



| case study |

Glowing Report For Topaz As Payroll and HR Software Receive Top Marks



"The fact that Topaz was so user friendly allowed me to start processing payroll straight away and I can safely say that in my 17 years experience this is the best payroll solution I have used. If I were to give it marks out of ten then it would certainly get a nine possibly even a ten. We recently gave a demonstration of Topaz to staff from another college and they were so impressed that they were going to order it for themselves."

John Gurney, Payroll Manager, Aylesbury College.

Topaz EMS has received top marks from Aylesbury College after eliminating the stress of having to meet impractical deadlines from an outsourced payroll bureau and creating a flexible payment and HR system.

Three years ago, like many colleges that are now wanting to tighten their grip on finances and regain control of staff payments, Aylesbury took the payroll duties in-house by installing Topaz EMS Payroll and has reaped the rewards ever since.

Key benefits include -

- Total control of all payroll details and payments
- Flexibility to accommodate fluctuations in payments, which vary between 340 and 390 full and part-time staff
- User friendly procedures

Payroll Manager, John Gurney joined the Buckinghamshire College, in May 2003 and was immediately impressed with the capabilities that the Topaz system provided.

"One of the main advantages of having Topaz is that the college does not have the extra cost or a strict deadline of providing payment details to a payroll bureau but can process its ever changing wages very flexibly. Pay codes for staff can be activated as and when payments are due and there is no irritation of having to print unnecessary wage slips.

"I like the fact that Topaz provides me with the ability to only generate wages for the staff members that need to be paid in a particular month, which is very helpful during holiday periods - when some of the temporary staff do not receive payments," says John Gurney.



Company

- Aylesbury College

Business

- Education

Software solution

- Topaz EMS

Modules Installed

- Payroll & pensions
- Human Resources
- Staff Individualised Returns
- Variable hours contract

Benefits

- Vastly increased staff utilisation
- User friendly procedures
- Total control of all payroll details & payments
- Quick and efficient processing
- Enhanced reporting and data tracking
- Streamlined recording facilities

"With some other systems you have to print wage slips for all staff members or erase their pay codes from the system and give them a new code when they next require payments. This can be a real pain when it comes to Year End Returns and having the problem of supplying P60 forms to the Inland Revenue with zero revenue on them. But, thankfully, Topaz eliminates this problem."

Topaz EMS has also totally transformed the way that the HR staff operate at the College and a new Variable Hours module - for staff that only work when the students are on campus - has helped to streamline the payroll process even further

Jane Jones has been working in the College's HR department for 11 years and during that time she witnessed the slow decline in functionality of the previous DOS-based HR system.

The system's reporting functions were so slow and long winded that the HR staff found it to be a great hindrance and lost heart even trying to produce simple reports.

Now the Topaz HR software ensures -

- User friendly functionality to monitor staff qualifications and payroll details plus information such as probation periods and appraisal requirements
- Quick and efficient processing of annual Staff Individual Records - taking days to produce instead of weeks with the old system
- Enhanced reporting and data tracking procedures
- Streamlined recording of variable staff hours linked directly to payroll
- Ability to print out standardised staff CVs if required

"The HR software installed by Topaz has been a breath of fresh air for our department. It is user friendly and ensures that we can record, store and monitor all staff details such as qualifications, payroll details, as well as probation and appraisal information."

"By storing all these details the Topaz system has made a big difference in the length of time it takes us to submit our annual Staff Individual Records to the Learning and

Skills Council, with the Topaz software in place, instead of a few weeks, it now takes several days to produce all the records. This is due to the fact that the information stored on the system feeds directly through to the SIR screens and is part of a totally user friendly process."

When bespoke applications have been required by the College, the Topaz development team have also passed the test with flying colours.

"The level of service that Topaz provides has been terrific and I can't fault it. The Topaz staff have been very supportive and have helped us to develop the system to our own personal requirements."

"We have also worked with the Topaz team on a Variable Hours module," says Jane. "This is a valuable addition as it now allows us to track the hours of staff who only work when students are here or who come and go at different times of the year, when they are required for various aspects of specialist courses.

"This has ensured that we have streamlined the payroll process even further because we can feed all of this information electronically through to the payroll department eliminating the need to manually input the hours from temporary staff forms."

"It also means that the various team leaders no longer have to worry about keeping track of claim forms and getting temporary staff to sign them, which in turn frees up their time even further.

"There have also been occasions when we have called Topaz to help us out when time has been pressing and support staff have accessed our system remotely to make changes within a matter of minutes, which has been greatly appreciated, as it meant we could continue with our work without any lengthy delays.

"We are now confident that our HR duties and reporting procedures will be a benefit to the College and all the staff. This is due to the fact that what we get from Topaz is a company that listens to us and our requirements and makes the software solution work, with as little fuss as possible, for our particular needs."