

The University of Huddersfield chooses the Barclaycard Business Government Procurement Card to deliver efficiencies



The University of Huddersfield was created in 1992. A dynamic institution in a thriving West Yorkshire town, it has grown to accommodate more than 20,000 students and 1900 staff. With an excellent graduate employment record and a high level of student support it attracts students from all over the UK and from more than 80 countries worldwide to study at the University.

Procurement Card Solution

In 2000 the University procurement department identified that a great deal of staff time and resource was being taken up with processing a large number of orders of relatively low value. As a result John Thompson, the University's Procurement Manager, and his team decided to investigate what solutions were available in the marketplace.

After looking at the options available from card providers, Huddersfield chose Barclaycard Business to supply the University with its Government Procurement Card. John Thompson said it was an easy decision to make, "We chose Barclaycard Business because it was clear they were the proven provider of the solution we needed, the others were really new kids on the block – we wanted a product that was tried and tested and Barclaycard Business was the only company that could deliver the product we needed."

Once the decision to partner with Barclaycard Business had been made the University began rolling out the cards to its staff. In year one, 31 cards were in operation. Since then it has steadily grown and there are now 73 cards in operation. From the very beginning the University was keen to ensure that all staff were trained on how to use the card properly. Using the training materials provided by Barclaycard Business, the University has developed a training course for all staff and it has now become a key part of the group staff development training programme.

A Secure Solution

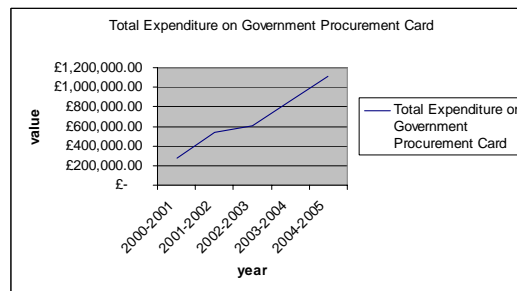
At the beginning of the rollout, the University was cautious and put in a series of rules and safeguards to protect against card abuse. As time has passed, John and his team have been extremely pleased with the way that the card has been used and the protection that the card provides. John says "At the beginning we were very cautious and purchase limits were kept at £250 per transaction. But since then we have only had one fraudulent transaction which was dealt with very quickly by Barclaycard Business with no charge to the University. As a result we have now been able to relax these controls and now have a purchase limit of £2,500 per transaction, giving our staff greater flexibility when using and managing their cards."

Encouraging suppliers acceptance

One of the key success points for the new Barclaycard Business Procurement Card was supplier acceptance. As soon as agreement between the University and Barclaycard Business had been reached, John and his team contacted all their suppliers informing them of their decision to use the card as their preferred method of payment. The University also asked suppliers whether they wished to accept the new card. Initial take up was strong and since then the number of suppliers has continued to grow. John Thompson adds "Since the card was introduced we have seen a very good conversion rate each year with more and more suppliers accepting our procurement card". To date the biggest supplier accepting the card has been the University's stationery supplier which now takes in excess of £200,000 a year.

Growing expenditure through the card

The rapid growth in the number of Huddersfield University suppliers accepting the card has meant that expenditure on the card has also grown strongly. Since its inception the value purchased through the card has grown from £273,000 in 2000 to more than £1,300,000 in 2005 and the Procurement team have a target to grow this to £1.5 million by 2007/8.



Delivering real benefits

For John Thompson the use of the Barclaycard Business Government Procurement Card has delivered real benefits for the University. As well as growth in supplier acceptance and the amount of expenditure put through the card, it has also meant real savings for the University. John is delighted by the results, "We have found that using the Barclaycard Business Procurement Card is an excellent way of paying for goods without going through the rigmarole of the order process. As well as being accepted by both staff and suppliers as the preferred method of payment, the University has reduced the number of invoices by a massive 40 per cent – based on the Government's own calculations the University has saved nearly £250,000 by using a procurement card in the last financial year as opposed to traditional invoicing."

John Thompson added "We are really pleased to have made the decision to move to using a Procurement Card and are delighted that we have been able to partner with Barclaycard Business to deliver significant savings and efficiencies for the University."

