

Case study

How Newbury College transformed enrolment with Onefile





Newbury College believe in creating opportunities that transform lives. Whether learners are beginning their journey, developing their career, or growing their workforce, Newbury College offer high-quality technical and professional education designed to help people thrive.



Headline results

11

years of
partnership
with Onefile

Hours

down from 1-2 days

Average learner enrolment time reduced from 1-2 days to just a few hours

300 hours

Up to 300 hours saved on travel during peak enrolment (based on 100 learners)

1-2 roles

Equivalent of 1-2 full-time roles in staff time saved per year

£30k-£60k

£30,000-£60,000 estimated savings value from enrolment and RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning)



Before Onefile, enrolling an apprentice at [Newbury College](#) meant piecing the process together across paper forms and several different systems, none of it built with apprenticeships in mind. Getting a learner signed up could take a whole day, sometimes two.

To fix it, Newbury College adopted Onefile's [Enrol](#) and [RPL Funding Calculator](#), alongside [Eportfolio](#). The result: enrolment that now takes hours rather than days, hundreds of hours of travel time saved each year, and by the college's own estimate, the equivalent of one to two full-time staff members freed up.

The challenge

The college's enrolment process relied on the college's own involvement forms, which weren't designed with apprenticeships in mind. The result, in the college's words, **"was not built for apprenticeships and made the process harder."**



The team was juggling an MIS system, spreadsheets, forms, documents and PDFs, on top of paper, with nothing pulling it together in one place.

300

hours a year lost to travel

Getting anything signed off often meant travel too - with some employer sites up to an hour and a half away, a single visit to get paperwork completed or corrected could mean a three-hour round trip. With sign-ups concentrated into August and September, and based on around 100 learners, the college estimates this travel time could add up to as much as 300 hours a year - and that's assuming everything was completed correctly the first time.



Visibility was a problem too. Decisions on a learner's suitability lived with individual development coaches rather than in one central place, so when an employer queried a decision, the reasoning behind it wasn't always easy to find.



Why Onefile

Of everything in the Onefile suite, the [RPL Funding Calculator](#) has had the single biggest impact on the college's process. Before it, different teams recorded RPL decisions in different formats - making it hard to see the reasoning behind a decision after the fact.



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“It captures everything we need, and then when you look at a person's decision, you can see the thought process behind a development coach. Whereas a lot of the time, employers would contact me and say you've told this apprentice they're not suitable, and I wouldn't have that information. Whereas now with the RPL I can just log in - **I've got one source of information, and it works really well.** It clearly demonstrates why decisions are being made.”

— Liam Faughnan

Head of Apprenticeships, Business & Partnerships



That consistency has also proven useful for audit purposes, giving the college a single, defensible record of how and why each decision was reached.

What's changed

One connected enrolment journey

01 A single journey

Enrolment now runs as one connected journey rather than a series of separate steps.

Enquiry confirmed

RPL

Enrol

Eportfolio

Once an enquiry is confirmed, the learner is automatically set up on [RPL](#) and [Enrol](#) without any double or triple entry.

And once they're ready to progress, they can be sent straight across to [Eportfolio](#).

02 Problems surface sooner

That earlier visibility means problems surface sooner too.

[RPL Funding Calculator](#)

Acts as an early flag for where a learner's application is heading

[Learner Support](#)

helps establish what support someone will need

[Eportfolio](#)

makes it quick to add extra courses to a learner's record.

What's changed

One connected enrolment journey

03 Onboarding Outcomes



It's changed onboarding outcomes as well.

Because the college now only enrolls learners once it's close to certain they'll go on to complete, there's very little drop-off linked to the process itself

The vast majority of leavers do so before enrolment is complete, because the college has identified a concern, rather than the learner choosing to withdraw partway through.

04 Communication with learners

Communication with learners has also improved.

An early email sets expectations from the outset, and paperwork submission gives staff a natural point of contact.

Onefile Onboarding Portal

That's set to go further with the new portal, which will give learners a portal of information about college life and what to expect on their first day as part of the sign-up journey.

"Reimagining the enrolment process into something more immersive.

Described by the college

Audit and compliance

Onefile now sits at the centre of how Newbury College prepares for audit.



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"It's the heart of everything we do.

Everything that's going to be looked at in an audit is evidence from Onefile. You log into Onefile in the morning and spend your whole day in Onefile - that's for all the staff."

— *Liam Faughnan, Head of Apprenticeships, Business & Partnerships*

That's a marked change from the college's experience of an ESFA audit shortly after reopening post-COVID, when evidence had to be tracked down across multiple locations. Now, paperwork sits in Enrol, everything else in Eportfolio and RPL - giving the college, in its words, “everything” it needs in one place.

The college has also recently moved its reporting into Power BI, which it expects will help close remaining blind spots in auditing and compliance.



The results

	Before	After
Enrolling a learner	Up to 1–2 days	Hours
Travel to gather/correct paperwork	Up to a 3-hour round trip per visit	Handled online
Estimated annual travel time (100 learners)	Up to 300 hours	Recovered
Systems used for enrolment	MIS, spreadsheets, forms, documents, PDF, paper	Onefile (Enrol, RPL Funding Calculator, Eportfolio)
Audit evidence	Spread across multiple locations	Held in Onefile
Estimated savings value (enrolment & RPL)	—	£30,000–£60,000

5

months of cover
not needed

Onefile has also helped the college manage staff absence without disruption. When its head of apprenticeship MIS was off for five months, the college was able to manage compliance and data remotely rather than bringing in cover, because everything already sat within Onefile.

What's next

01 Reporting and Power BI

Newbury College sees further savings ahead as it makes fuller use of Onefile's reporting tools. Employer reporting, previously a manual task involving bespoke, employer-filtered reports, is expected to become significantly quicker with the [Power BI integration](#) - while also improving the experience for employers themselves.

02 Onboarding Portal and headroom

The college is also rolling out Onefile's new [Onboarding Portal](#) and believes there's more headroom to get value from Onefile even as it stands today: with a single, holistic view available to the whole team, the college can take on more learners without adding headcount and sees room to make even fuller use of the tools already in place.

“ In their own words

"It's freed up staff time to focus on important things such as building relationships. If you're sat there with a person, head down completing the paperwork, and you're an employer or a learner and a development coach is throwing information at you, none of it's sticking.

This allows us to send that, **the information's there, and they can go back to any point they want - and it allows our staff to just answer questions and check in with employers and learners.** It lets you tailor that journey to the employer. Compliance is quicker and easier too."

— *Liam Faughnan, Head of Apprenticeships, Business & Partnerships*





Less time on paperwork, more time on people

Implementing Onefile's [Enrol](#), [RPL Funding Calculator](#) and [Eportfolio](#) has taken Newbury College from a fragmented, paper-heavy enrolment process to one connected system - cutting enrolment time from days to hours, saving hundreds of hours in travel and freeing up staff time equivalent to one or two full-time roles each year.

With everything held in one place, the college is better placed to grow its apprenticeship numbers, stay audit-ready and spend more time building relationships with learners and employers rather than chasing paperwork.

Ready to see what Onefile can do for your apprenticeship programme?

[book a discovery call](#)

