



Barclaycard Business provides a flexible solution to Leicester College

Leicester College is one of the largest further education colleges in the UK. It has an annual budget of £45 million, employs 1,557 staff and is attended by over 27,600 students. A broad range of subjects are on offer at the four campuses and 200 community centres spread across the city.

Barclaycard Business has provided Leicester College with Government Procurement Cards (GPC Visa) since June 2005 when the college made the decision to streamline its purchasing policy. Jane Parkinson, Financial Accounting Manager, recalls that as the college already banked with Barclays they decided to trial the Barclaycard Business GPC Visa scheme.

She says:

“We started using the Barclaycard Business GPC Visa scheme in our Corporate Services Department as a pilot trial. This department purchases supplies for cleaning, catering and front of house. The success of the scheme has meant other departments have come forward and asked to be included.”

Leicester College now has 76 GPCs in departments across the college. Barclaycard Business worked with Leicester College to create a bespoke scheme that is flexible to each department's needs whilst still allowing the college to maintain control of expenditure centrally. This is achieved by setting merchant categories (which limit the types of purchases able to be made on each card), transaction limits and individual card limits on members of staff that regularly make purchases.



Jane Parkinson says:

“The success of the Barclaycard Business scheme for us has been that it is flexible and hassle-free. We have been able to set limits on individual cards which gives us confidence that expenditure is under control. But these are not fixed and the flexibility of Barclaycard Business’ customer services means that we can adapt these whenever necessary.”

The benefits of the GPC Visa scheme are felt by the Finance Department, the cardholders and suppliers. One major benefit is that purchase orders are no longer needed. Previously it would take two days to raise a purchase order before departments could buy any item. Now, goods can be purchased immediately. This means the finance department are more efficient, cardholders receive the supplies they need on time and suppliers benefit from immediate payment.

The feedback received from the cardholders shows the scheme to be popular. Feedback includes:

“I feel more in control of my departments spend and I am able to get more out of my budget.”

“We can now take advantage of special offers on the internet and book travel in advance, which is often cheaper.”

“When the freezer handle broke, I was able to order a replacement immediately. Within 18 hours the repair was complete; before it would have taken two days just to get the purchase order.”

“We can now register students online for exams in advance, it’s so easy.”

Jane Parkinson also reports that they have had a positive experience with Barclaycard Business customer services. The members of the financial team are able to pick up the phone and alter individual card controls immediately.

In conclusion Jane Parkinson says:

“Overall the scheme has been a real success and we are looking to complete the rollout to the three departments not yet signed up. We also hope to be able to develop the scheme to take advantage of other services Barclaycard Business offer such as the EMIT reports. I would not hesitate to recommend the Barclaycard Business scheme.”