

# MASSEY UNIVERSITY

## CASE STUDY

TINA HILLIAM

CONTACT CENTRE MANAGER

**Contact centre seats: 27**



Massey University's contact centre is an inbound/outbound fully blended multimedia centre using telephone, email, SMS text, web chat, fax and email. The centre operates between 8.30-5.00pm on Monday to Friday – during peak times calls can top well over 2000 per day, off-peak approximately 1000 per day.

### **Training status:**

Over 90% of current staff hold a national qualification and the contact centre currently has two staff members working towards one. Since starting training in July 2003 there have been 31 completions and only two terminations. They also have five registered assessors.

### **How did you get management to commit to national qualifications training?**

Prior to introducing national qualification training we visited a number of different contact centres to see how they were each approaching the training and assess the uptake within the industry. We saw the benefits of the training and qualifications framework for our team and the assistance from ETITO was, and still is, brilliant. As manager, I completed the Level 5 Diploma in Contact Centre Management to prove our commitment to the qualifications and led my centre to assure a well qualified team within our industry.

### **How do you choose trainees?**

It's part of our 'sale' to them during recruitment so they know our expectations and know about the qualifications and what they can do for them. With new recruits the first priority is to learn the role and it is usually between three and six months after they start that we offer them the chance to gain the qualification.

### **How do you choose assessors?**

It's a combination of their level of experience and their capability, plus they also need to be passionate about customer service and understand quality and quality assurance. We take the view that this is a step-up position, and we like to give it to people who show enthusiasm for it and are prepared to take on a mentoring role.



### **How does the training impact individual trainees?**

For us it's important to have staff who not only understand the mechanics of taking a call, but have a perspective and understanding of what the caller is expecting. This is something the training can promote. It also gives the trainees more confidence in the service they give our customers.

### **What are the challenges you have faced and how have you overcome them?**

We have big workflow peaks and troughs throughout the year. National qualifications started slowly, but in the last three years it's taken off. Even in uncertain times we view the training as a long-term investment. And it's paid off, it's now routine – it's the Massey way.

### **Do you have any advice for contact centres considering national qualifications training?**

Get out and visit contact centres already doing national qualifications training. If you're serious about being a professional contact centre what's more relevant to the staff than training that is developed specifically for their industry.

### **Why does national qualifications training work for Massey?**

National qualifications are one element in our strategy to make sure we're the best contact centre for Massey University. Training's our bread and butter, not just an add-on. We're proud to have the training completely embedded in the contact centre's processes. We wanted to align our centre with the rest of the industry and national qualifications training is the closest thing contact centres have to an industry standard.