Management Systems - ISO9001:2015, Legal Admissibility of Electronic Information — BS 10008 and Cyber Essentials Plus." Senior Data Analyst, Windsor Forest Colleges Group.

The college were also keen to have a digitisation strategy to protect their paperwork and make it more accessible. SPS were able to offer a combination of both secure storage, with scan on demand retrieval and document scanning services.

Secure storage & scan on demand

Records are stored offsite at SPS's secure storage facility. The college can submit file requests via their online, Cleardox AMS (Archive Management System), files are then retrieved, scanned and digitally returned to authorised users. Keep until dates are logged via the system, with automated destruction notifications to authorised users and a compliant shredding service.

Digitisation

SPS has digitised the College's HR and student admissions records, with over a million images scanned to date. Records are scanned at SPS's bureau using the latest IBML and Kodak scanning technology. All images receive a 2 x 100% quality check.

Key tasks

- Documents collected using tracked fleet.
- Records checked in and indexed with secure audit trail.
- Compliant, secure storage and scanning facility with VESDA (very early smoke detection alert systems).
- File retrieval available throughout the digitisation process.
- Worked with the College to add barcodes to form design to enable automatic capture of indexed data at point of scanning.
- 1.1 million images scanned using IBML and Kodak scanning technology, with 2 x 100% quality check
- Files digitally returned to client via secure SFTP.
- Shredding to BS EN 15713 where required.

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Client Feedback

Our experience with SPS, formerly Cleardata.

“SPS has provided an efficient scanning and archive service for Windsor Forest Colleges Group. The company has digitised over a million images for our organisation and the quality has been to a high standard.

The scanning service has enabled us to access and retrieve our digitised HR and student records quickly and easily. The quality of scanned images is excellent.

Digitised student records are returned via SFTP for import into our student management system. This enables us to remotely access our records and work in an agile manner, providing a modern way of working. We find SPS’s system is easy to use, and they have worked with us to ensure digital records output are compatible with our student records management system.

The project team at SPS advised us to implement barcoding for our student admission forms, enabling automatic indexing at the point of scanning. This guarantees accurate and efficient data capture, eliminating the need for manual indexing. We benefit from a consistent naming convention for scanned data, facilitating seamless matching, addition, and uploading into our student management system.

Furthermore, we can perform a straightforward document check via form barcode scanning to verify the production of printed catalogue documents on any given day. This has significantly enhanced our compliance and audit processes.

We’ve benefitted from:-

- Agile, modern working
- Improved data compliance & business continuity.
- Fast access to information stored off-site for audit purposes via their scan on demand service.
- Created additional workspace by storing paperwork offsite.
- Consistent naming conventions for digitised files with automated indexing.

Their secure archive storage, with scan on demand service, allows us to store documents offsite and retrieve files quickly when we need them. We no longer have big rooms full of documents on our sites, which has improved our business continuity, data compliance and security. It’s also provided us with the ability to gain information quickly for audit purposes.

SPS archive boxes are of superb quality, the integrated lids mean paperwork is secured, with no lids or documents overspilling.

We would highly recommend SPS’s document scanning and archive storage services to other colleges and educational establishments. They offer a prompt, accessible and friendly service.”

— Group Director of MIS, Windsor Forest College Group

