



Case Study: Bolton Revenue & Benefits | July 2011

## Bolton Council Sets a Quality Standard with ActivExpression

*“ActivExpression gives us a powerful tool that turns what are frankly quite ‘dry’ subjects into engaging, efficient and ultimately more effective training sessions.”*

### Bolton Council

#### In Summary

The Policy and Quality team within the Revenue and Benefits service at Bolton Council is responsible for translating legislation changes into workable actions and solutions for its employees and customers. With training officers of just three full time equivalents, the Policy and Quality team is responsible for training approximately 160 council employees, which spans inductions, new starters, refreshers and the communication of policy changes.

#### The Challenge

For the Revenue and Benefits department at Bolton Council, the two key challenges facing the Policy and Quality team are; the complexity of materials that must be communicated and the frequency with which changes are made to policies – both at local and national level.

As a statutory service provided by the council, the provision of revenue and benefits must be closely monitored to ensure delivery is compliant with the latest legislation. Key to achieving this is an ongoing training and development programme that is highly responsive to changes and ensures effective knowledge transfer to employees.

Angie Daverage, Policy and Quality Manager for Bolton Council, explains: “The challenge for us lies in being able to efficiently bring teams up to speed with any changes, no matter how small. This is compounded by the fact some of our staff have been with us for many years, making it harder to keep the content fresh and the delivery engaging.”

In the spirit of sharing best practice, Bolton Council encourages its team to regularly visit neighbouring authorities to identify new ideas and techniques that could help improve operations in its own services. As part of this exercise, Angie came to learn about Promethean’s ActivExpression – a market-leading and award-winning Learner Response System and Assessment (LRSA) solution.

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### The Solution

Working with Promethean partner, LEB Partnership, Angie was able to learn more about ActivExpression. With full text capability, ActivExpression is a flexible alpha-numeric Learner Response Device which puts a powerful communication tool at the presenter’s fingertips. Simply set up a question and answer session and then individuals respond using ActivExpression, allowing the presenter to assess understanding, gauge opinion or stimulate debate.



Facilitating personalised learning, the self-paced mode within ActivExpression allows individuals to complete assessments at their own pace, with time of response and accuracy being recorded for evaluation upon completion.

Having seen ActivExpression used to great effect in training sessions at neighbouring councils, Angie appreciated how the system could be integrated into her own department to drive efficiencies, but more importantly, increase the effectiveness of knowledge transfer: “It was certainly more novel than the traditional way of formative assessment and evaluated employees’ understanding. However, beyond this the potential for the technology was obvious – it would help inject more life into our ‘dry’ subjects, and from a practical perspective, make our sessions more efficient.”

### The Benefit

To ensure ActivExpression could be used to support the delivery of a wide range of subjects, Angie commissioned LEB Partnership to deliver a programme of training: “LEB was really good at showing us what we could do with the technology, which meant once we had completed the training we were really ready to put it through its paces. The team at LEB continued to be responsive as we explored how we could use ActivExpression—they gave us excellent support.”

By exploring the features and functionality of ActivExpression, Angie and her team established additional benefits from the system, including training needs analysis: “The self-paced mode of ActivExpression really came into its own with training needs analysis. Our staff quite often request training on a topic, even if we believe them to be competent. Using self-paced questions with ActivExpression we can conduct a training needs analysis with an individual and 98 percent of the time we confirm that training is not actually necessary. As well as giving employees renewed confidence in their abilities, it helps us save time and resources by not undertaking training when it is not required.”

The positive contribution ActivExpression has made to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of training, and ultimately making it more enjoyable is echoed throughout the Policy and Quality team and employees within the Revenue and Benefits service. However, the technology is going beyond its boundaries and delivering tangible benefits in other areas: “Since you can export results into Excel, we’re able to easily share information with line managers and use this in one-to-one appraisals. The obvious benefit is time savings all-round – it also makes information sharing between departments much easier.”

To find out more about Promethean’s business solutions, please contact LEB Partnership Ltd., or learn more at [www.prometheanworld.com/business](http://www.prometheanworld.com/business)



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