



the first choice
for organisational improvement

Case Study:

Kingston Maurward College



Back row left to right: Ken Onions; Joy Pinnow; Fiona Renouf; Wing Lee Baker; Pete Churchill
Front row: David Henley

About the organisation

Name:

Kingston Maurward College, Dorchester, Dorset

Size:

250 employees, 500 full time students (including 60 residential) and 4,500 part time students.

Industry Sector:

Further Education

The first College in the South west to achieve the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) Standard, it delivers full and part time courses ranging from agriculture and animal care to floristry, business studies, forestry and sports coaching. It has 35 acres of formal gardens and a five-acre lake which are open to the public.

Why choose the Customer Service Excellence Standard?

The College works closely with business and agencies to ensure its services meet customer expectations. Having held the Charter Mark since 2005, it decided to apply for the new CSE Standard due to a number of continuing improvements in its services.

Equality and Diversity Manager Ken Onions explained: "We genuinely care about our customers, have challenging standards of service and are committed to developing an in depth understanding of customer need. We have a clear strategy for engaging and involving customers and use this to inform future planning."

The College's commitment to putting the customer at the heart of its service delivery prompted several unique initiatives. These included its Student Council with its paid members and its Total Access Council involving disabled students and others associated with the College. The Councils, along with the college's Gypsy and Traveller initiatives, have earned the college much-coveted local accolades and national recognition.

Since being offered training specially tailored to meet their itinerant lifestyle, members of this ethnic minority group within the county have worked through Level 1, 2 or 3 courses. "We received an Association of Colleges Beacon Award for going the extra mile to widen participation and make contact with hard to reach customers," said Ken.

The College, which also has a number of out reach facilities for isolated rural communities, uses individual learning, evaluation and customer satisfaction measures to help develop flexibility and choice.

**CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE**



The Government Standard

Implementation

The College has shared its success with its customers and partners through local publicity and college events. Plaques, plinths and other publicity materials from the CSE organisation are displayed throughout the campus..

“We are one of the first Colleges nationally - and the first in the South west - to achieve the award, which is quite an accolade for us,” said Ken.

As part of the College’s drive to encourage its public sector partners to follow its lead and apply for the Standard, Chief Executive and Principal David Henley is in the process of writing a number of articles for the industry’s journals about how the reflects the way the college deals with its customers.

What benefits have been gained?

Achieving the Standard has helped Kingston Maurwood make all of it’s customers, potential students and business partners aware of its commitment to putting them at the heart of its service. “It tells all our customers that we really mean it when we say we want to put them at the top of the priorities,” Ken said.

He also pointed to the advantages of this achievement when seeking public funding. “We are very aware of the kudos that comes through holding this prestigious Standard,” he commented.

Other benefits included:

- Greater focus and emphasis on the customer and the impact of the organisation
- Awareness of organisation heightened by applying the new criteria
- Profile of customer care raised across all parts of the service
- An organisational feeling of progression from Charter Mark to CSE
- Improved business profile from the publicity resulting
- Organisational pride in our achievements in being one of the first in the country and the credit of being part of the advice and guidance service to new applicants
- A springboard from which to apply for other business standard awards
- Annual assessor visit assures continuous improvement and reinforces the status of the award.

David Henley concluded: “Our achievement is down to all the people who work hard, often behind the scenes, to make sure that everyone who visits, works or studies here is given excellent customer service.”

Assessor Leon Winston highlighted:

“This is a College firmly committed to getting it right for its customers, with an exciting and innovative approach to tackling hard to reach and disadvantaged groups of which the college can very proud.”

