

University of Sussex boosts disabled student engagement and budgeting accuracy

An Amano client service case study

The challenge

At 20% of the total student population, the University of Sussex has a higher than average rate of disability disclosure among its student population compared to the national average of 16% (HESA, 2021). The Disability Advice Team at the University of Sussex provides support and guidance to over 4,600 disabled students, with a key focus on supporting disabled student retention and attainment. Non-Medical Help (NMH), including one-to-one support workers for students, is a high volume service offered through the Disability Advice team.

With a large and growing population of students with disabilities, the Disability Advice team needed faster and clearer oversight of student engagement with the support worker service offered, which includes notetakers, lab assistants, study assistants and sighted guides. Outsourcing the management of the support workers offered a strategic solution to better meet the needs of their disabled students, and also allowing repurpose of internal resources.





The solution

The University of Sussex decided to partner with Amano, a specialist provider of Non-Medical Help services for higher education institutions. Amano created a bespoke service that included:

- Building a dedicated, on-site support worker pool, who were recruited, trained and managed by Amano's head office team.
- A comprehensive reporting system, which collected and analysed data on various aspects of the service, such as student engagement, support worker performance, feedback, communication, and outcomes.
- A collaborative partnership, which involved regular communication and feedback between Amano and the Disability Advice Team, as well as face-to-face meetings and invitations to join the team's meetings and on-site engagement events with the support workers.



The results



Increased student engagement and satisfaction with the support worker service.



Robust support worker team who were able to provide tailored and flexible support to meet the diverse needs of disabled students.



Improved budgeting accuracy with data from the reporting system providing greater evidence-based insights. Not only justifying the costs of the support worker service for a growing population of students, but also helping identify any areas for improvement and efficiency.



Individualised student data and a bespoke 'flagging system' designed into the reporting system helped highlight students who may be at risk of falling off track, enabling the team to focus attention where needed to prevent disengagement before it happened.



Enhanced team productivity, as the team was able to focus more on delivering personalised, high quality support to the students, rather than managing the administrative and operational aspects of the support worker service.



UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX

“ Nasim Shakoori, Head of Student Advice and Guidance said:

We can go into next year with really strong budgetary understanding. Plus, we see and feel like we have a team behind us in Amano, which is very reassuring. We have invited the Amano team to join our Disability Advice team meetings and they have visited us on site to review progress of the contract face to face.

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“ Natasha Hardiman, Amano Head of Operations said:

We can drill into specific student data and flag any that are at risk of falling off track, allowing our Amano head office team to step in and encourage the student to take up their support, and for us to notify the team at the University, so that they can also keep track and provide support from their side.

We also monitor the different areas of support to see where we may need to connect with individual support workers and ensure they have the tools they need to meet the requirements of the role. This ensures that no part of our service can go unseen and therefore the students needs should be met with a consistent and reliable service.

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Amano's support at the University of Sussex in numbers



44

Amano Support Workers recruited, trained and now engaged with University of Sussex students.

7,335

hours of support delivered to students in the first 6 months of contract go live.

99%

of all students received within the first 6 months of contract go live successfully matched.

77%

of all students engage at least once every 30 days with their support worker.



What the University of Sussex team says about Amano

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The Amano reporting is an outstanding tool in terms of student monitoring. It provides an additional layer of insight into what is going on with students who may be falling off track. This gives us the confidence as a disability support team to make decisions and communicate with students at a personal level. Also can help move to a solution faster, such as understanding who might be best to help resolve an issue – is it best placed with us or is it something Amano can help with? Or do we both need involved?

- Mike Pudan, Lead Disability Advisor

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Working with Amano has helped ease pressure in terms of our involvement with admin. This allows our team to focus on other areas of service delivery. Our approach focuses on empowering students to take control of their own support through their improved independence. With less time spent on admin we can spend more time on providing tailored advice to each student.

- Imogen Pennington, Disability Coordinator

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Amano offers a great forecasting report. It can be tricky to estimate costs due to variable student engagement and it is also hard to estimate how many hours each student might need. I appreciate Amano's approach to reporting and how they take care in listening and understanding what we need to know. The service far exceeds what we hoped for.

- Nasim Shakoory, Head of Student Advice and Guidance

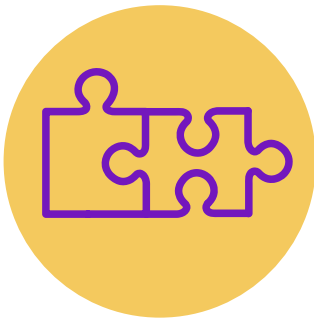
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Amano is part of the eQuality Solutions Group

Amano is part of a specialist group of companies that offer end-to-end solutions in diversity, equity and inclusion.

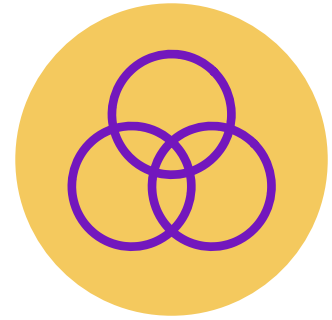
Our services



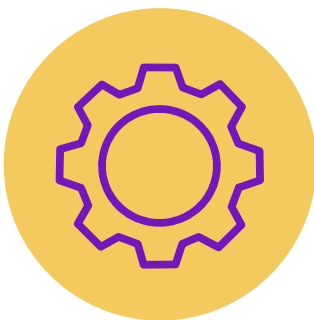
Psychological assessments



Neurodiversity awareness training



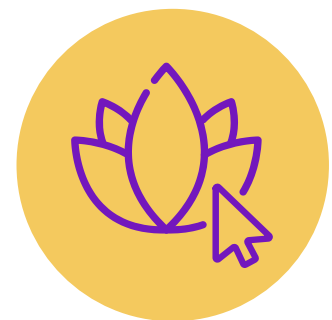
Non-Medical Help
(such as mental health mentors)



Assistive Technology (AT)



AT Training



AT and wellbeing e-learning



Get in touch

To find out about how Amano or any of the eQuality Solutions Group of companies can create a bespoke support service to meet your organisation's needs, speak to our Head of Operations Natasha Hardiman:

Natasha.hardiman@e-q-s.com



Visit Amano's website to find out more:

amanosupport.com



Amano is an eQuality Solutions Group (eQS) company. Visit eQS' website to find out more about our wider diversity, equity and inclusion services, for your students and your staff: e-q-s.com