From Silos to a Cohesive Student Services Team in Partnership with Symplicity

Known for its distinct person-centered approach to education and teaching, Queen Margaret University is an intimate, self-contained institution located in Musselburgh, Scotland. With a student population of just over 8,500, Queen Margaret University (QMU) student services play an integral role in supporting their students to gain success post-graduation, well-being, and disability services. For QMU, Symplicity unified several departments to offer a cohesive student experience and enhance departmental collaboration.

One Unified Team

Due to the nature of working at a small university, QMU has always had a robust collaborative environment across teams and schools. However, prior to engaging Symplicity in 2018, QMU's student services often worked in silos, often with inconsistent student data, making collaboration a challenge. With no systems in place to centralise student offerings, from career counseling, well-being services, financial services, and disability services, Symplicity supported an opportunity for QMU to transform and unite several teams. Symplicity was a natural fit for QMU student services who were looking for a unified, easy-to-use platform due to the flexibility of enabling various departments to work in one system. Since adopting Symplicity, QMU has been able to utilise the platform across the university whether it's for booking counseling appointments, as a client management tool, for data collection across all campus services, and more.

"I think a lot of universities use Symplicity for the career side of it. For us it had this sort of dual purpose that yes, that is something we wanted, and we needed. But, we also needed something that worked for the rest of the services, in terms how the various services use Symplicity in very different ways... It was a system that worked for everyone in terms of getting what we wanted out of it."

Jessica Lindohf, Head of Student Services at Queen Margaret University

Putting the Student First

The flexibility of the platform has enabled the various student services offerings to be united under one cohesive student services department to better help students. If a student is coming through for wellbeing services, that wellbeing officer can now pull up all the important information on the student with a few clicks and see any relevant information. It enables us to share relevant information at the same time as ensuring confidentiality is kept where needed.

"I do think the students think having one system for all services is really beneficial. And I think it's safer since we are able to manage risk and ensure confidentiality at the same time. It's definitely something I think that is actually making students safer."

Jessica Lindohf, Head of Student Services at Queen Margaret University

Within Symplicity, departmental staff at QMU can easily communicate to ease the stress on a student at a vulnerable time. By submitting a questionnaire within Symplicity's system, a student doesn't need to be worried about having to answer the same questions multiple times. It ensures that staff are able to access the information they need and that ensures the student receive the best support possible whilst respecting the need for confidentiality and security. Additionally, having the student information within a secure system that enables staff members to view student information relevant to them and their role, has made students feel safer on campus. By having the ability to set confidentiality level and chose who can see what information we are balancing the need for confidentiality with the needs of managing risk.

Data Data Data

With Symplicity, QMU has been able to accurately collect real-time student data to understand what is happening on their campus from all its student services departments. No longer is data scattered across various systems and platforms, QMU can easily view important engagement data all in one place. Having data touchpoints on the number of appointments made, students seen, students using campus services, enables QMU to make informed decisions that can be critical to support students. Additionally, QMU has utilised Symplicity's monitoring function to stay on top of ongoing annual and quarterly reporting saving the department time to increase one-on-one interactions with students.

"The biggest driver for me is the data collection. Having a way of actually doing data collection across a number of very different services, but still being able to have it in one place is the highlight of Symplicity for me."