

Case Study

Petroc College

Delivering the complete classroom experience to rural areas



The Challenge

How to tackle a 30-mile distance between campuses without wasting time and resource on travel.



The Solution

Installation of virtual classrooms at the Mid Devon campus to allow remote teaching over Vscene.



The Results

Reduced travel time and expense, and a real-time classroom experience for all.

The Client

The award-winning Petroc College offers a wide range of study programmes, courses and qualifications including A-Levels, apprenticeships, Higher Education, vocational training, part-time and adult evening classes. It is one of the most rural colleges in the UK, with a catchment area of over 1,500 square miles.

The Challenge

Petroc College faced a difficult geographical dilemma:

- Following the merger of North Devon College and East Devon College, the college found they were stretched between two locations.
- The college now has two campuses based in North Devon and a third campus located 30 miles away in Mid Devon.
- With low student cohorts, it was unviable to run courses in the Mid Devon campus. Teachers would have to travel three hours to teach a one-hour lesson.

Petroc was keen to find a way to ensure teaching time was utilised in an efficient and cost-effective manner. They also wanted to ensure that the

smaller groups of learners in rural Devon had the same access to education.

The Solution

By installing virtual classrooms, Petroc was able to deliver remote learning to students at the Mid Devon campus.

- Each virtual classroom was fitted with two screens; one showing the lecturer (teaching remotely from North Devon) and one to view shared content.
- Quality and visual technology brought the classroom experience to life.
- Thanks to the high resolution and frame rate, students and lecturers felt as though they were in the same physical classroom

The solution included Vscene, the class scheduling platform and V-Room, an all-in-one hardware bundle.





Improved teaching experience

Superior audio and visual technology is the key to success. Learners feel the presence of the lecturer, despite being located over 30 miles apart. This means the standard pedagogy style is still effective. Teachers simply walk into the classroom and start teaching.



Improved learner engagement

Learners have quickly adopted the new technology and the new method of teaching delivery. The collaborative working style has encouraged greater interaction between learners. In short, learners are more focused and engaged.



Improved use of resources

Petroc has enjoyed significant savings on time and expense of staff travel. In addition, smaller cohorts now have access to courses that were previously unviable due to the distances. Improving the use of lecturer time has been invaluable to the college budgets.

“Distance doesn’t exist with Vscene and V-Room. 100% pass rate in our Functional Skills English - the results speak for themselves!”

Joanne Byrne, Head of Progressive Studies, Petroc College

Client Q&A

Neil Tanton, Head of IT Services

What were your main priorities when sourcing a solution?

We already had an old video conferencing system that was in need of an upgrade because of age. In order to provide more opportunity for in learners in rural areas, we wanted to find a solution to deliver education if course uptake was low.

The college had the V-Room set up in the boardroom and a couple of meeting rooms. Impressed with the technology, we decided to expand our use of V-Room into the college campus to deliver remote teaching to our Mid Devon campus.

Do you have further plans to extend the use of V-Room and Vscene?

Currently we use the V-Room hardware and Vscene platform to remotely deliver education from our North Devon Campus into learners at our Mid Devon campus. In the future, we would like to use the bring two groups of learners together to collaborate. We would also like to use this as a platform to deliver blended learning with organisations in the private sector.

Joanne Byrne, Head of Progressive Studies

Did lecturer pedagogy have to change with the new technology?

Having simple, easy to use technology was key to quickly grow lecturer confidence in remote delivery. Pedagogically, the importance of a positive and engaging teaching style remained, and this form of education delivery has promoted independent learning skills in our students.

What do you believe are the main tangible benefits so far from using the solution?

The ability to extend the delivery of our education to learners who may have previously not had access to this due to low uptake. Also, better utilisation of lecturer time by reducing travel to Mid Devon and as such reducing the financial impact to the college.

