

*skills* **4** *success*

e: [enquiries@skills-4-success.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@skills-4-success.co.uk)

[www.skills-4-success.co.uk](http://www.skills-4-success.co.uk)

*Transformational Improvement Programme*

*Russell Group University Case Study*

# THE BRIEF

**Skills4Success** was asked to lead a transformational change programme for a major top ten Russell Group by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer.

The programme aimed to generate significant financial savings **without redundancies** through process simplification and increased departmental cooperation to break down barriers and generally improve student and staff satisfaction.

The project focused on improving administration processes which would ultimately benefit academics and students alike, whilst the key savings focus was initially on the Estates support functions.

# OUR APPROACH

## What we did

Having significant experience of driving complex change programmes for large organisations, including the NHS, we were well aware that any change implemented needed to engage and empower staff and be rapid in order to maintain momentum. We were also aware that a number of initiatives had previously been tried internally which had failed to gain traction, hence credibility and delivery were key.

As a result we adopted our tried and tested rapid improvement methodology to the majority of issues and spent considerable time working with staff members to understand key issues and opportunities for improvement.

This work was supplemented by training over 350 senior employees in our transformational improvement techniques to provide a level of competence and understanding of what could be expected. Attendance on the programme was considered essential for career advancement.



# RESULTS ACHIEVED

We agreed and developed a sector leading benefits tracker with Group Finance that validated and tracked achievements against 5 Year Plans on an ongoing basis. Three types of benefits were captured, including financial, experiential and capacity improvements where staff roles changed to meet the needs of expanding departments or new teams that would have previously been recruited.

The programme pre Covid-19 delivered the following benefits:

**£19 million identified benefits**

**£13 million realised benefits**

**£2.4 million capacity savings**

**140 experiential benefits**

**Provided a 7:1 ROI**



# OUR APPROACH

## What we did

# SPECIFIC HIGHS

## Administration

**68-96%** student satisfaction improvement - Enrolment  
**48-88%** improvement in staff satisfaction - Arrivals  
**56-8 days** reduction in student application turnaround  
**33% reduction** in Management Accounts turnaround  
**26% reduction** in Research Contract turnaround times  
Won **THELMA** for Best Student Admissions Department

## Facilities

Over **£9 million saved** in the following areas:

- University vehicles
- Waste & Recycling
- Cleaning
- Transport
- Portering

Identified additional 25%/£12 million in Maintenance productivity improvements

# CASE STUDIES



## Student Admissions

Case Study

We have a range of case studies highlighting our results and approaches in the sector. Should you wish to obtain a copy of a specific case study, please contact: [lawriecatt@skills-4-success.co.uk](mailto:lawriecatt@skills-4-success.co.uk)



## Right to Study

Case Study



## Student Enrolment

Case Study



## Arrivals Weekend

Case Study



## Research & Impact

Case Study



## Cleaning Services

Case Study



## Transport Review

Case Study

Russell Group University

# Student Admissions

Case Study  
Russell Group University

## Reason for Action

Top 10 Russell Group University needed to:

- Improve the student experience by reducing student application turnaround times from 56 days
- Improve academic satisfaction running at 50%
- Increase the number of applications processed from 760 decisions per week:

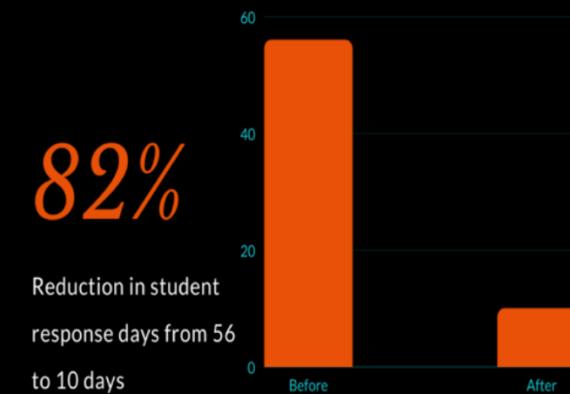
## Approach

Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) approach adopted.

