



Hartpury College



Hartpury College provides a range of land-based and sport courses to over 1200 FE students. As an Associate Faculty of the University of the West of England (UWE) it also provides a similar range of courses to about 1200 HE students. UWE provide library services for the College.

The college provides a range of IT facilities across the whole campus that includes both drop-in and classroom facilities. The LRC has 18 computers on the Hartpury network that are accessible to both FE and HE students. The HE students also have access to the UWE network on site.

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Introduction

Despite the availability of other PCs on site, demand for these PCs is very high. In an attempt to manage this demand, the LRC staff introduced a manual booking system. While this went some way to fairly apportion time on the computers managing such a system was very time consuming for the LRC staff.

Staff would need to get involved in disputes between students when individuals would not relinquish the PC when their booked period had expired. Arguments would erupt between students over access and the general commotion and noise was significant.

Despite the problems, it was still considered worth the effort to manage student access. We limited access to a maximum of 2x2hr sessions a day.

The Decision

The frustrations of dealing with a paper-based system led us to consider the feasibility of a computerised booking system. This coincided (fortuitously) with a phone call from ITS looking to promote MyPC.

After discussion with the IT Department a demonstration was arranged that convinced us that MyPC was what was needed.

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Staff Reaction

The installation took place in early February 2008 and went without any significant problems. For LRC staff using the system the benefits were immediate. Staff have found the system very user friendly and intuitive to use. No longer did we have queues at the Service Desk; no longer were we required to intervene in disputes.



While initially the system was only installed for the LRC, the intention is to extend coverage across the *whole* campus.

This enables students to familiarise themselves with MyPC and receive guidance and advice on its use from LRC staff. Student instruction has involved direct demonstration to individuals as well as posters, bookmarks and emails.

Links have been created from the student VLE to the booking page. Details of using the system will also be included in all future Library Induction sessions and guides.

Additional Benefits of MyPC

Other benefits from the system include the ability to monitor activity and, via the messaging system, to check and curb undesirable activity. This facility is very important within the LRC where limited numbers of computers require us to restrict the use to academic purposes. As the students become aware that we can monitor and terminate sessions, they are more likely to observe the agreed IT policy on use.

While it is not the primary purpose, the ability to block access to the network can provide a powerful tool as part of a wider disciplinary process.

Furthermore, the reports that can be generated from the system will provide accurate information of use in these different areas and this information will be of benefit to the IT department in allocating resources appropriately.

Student Reaction

From day one of its installation we have encountered little or no resistance to the system. On the day of its installation the students were observed showing each other how to use the MyPC system. A month after its installation we got student feedback through a questionnaire. When asked to rate the system on ease of use, **77.5%** rated it easy, **22.5%** moderate and no one found it difficult. The feedback has indicated that the feature that the students most value is that they no longer have to ask people to leave a computer that they have booked.

Further, the students appreciate the guaranteed access, the avoidance of argument and confusion and consider it to be more organised and fair. It has been observed by the students that having this system makes the LRC quieter – something the staff certainly appreciate.

At present few students use MyPC to book ahead from home. Students do come in to book for later in the day but we still have many students who come in to book for immediate use. As their familiarity in using the system increases it is anticipated that more use will be made of the book-ahead function.



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