



# ACHIEVING DIGITAL FIRST: ON TIME, ON BUDGET AND WITH GREATER RETURNS.

The Office for Students (formerly HEFCE) has partnered with Kainos WorkSmart and Workday to transform its HR, Payroll and Finance functions, delivering operational efficiencies and moving one step closer to meeting the Government's target of a true Digital First public sector by 2020.

## The Requirement

At a time when the public sector continues to face considerable budgetary challenges, agencies are also under pressure to deliver the Government's Digital-by-Default agenda. The Office for Students (OfS) is no exception to this requirement. A non-departmental UK public body, it has been responsible for the distribution of funding to universities and colleges of higher and further education in England since 1992.

## The Gap

The OfS had legacy systems that were aged in terms of look, feel, and functionality. The systems were disjointed, limiting both data flows and management reporting. There were up to 10 disparate systems, some causing more issues than others. The aim was to free up resources that were traditionally focused on transactional tasks, by deploying innovative systems that take the department forward. Adding both value and insight that can feed into strategy, meeting digital-first priorities while minimising risk and maximising return on investment – all essential when dealing with public funds.

## The Solution

Having carried out high level market analysis, OfS identified that they wanted a single, multi-tenanted, cloud-based system and chose Workday.

Alison Jarvis, former Head of Finance for OfS commented, ***“Being a single system Workday makes it easy to combine finance and HR data, giving the organisation one source of truth and an accurate picture of the workforce. We felt that Workday was written in line with the GDS blueprint and, given that other products just weren't aligned as readily or***





*closely, it felt like a real step up. It also helps that Workday has an intuitive look and feel that is easy for employees to use.*

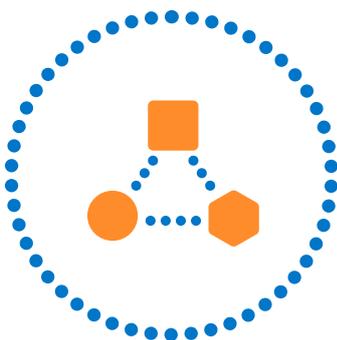
*The UK public sector has idiosyncrasies that can make us complex to work with. As anyone who has tried to deploy large system changes in the public sector knows, projects often come unstuck not because of the software, but how it is deployed. This is the part of the process where project creep, overspending, and the seeds of adoption success can flounder.*

*Therefore, we looked for a partner that specialized in Workday AND delivering digital transformation projects in the public sector, and that's when we found Kainos WorkSmart. We chose Kainos WorkSmart as our implementation partner primarily because of their understanding of the public sector. We were conscious that choosing a vendor like Workday is new territory for us, and having Kainos WorkSmart on board with its knowledge of similar projects in the public sector and its expertise in implementing Workday was a way of mitigating any perceived risk."*

## A Glimpse into the Future

The challenges OfS faced were threefold: an aggressive timeline of six months to implement Workday, HCM, Finance and Payroll modules across the organisation; increasing pressure on government budgets, and the need to show a return on investment that is now practically a prerequisite to any project.

The project focussed on establishing a set of design principles, and the mapping OfS current processes against best practice to make sure poor procedures weren't being replicated in the new system.



Jarvis had this to say *"Having come this far through the process, I understand the challenges that others now face – the need to minimise risk, to future-proof any solution and to get good advice from the outset. My best advice would be to really consider the market and all the options it provides. We learned that by*

*moving to an innovator in the market we really are reaping the rewards by choosing Workday and I believe it will make a step change in our organisational ability. Traditional solutions are the easy option but will always struggle to deliver the operational efficiencies that Government demands."*

OfS is now live with Workday, HCM, Payroll and Finance.