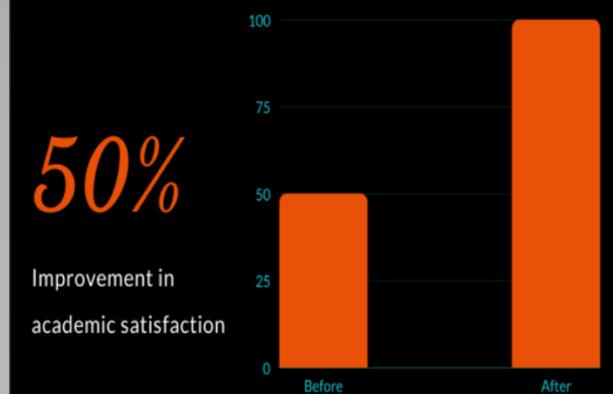
## Results:

- Led to::
- 82% reduction in student response times from 56 to 10 days
  - 39% increase in applications processed to 1061 per week
  - 50%-100% increase in academic satisfaction
  - Awarded Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Award (THELMA) for best Student Admissions department

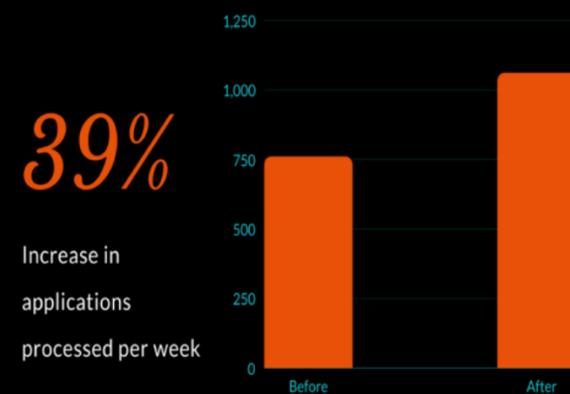
### REDUCTION IN STUDENT WAIT TIME



### INCREASE IN ACADEMIC SATISFACTION



### INCREASE IN APPLICATIONS PROCESSED



### ACHIEVED NATIONAL RECOGNITION



# Student Enrolment

## Case Study Russell Group University

### Reason for Action

Top 10 Russell Group University needed to:

- Improve the student experience by reducing long student queues at Enrolment
- Improve student satisfaction and the overall welcome experience for students
- Improve low levels of staff morale resulting in high levels of stress and staff absence

### Approach

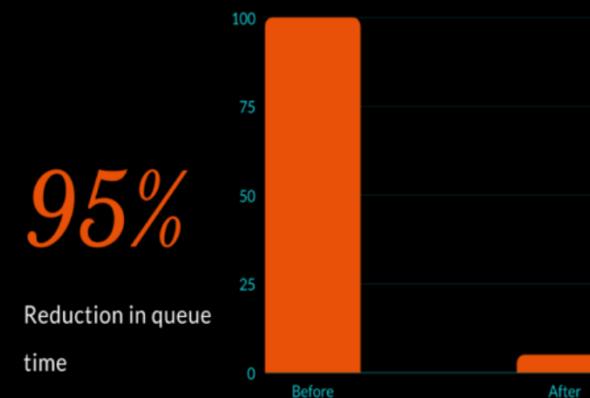
The initial principles to be adopted were agreed following a Lean simulation with the Senior Executive Team including the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer. The feasibility of the principles were then verified with a team of skilled practitioners currently involved in the process prior to assembling a team to undertake a Rapid Improvement Event over five days to develop and work up solutions to the existing problem. The team presented out and obtained approval to undertake a wide-ranging scale of changes from the Deputy Registrar and Academic Registrar.

### Results:

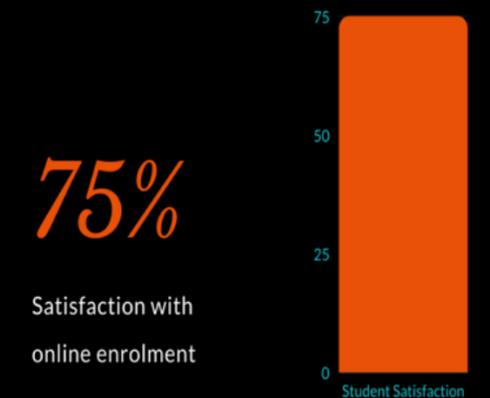
Led to::

