Keele University

Putting students first across 19 service departments

Keele University has been with TOPdesk since 2007, starting with TOPdesk Professional and moving on to TOPdesk Enterprise in 2012/2013. In 2014 they were able to show other departments the value of TOPdesk and IT has since onboarded 18 other departments.

We spoke with Sandra Gillham, who originally implemented TOPdesk at Keele University and has headed the tool's growth within the organisation by taking on the role of Application Manager.

Transforming processes: from IT to Student Records

When Sandra took over the IT service desk, the department was using an in-house emailing system to handle requests. However, with the desire to track and report on jobs Sandra realised the importance of purchasing an ITSM tool.

In 2007 IT implemented TOPdesk. After seven successful years of using the software, it was recognised that TOPdesk was much more than just an ITSM tool. Sandra explains the process of deploying the tool across various departments of the university.

"Student Records were the first department to use TOPdesk after IT. A student had gone back and forth to both the Student Records office and IT because he didn't have an IT account, repeatedly walking between the two buildings. For me, this wasn't acceptable, so I used this case to encourage the roll-out of TOPdesk to Student Records."

"Student Records then needed links with Student Services, so we were able to on-board our Student Services division. From then on the tool grew organically across the university, meaning that students got their information much quicker thanks to cross-departmental working."

IT is still the biggest user of TOPdesk on Keele's campus, with Student Services now following closely.

Focussing on customer centricity

With TOPdesk usage increasing across the university, Sandra explains the significance of communicating with the customer, in this case, the students: "We had a student life session with staff members, what I didn't tell them was that I had invited four students to take part."

"This highlighted that speaking to the customer will help you find out the pain points very quickly. This process of involving students was extremely powerful in comparison to a survey, where we would have had to collect lots of data to get to this point."

Keele University has faced staff cuts similar to other universities. But because they're committed to ensuring high levels of customer service, the university implemented automated forms to speed up the ticketing process. "We've had to think of ways to automate our processes to stop the double handling of tickets and escalation to second line. For us, it's important to pass inquiries, not people."

> ## Thanks to cross-departmental working, students got their information much quicker.
> Sandra Gillham, Keele University

The value of knowledge

Since launching their new Self Service Portal in June 2018, the number of incidents reported at Keele University has gone down by 10%. This is the first time there has been a decrease since they implemented TOPdesk.

"A lot of work has been put into the Self Service Portal over the last 12 months. Our first-line service desk operators are responsible for populating all of the knowledge items, meaning that they are written in a customer-focused way. The knowledge base has grown and we are always evaluating what is available."

Sandra trusts that with the knowledge base at their fingertips both customers and operators can become more self-sufficient, enabling the service desk to be more effective: "We believe that the reduction in tickets is down to people using the Self Service Portal to find the information needed to resolve their problem without logging an incident."

Circulating TOPdesk's success throughout the University

Since writing a paper illustrating the 360-degree view of a student, Sandra has aided with the onboarding of 18 other departments on to TOPdesk, the most recent being Estates.

"I have advised departments that want to use TOPdesk to begin the process early and get input from the whole team. Some people have been reticent in coming forward because of fear of change but it's not about spying on others, it's about business continuity."

The recent deployment of TOPdesk into Estates is a project that is believed will transform how the department works. Customer-centric process mapping highlighted how there were more than 10 touchpoints from a student reporting a fault in the halls of residence up to that ticket being resolved.

"Using TOPdesk, we have now reduced these touchpoints by creating a form that can be filled in by the student. This is then sent directly to a steward to go out and triage that problem. The student is fully informed about the progress of their ticket in the system and receives an automatic email once closed."

To support staff across various departments, Keele University has a TOPdesk user group that meets twice a year to gather people's thoughts and ideas. This helped with the recent task of streamlining emails. "As one organisation, it is important to have consistent emails across departments. Now we are supporting three or four emails, not hundreds."

"Becoming the application manager for TOPdesk has given me something to get my teeth in to, and I've learnt so much about the university by speaking to different teams," Sandra explains. "With TOPdesk, you're not stifled. You don't need consultants for everything, you can be independent, which is what we have encouraged other departments to do."

Keele University & TOPdesk: A partnership

Over the years, the university and TOPdesk have worked closely as Sandra describes: "The TOPdesk culture is all about providing ongoing support to customers which is something that we have instilled on campus. TOPdesk have been nothing but a pleasure to deal with. We liaise with so many different suppliers but with TOPdesk the focus is on building a partnership. There is always someone available to help, give advice or reassure us."

Want to know more?

We would be pleased to show you what
TOPdesk can do for your organization
or provide you with more information.
Visit www.topdesk.com

>TOPdesk