

Queen Elizabeth's School.

excelling in education with Equitrac Office from Nuance Communications

Challenge

- To bring control and visibility of print management throughout Queen Elizabeth's School
- To reduce print output
- To integrate printing with students' and staff's online accounts utilising the existing bio-metric and ParentPay technology

Strategy

- To deploy Nuance Equitrac Office on new multifunction devices
- To dispose of old and inefficient devices
- To standardise the print fleet and provide a consistent user experience

Results

- Estimated reduction in print output
- More effective cost recovery and accountability
- Advanced technology solution, fully integrated with the school's current ParentPay system
- Granular insight into printer use through Equitrac Office's comprehensive reporting
- Print confidentiality ensured thanks to document release secured with biometrics

Founded in 1573, the Queen Elizabeth's School is a Grammar School for boys aged between 11 and 18 and it holds an established reputation for academic excellence. While mindful of its illustrious past and long-held traditions, it actively embraces forward-thinking leadership, combined with the latest in technology. This progressive mindset ensures that every generation of students are able to excel by benefitting from the exceptional teaching upon which its reputation is founded. Today, the Hertfordshire-based school is using Equitrac Office, Nuance Communication's intelligent print management and cost recovery solution. Today, Equitrac Office is optimising the lives of the school's 1,200 pupils and 130 staff by making it easier for them to print securely.

The school's commitment to progress is visible in its classrooms and laboratories, which have been fitted with electronic whiteboards and projectors. These ensure each lesson is engaging and encourages memory retention. The school has several computer rooms and the new 6th Form Café has wireless internet access.

An Equitrac story that starts in a library

The school's journey to broader Equitrac Office deployment began with the desire to replicate the implementation in its new state-of-the-art library across the whole school, via a fleet of Multifunctional devices compatible with Equitrac Office. This move would bring a consistent user experience, as well as management and control, to its printing throughout the school in order to reduce print volumes and control costs.

It also promised to bring the staff and student payment process for printing and copying in line with the school's use of ParentPay, the income management and catering administration application which enables parents and pupils to add credit online for use within the school's canteen and on-site store. Queen Elizabeth's is a cashless school, so Equitrac's alignment to these systems was essential.

With Equitrac Office in place, each print or copy made by students or staff is deducted from their Online account, bringing cost recovery, print control and detailed reporting about print patterns and usage to the school. Furthermore, biometric technology authenticates users, ensuring that documents sent to a print device are only released to those authorised to retrieve them from the printer.

Not only does this ensure maximum security with confidential documents that can no longer be retrieved accidentally from a device, it also ensures print or copy costs are always correctly attributed to the user and department – and deducted from – the corresponding student or member of staff. Equitrac Office's reporting functionality has also given the school a detailed insight into its printing habits and allows the school to not only identify and charge costs, it is now also able to analyse printing trends to enable continued improvements and reduced costs. The ease with which this reporting can be done has saved the school's Print Room hours of time and enabled more timely and regular analysis of printing and copying habits around the school.

Flexible printing to meet changing needs

Emi Aghdiran, Assistant Head (Business Manager) at Queen Elizabeth's School, points to another benefit of the school's current print strategy:

"The new configuration has the potential for mobile print functionality which will enable users to print from mobile devices, like Smartphones, tablets and laptops. Furthermore, students will be able to send homework from their home PCs to print at school, so the print job can be released and collected at the chosen device the following day. In a school like ours with a very broad socio-economic mix of students, this is another equaliser."

Emi Aghdiran, Assistant Head (Business Manager)
at Queen Elizabeth's School

As to why Equitrac Office was the favoured solution for Queen Elizabeth's School, Emi explains: "Equitrac's longevity in the market was an important factor, while other schools and print manufacturers endorsed it, too."

Equitrac Office's flexibility ensures that rules have been set in place to default to mono and duplex printing. This further reduces print-related costs, while large print jobs can be diverted to the school's central reprographic department when necessary, to reduce paper, consumable and energy waste.

An investment for the future

With respect to day to day use, students and staff are equally impressed by its simplicity and efficiency, states Emi: "The training was very straightforward and the devices are intuitive to use. It was important the transition appeared seamless and immediately effective, as change in any organisation is difficult, especially if it impacts the students during their time with us. To best manage the changeover, we began the roll-out of the technology in the new library." This helped to familiarise them with the application before its broader deployment. The boys and staff now have ease of printing in several locations. Some additional long term benefits of the deployment are less print-related calls to the IT support department thanks to Equitrac Office's inherent reliability and that the school will gradually rationalise the use of desktop printers around the site, which itself is likely to deliver a direct cost saving.

And what of future developments for Equitrac Office? Emi believes that "...everything is working well. But currently we are only scratching the surface in terms of how we can use Equitrac. If we have the same conversation in six months time, I think I would be able to add even more examples of how we're using it." In the meantime though, Emi is adamant that: "Equitrac has definitely made an obvious improvement to Queen Elizabeth's printing efficiency. We are much better off now we have this solution." Given the school's pioneering use of technology and its vision, it is fair to assume this is just the start of the school's print revolution.

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