- Separation of ID card and visa check process
- Earlier opening of the online enrolment process
- Advance photo ID upload and checking for international students
- Creation of an on-line dashboard tracking process
- Moved the Health Centre registration process online
- Recruitment and training of specific temporary staff to handle the workload enabling skilled staff to resolve more complex issues as they arose
- An increase in ID card collection satisfaction from 68% to 96% following booking slot introduction
- 95% reduction in queue time for overseas students to zero minutes
- Work provided the basis to enable a radical transformation of the Arrivals process. This work would not have been feasible without such a step change.
- Process evaluated year on year to make ongoing enhancements

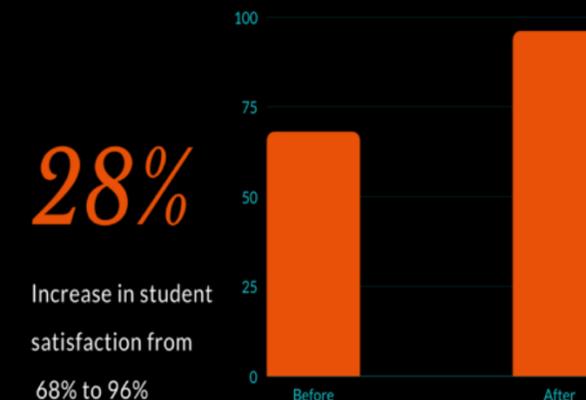
### REDUCTION IN QUEUE TIME



### ONLINE ENROLMENT SATISFACTION



### INCREASE IN STUDENT SATISFACTION



# Arrivals Weekend

## Case Study Russell Group University

### Reason for Action

Top 10 Russell Group University needed to:

- Reduce traffic gridlock in and around campus over Arrivals Weekend
- Analysis identified that 96% of students lived within 2 hours of campus and arrived between 10 and 14 hrs
- 73% of students arrived on Saturday with the remaining 27% arriving on Sunday
- Limited car park capacity around residences further compounded the grid lock
- Students and parents were forced to queue for hours
- The whole experience was less than optimal for parents, students and staff members

### Approach

- A series of process review workshops were held in November to analyse the root causes surrounding the poor student and staff experience. A plan was developed and agreed with a team of some 12 to 15 key individuals from across the University including the SU and discussions held with other similar universities.
- Decisions were taken at the highest level to implement the following:
  - Contract start dates amended to Saturday or Sunday contracts
  - Campus was divided into 5 zones each with designated holding and long stay car park arrangements. Each arrival was permitted a single 20 minute car parking slot.
  - Students were offered pre-bookable arrival slots throughout the day at 15 minute intervals
  - Detailed and simplified comms produced for students/parents and the 300+ staff involved
  - Formula 1 rapid changeover techniques were applied to unload cars within the given time slots
  - Over 200 student helpers were employed with trolleys to assist the process

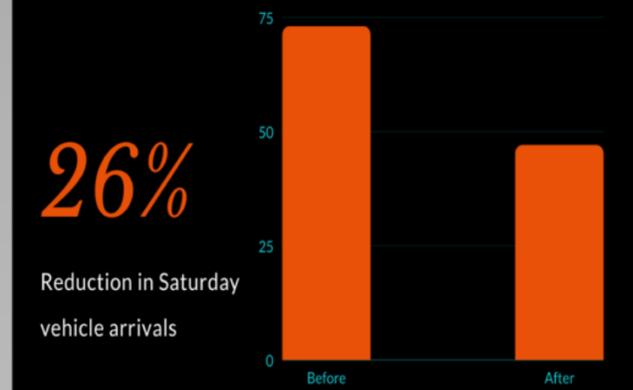
### Results:

- Led to:
- A total transformation of the student and staff experience. A calmness descended on campus. As many of the residences were free from traffic, the overall experience was a far more enjoyable one for parents and students alike enabling them to embrace the atmosphere on central campus

#### INCREASE IN STAFF SATISFACTION



#### BALANCED THE ARRIVALS FLOW



#### BALANCED THE ARRIVALS FLOW

90% of booked car slots arrived within 60 minutes

#### BALANCED THE ARRIVALS FLOW

"The calm, collected and professional manner in which it was conducted made me very proud and is absolutely the image we wanted to and did, convey to students and parents alike"

(Registrar)

# Research & Impact

## Case Study Russell Group University

### Reason for Action

Top 10 Russell Group University needed to:

