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Career Services

University of Nottingham Enters a Different Universe with CareerHub

Introduction

With more than 34,000 students within the UK, and campuses in Malaysia and China, the University of Nottingham is a leading Russell Group university providing exceptional research-led education (TEF Gold) with specific focus toward delivering a delightful experience for students and graduates. In 2019 the University of Nottingham launched Symplicity CareerHub to further enhance its support for students to exceed their career goals and aspirations. CareerHub has supported the University of Nottingham to streamline student engagement across all campuses in line with student demand through an easy-to-use, secure platform that not only supports students, but enables staff to align focus to students who need their support the most, underpinned by automation, flexibility and the agility to continually enhance impact for the university.

Benefits of Using CareerHub

For the University of Nottingham, CareerHub has been instrumental to streamline broad engagement within the department, supporting with focus the large number of students staff meet each day. With the CareerHub scheduling module, student facing staff are able to proactively manage their appointments dynamically and with greater agility; prior to CareerHub, career services had to individually plot their schedules which was both time-consuming and often confusing. Today with CareerHub, the Nottingham careers team engage more than 500 student appointments weekly, closely coordinated with the students' schedules.

“The flexibility for advisors to control their appointments in CareerHub means we can meet student demand. Our success combines a very flexible mindset of the staff with a very flexible piece of software, which is brilliant”

- **Stuart Marriott**, Associate Director of University of Nottingham Career Services.

CareerHub provides all the student information in one place along with a synced notes system so that no matter who meets with a student, they have up-to-date information regarding where they are in their career journey. With all the student data securely accessible, it has enabled the team to be more productive toward addressing student goals and needs.

“The best thing about the CareerHub is you can pipe your student data straight into it, so students also automatically have access,”

- **Stuart Marriott**, Associate Director of University of Nottingham Career Services.

Answering the Big Questions

For the University of Nottingham, one of the biggest areas of improvement with CareerHub has been the scheduling module. With CareerHub, the Nottingham careers team can easily make and amend appointments with advisors that can fit with students availability and their own timetables as well as graduates while also providing all the relevant information in one place; the notes module in particular is really good.

In terms of reporting, previously the University of Nottingham used spreadsheets extensively, that did not enable the staff to see the full student picture, which was frustrating. "It didn't answer some of the bigger questions like which students are engaging, or what percentage of students engaged with our office," says Stuart Marriott, Associate Director of University of Nottingham Career Services.

Engaging the Gen Z Student

Ten years ago, the University of Nottingham re-evaluated their software systems and assessed that the careers platform was outdated. The previous system wasn't accessible and didn't contribute to the positive student experience that Nottingham students deserve. Additionally, the interface was far from user-friendly for both students and staff. Since launching CareerHub in 2019, students are able to book appointments online using a simple, accessible interface increasing the breadth of the career centres engagement and enhancing the overall experience for both students and staff. Searching for job vacancies using CareerHub is so much easier too and the number of opportunity views has exceeded all of the University of Nottingham's expectations.

Engaging the Employers

With CareerHub, the University of Nottingham is able to manage employer relations with large, prestigious companies, and small businesses alike... focused on the University of Nottingham engagement values. This encompasses working closely with the Symplicity team to customise the CareerHub interface to promote meaningful jobs front and centre, immediately after students log in. In tandem, the university has revamped its employer relations strategy to further promote smaller businesses. With CareerHub, the University of Nottingham enables local business to advertise jobs quickly and easily for free, thereby expanding relevant opportunities for students.

Managing the Pandemic with CareerHub

As the 2020 term began, the University of Nottingham was keen to book COVID-19 test appointments for students anxiously returning to campus. Acknowledging that CareerHub had a powerful and robust booking platform, the wider university turned to the careers team to see if CareerHub could be used to support COVID-19 testing. Working with the Symplicity team and university colleagues, the careers team enabled CareerHub to underpin students to book appointments for COVID-19 tests..

Expanding the power of CareerHub in this way is not a new concept and, in this case, "worked like a dream". The university didn't have to purchase, learn and drive adoption for a new system, there was no requirement for students to set up new accounts and passwords; student's information was immediately readily available.

Such was the success of this approach for supporting COVID testing for students, the University are now expanding CareerHub to support staff testing too.

“We've set CareerHub up, and a lot of the architecture and infrastructure, we can then use for other things, whether it's careers activity whether it's using other Symplicity platforms such as Advocate and Access. We know how the systems work and we know how to work with Symplicity.”

- **Stuart Marriott**, Associate Director of University of Nottingham Career Services

Looking Ahead

For the University of Nottingham, utilising CareerHub has not only driven improved reporting analytics capability and streamlined processes, but it has also increased engagement as COVID-19 enforced remote engagement. January 2021 was one of the university's most successful student-engagement months. With this level of engagement, the University of Nottingham is going to be utilising Symplicity CSM's Virtual Career Fair Module for graduate jobs and internships.

“We know how it works. We know how to work with Symplicity. We've got data protection impact assessment, and we've done supplier assessment and continue to be very, very pleased with Symplicity.”

- **Stuart Marriott**, Associate Director of University of Nottingham Career Services

Why Should a University Consider Symplicity CareerHub?

At the University of Nottingham, Symplicity has been a keen partner in driving positive impact using CareerHub powerful capabilities. From transforming booking systems, driving incredible student engagement through to underpinning university-wide COVID-19 efforts, Stuart Marriott encourages those thinking about transforming their approach toward driving meaningful careers for students to think about what else the system can do to help solve a university's problems outside of the career centre.

Additionally, no matter what Nottingham has had to do, Symplicity's support team has always been readily available and keen to assist. With the expertise and knowledge of CareerHub, adapting the software to fit the university's needs has never been a hurdle.

“If we're trying to solve a problem, Symplicity have got the answer. I can put something in the help desk and in minutes it will be fixed, and I've got an explanation as to why and how something happened... [The support team] will find a way to help us and they really have an appetite to help us do stuff. I've never heard anyone at Symplicity say we can't do something to help us.”

- **Stuart Marriott**, Associate Director of University of Nottingham Career Services
