



## Case Study

# Capita Education Services' first Site of Excellence in Scotland Forth Valley College

The importance of a robust Student Records Tracking Solution (SRTS) and Management Information System (MIS) has been crucial in assisting the recent merger of Clackmannanshire College of Further Education (FE) and Falkirk College of Further and Higher Education (FHE).

The merger saw the creation of Forth Valley College - making it the fifth largest college in Scotland. Capita Education Services (ES) UNIT-e SRTS software solution provided a stable framework that the newly combined College can use for a wide range of activities including student records and management information. The College is also able to use UNIT-e SRTS software solutions in a number of original and innovative ways - the very reason they became Capita ES' first Site of Excellence in Scotland.

### How Capita ES became involved

When the merger created the new College it was necessary to implement a SRTS and MIS system that would minimise disruption to the combined college's operational efficiency. Fortunately the relationship with Capita ES goes back some eight years and the UNIT-e SRTS suite of software and services had already been in use for four years.

The need for the new college was to ensure that the merger enabled the establishment of a SRTS and MIS that would be able to deliver to all parts of the college. This required a system that embraced a wide range of services including the organisational infrastructure of the college, its curriculum and resourcing requirements as well as issues such as admissions and enrolment. In short it required a system that could deliver to management, administration and teaching staff as well as to learners.

Building on the experience with the UNIT-e SRTS system, Forth Valley was able to deliver on all these aspects. In recognition of its excellent and innovative use of UNIT-e SRTS software solutions, in May 2006 the College became Capita ES's first Site of Excellence in Scotland, and the third across the UK.

### Background

Forth Valley College was formed in August 2005 by a merger of Clackmannan College of FE and Falkirk College of FHE. Now the fifth largest college in Scotland, Forth Valley covers three local authority areas – Clackmannanshire, Falkirk and Stirling – with three main campuses in Alloa, Falkirk and Stirling and over 30 community learning centres across the Forth Valley area. It has an annual student enrolment of around 24,000, 800 staff and runs over 1,500 courses.

Forth Valley College offers a broad FE curriculum as well as a higher education programme with courses validated by the Open University, Herriot-Watt University and Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh. It is also the lead college for the Scottish Biodiversity Consortium and its range of courses attract students from over 30 non-EU countries.

“The implementation of the software is now being seen to benefit not only staff but also learners.”

David Allan, Depute Principal, Forth Valley College

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## Why Capita ES and UNIT-e SRTS work for Forth Valley

One of the issues facing Forth Valley was the way that they could integrate the SRTS and MIS systems of the combined colleges in a way that minimised disruption to the new College at the operational level. This has been achieved efficiently and effectively due to the robustness and adaptability of UNIT-e SRTS, along with Forth Valley's experience of working with it in innovative ways across a whole range of the College's activities and across the constituent centres of the combined College.

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The College has developed a strong working partnership with Capita over a number of years and the accolade of the Site of Excellence recognises and supports the College's vision of fully integrating all College systems with UNIT-e SRTS at the hub.

David Allison, Head Of Administration, Forth Valley College.

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### About the Site of Excellence scheme

The Capita ES Site of Excellence scheme is designed to identify and reward those sites that are making the best use of the UNIT-e SRTS software solutions above and beyond that of a standard installation. A Site of Excellence will have demonstrated one or more areas of excellence or innovation and integrated the technology to deliver the intelligent capture of information, storage, manipulation and application to support the needs of academic, business and learner users.

A central element of the Site of Excellence scheme is to encourage a closer working relationship between Capita ES and the sites. Key benefits for the customer include priority service levels, increased access to technical and product information, participation in Practitioner Forums as well as attractive discount packages and vouchers.

Image on front, from left: David Allison, Head Of Administration, Forth Valley College, David Allan, Depute Principal, Forth Valley College and Steve Braund, Director Capita ES.

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