- Improve the contract review and approval system for some 2,000 research contracts per annum
- Improve clarity of entry into the contracts support system
- Reduce the number of handovers (contracts passing through multiple officers prior to approval)
- Improve the proportionality of the review process in terms of risk and complexity (all contracts were treated the same way regardless of risk)
- Improve connections between the ultimate contracts signatory and the practitioner team
- Create a clearer framework and standards to guide contracts officers and academics

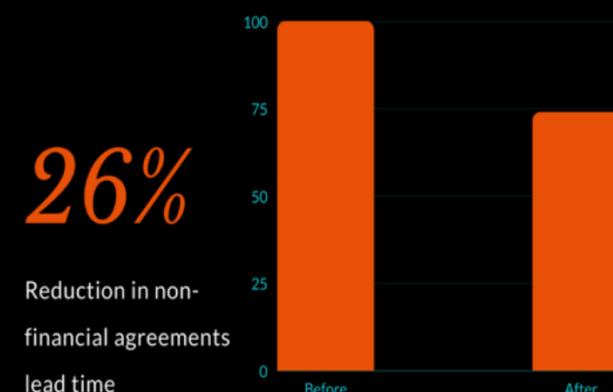
### Approach

Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) approach adopted.

### Results:

- Led to:
- The creation of one point of entry for grants and contracts
  - An early assessment of risk and complexity
  - A reduction in the number of handovers within the contracts review system
  - The creation of a new framework and set of institutional standards to guide contracts officers and academics during the negotiation
  - Structural changes within the contracts support team to increase levels of responsibility for officers to approve contracts, plus created a new integrated 'grants and contracts' support role
  - A reduction in contracts lead times of up to 26% for non-financial agreements and up to 24% for financial agreements
  - Reduced the number of process steps by 38% for medium risk agreements and 47% for non-financial agreements

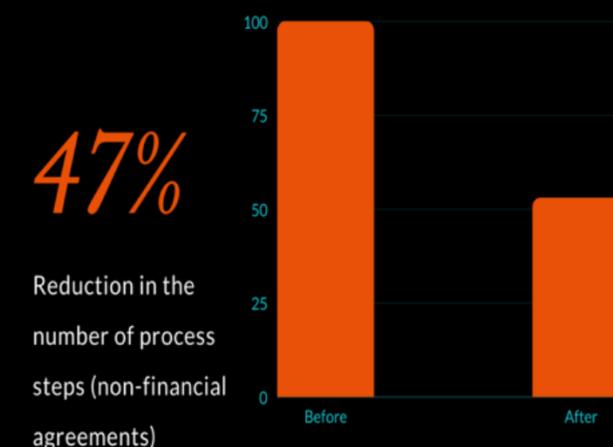
#### REDUCTION IN CONTRACTS LEAD TIME



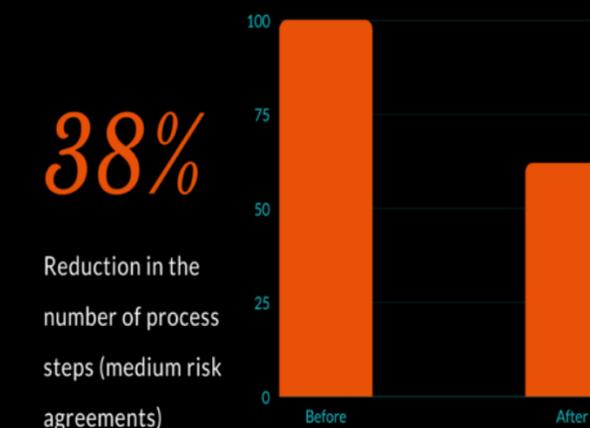
#### REDUCTION IN CONTRACTS LEAD TIME



#### REDUCTION IN THE NO OF PROCESS STEPS



#### REDUCTION IN THE NO OF PROCESS STEPS



# Transport Review

Case Study  
Russell Group University

## Reason for Action

Top 10 Russell Group University needed to:

- Review the existing Transport and Vehicle Strategy to improve operational efficiency, reduce cost and reduce the current carbon footprint.

