

PS-EdTech Consulting

Client: Federation for Industry Sector Skills and Standards (FISSS)

Date:
Dec 20 – ongoing

Project: Strategic Consultancy for Apprenticeship Management Software



Client overview: Federation for Industry Sector Skills & Standards (FISSS)

- FISSS promotes and supports the 21 UK Sector Skills Councils, the employer-led skills organisations covering in total approximately 90% of the UK workforce. FISSS is the sole provider of apprenticeship certification for apprenticeship frameworks in England, Scotland and Wales.
- Following the introduction of apprenticeship standards in 2015 FISSS commissioned an external software business to develop the cloud-based ACE360 software system. Launched in 2018 ACE360 is the only industry-wide apprenticeship management system that joins Training Providers to End Point Assessment Organisations and External Quality Assurance Providers in one system, to manage Apprenticeship Standards efficiently, securely and online.
- The introduction of ACE360 into a competitive marketplace for apprenticeship standards assessment management systems marked a move away from FISSS operating as a charity with a monopoly position in the market to a competitive commercial EdTech solution provider.

Consultancy assignment brief

Working directly with the FISSS Chair and COO the consultancy assignment involved:

- Carrying out a product review and options appraisal for ACE360 End Point Assessment software product, to address the commercial objective to get to profitability then execute recommendations.
- Review looked at ACE360 value proposition, current financial position and forecast, market assessment and sizing, qualitative and quantitative market survey, what it would take to get to profitability, organisation structure, staff skills and competencies required to implement changes.
- Refining the sales engagement and operating model to support market growth.

Consultancy outcomes

1. Recommendations to invest in in-house development of the ACE360 product, restructure and scale up to grow the business, underpinned by a three-year business case were approved by the Board.
2. Consultancy contract was extended to cover support in delivery of the recommendations, working with the COO and other team members, including:
 - Support with the organisational re-structure, defining job roles and objectives, candidate skills and competency profiles, recruitment across the business including sales executive, implementation & training manager, software developers & product manager role.
 - Support in the introduction and implementation of agile software development process, refreshed value proposition, product vision, product roadmap, prioritisation of product backlog and enhancements including creation of a user group to consult on product development.
 - Support in refining sales engagement approach, budget, forecasting and performance reporting.
 - End of first quarter after commencing the change programme, FISSS was trading £140k ahead of budget with four new hires recruited and notable improvements in staff motivation and engagement.