

Newcastle University, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK

Providing a First-Class Student Experience Using SAP HANA



With SAP HANA, we have near-instant response times, enabling us to deliver real-time data to our users and create innovative processes. We can now reimagine the way we run our organisation and provide better services to our students.

Alan Cecchini, SAP Development Manager, Newcastle University

Challenges

- Increasing volumes of data leading to decreased performance and slower system response times
- Time-consuming overnight batch processing and unacceptable wait times for reports
- Rising system landscape complexity
- Hardware approaching end of life

Benefits

- Real-time insights to support decision-making
- Quick access to an accurate picture of the student body
- Ability to roll out intuitive apps to improve student satisfaction and retention
- Instant responses to student queries
- Reduced data footprint, resulting in faster system copy, patching, and backups

Solutions

- SAP HANA
- SAP Business Suite powered by SAP HANA
- SAP BW powered by SAP HANA
- it.education based on SAP Student Lifecycle Management

Why itelligence?

- Key focus on innovation in higher education
- Strategic SAP partner, providing application management services, technical and functional consulting, advisory services, and software maintenance
- Support for the SAP HANA proof of concept

300-400%

Performance improvement





<1 second

System response times

A Culture of Immediacy

In higher education, expectations are higher than ever. Students demand value for money, which means they want instant information, efficient services, and intuitive apps. This puts higher education institutions under growing pressure to offer an outstanding student experience and to increase student satisfaction.

Newcastle University was quick to recognise the rising expectations. The red brick university is well-known for its research and attracts over 23,000 students from around 120 countries. For over 17 years, it has been using SAP ERP and a number of other SAP solutions to manage its back office systems. However, with increasing volumes of data, performance was declining and it was taking too long to run reports.

In order to become more responsive to students' needs, the university decided to upgrade to the SAP HANA database platform. As the existing hardware was approaching end of life, the time was right to switch to new technology.

Providing Improved Student Services

First, the university needed to build a business case for SAP HANA. To do this, it collaborated with itelligence to carry out a proof of concept and test the performance of all key systems. The results were convincing. On the old database, it took 40 minutes to transfer 600,000 student records; the same process takes just 11 seconds with SAP HANA.

The performance boost enabled the university to free up considerable time in its overnight processing window, which can now be dedicated to more valuable tasks. SAP HANA has also accelerated reporting in key university processes, such as clearing and registration. These reports now run in around a second, giving hundreds of users real-time information that they can immediately act on.



Without itelligence's help, the proof of concept wouldn't have been possible. SAP HANA really does deliver everything promised.

Chris Burns, Business Systems Technical Manager,
Newcastle University

For example, now the university staff have an accurate picture of the student body, they are able to instantly respond to student queries over the phone. They can also provide students with smartcards straight away – rather than waiting for overnight batch processing. The website and course statuses can also be updated in real time, ensuring the university makes the right offers and fills all of its courses.

Furthermore, the migration has significantly decreased the data footprint – enabling faster system copies, upgrades, and backups. This added productivity and the simplified system landscape is expected to reduce support costs and total cost of ownership in the long run.

On a Path of Innovation

The move to SAP HANA will enable the university to stay current and leverage advanced solutions in the future. For example, it already plans to roll out SAP Fiori mobile apps to its students to give them quick and easy access to all the information they need. A move to the next-generation business suite SAP S/4HANA is also in the pipeline.

Thanks to SAP HANA, Newcastle University can ensure it continues to appeal to digitally empowered students for generations to come.



Company:
Newcastle University

Industry:
Higher education

Products:
Public research university
with 24 academic schools
offering around 175 full-
time undergraduate degree
programmes

Number of employees:
5,628

Turnover:
£475.3 million (2015)

Website:
www.ncl.ac.uk