## Approach

A number of mini-reviews were undertaken both internally and externally that collectively identified the following:

- Poor utilisation of existing sub-contracted bus services
- Poor utilisation of existing shuttle bus services
- Less than optimal cross-campus vehicle usage
- Significant over-reliance on diesel vehicles for short journeys
- A greater need for more carbon-neutral transport options for staff and students alike
- Analysis demonstrated that 50% of staff lived within 3.5 miles of campus

## Results:

Led to::

- Re-designing the existing post round process to free up staff and vehicles
- Termination of low utilisation externally contracted bus routes
- Introduction of strategically situated 'bikes for hire' across campus
- Replacement of diesel vans by electric vehicles
- Review of the Car Parking operation, plus 're-imagining' a more environmentally friendly campus experience post Covid-19
- Identified initial vehicle reductions in excess of 24%
- Generated transport savings versus 5 Year Plans in excess of £2 million

### TRANSPORT SAVINGS

>£2m

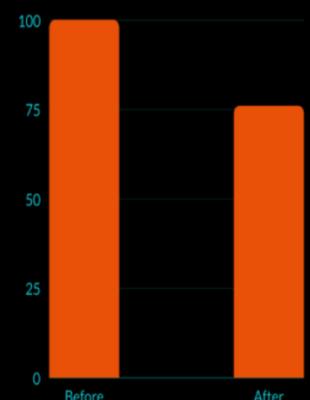
Saved against the 5 Year Plan



### VEHICLE REDUCTION

24%

Initial vehicle reduction



### RE-BALANCING THE VEHICLE FLEET

NO OF  
DIESEL VEHICLES

NO OF  
ELECTRIC VEHICLES



### IMPROVING THE CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

BICYCLE USAGE



# Cleaning Services

Case Study  
Russell Group University

## Reason for Action

Top 10 Russell Group University needed to:

- Reduce cost of the existing Cleaning Services operation whilst still maintaining an exemplar operation

## Approach

A Cleaning Services Review was undertaken that focused on engaging the senior management team in the process.

- Day in the life of studies were undertaken to understand the different cleaning regimes adopted across the 600 strong department, procurement practice and organisational structures around each of the three operating departments: Residential Cleaning, Academic Cleaning and Conference Cleaning.

## Results:

Led to::

- The creation of one amalgamated structure across all three areas
- Introduction of a new schedule for cleaning
- Improved procurement practices and lower cost per item
- Improved organisational learning and best practice sharing
- Created greater staff flexibility to respond to peak workload requirements in the most effective manner
- Led to significant savings of £1.7 million versus 5 Year Plans with full staff participation.
- Savings realised over 6 months + with no redundancies. All savings realised via staff natural attrition

### COST REDUCTION

£1.7m

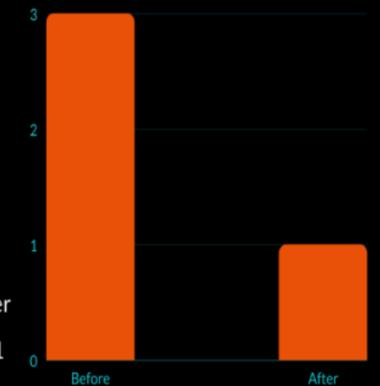
Saved against the 5 Year Plan



### REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF TEAMS

66%

Reduction in number of teams from 3 to 1



### CLEARER MORE CONSISTENT SUPPORT

- More collaborative working between teams
- Improved team work with Waste & Recycling and Post & Portering

### IMPROVED PROCUREMENT

- Improved buying synergies

# OUR CLIENTS



# OUR OFFERING



## TRANSFORMATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

We provide guidance and ongoing support for clients wishing to set up and deliver a Transformation Improvement Programme

## STRATEGIC PLANNING & RAPID IMPROVEMENT EVENTS

We plan and deliver strategic planning sessions with your senior team, plus facilitate and support scoping and facilitation of Rapid Improvement Events to address complex process issues

## TRAINING & VIRTUAL SUPPORT

We provide training in our interactive Transformational Development Programme, plus provide guidance and support to facilitate Rapid Improvement Events in addition to providing virtual consultancy and project management support

# *skills* **4** *success*

e: [enquiries@skills-4-success.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@skills-4-success.co.uk)

[www.skills-4-success.co.uk](http://www.skills-4-success.co.uk)

Call: Lawrie Catt on: 07947-647302