

# processfix

Summer newsletter 2020

## Welcome

For many of us the coronavirus has been the most significant, and perhaps the most traumatic, experience of our lives. It has had a huge impact on us as individuals, as a society and as a workforce. Although it's hard to imagine right now, the crisis will come to an end and things will get back to normal. Well, some things will go back to the way they were. For others, there will be a 'new normal'.

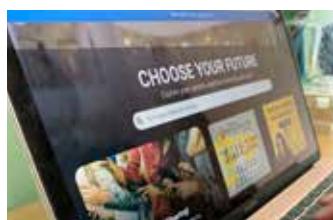
Higher education is an example of a sector that has been particularly affected by the pandemic and we are delighted to share with you how the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology has effectively responded to the crisis. Vice Chancellor Martin Bean explains the challenges they have faced and will continue to face as they enter the 'new normal' and reflects on the incredible response that he has seen from their academic team to enrich the learning experience of the students.

Here at Processfix we have also responded to the 'new normal' by meeting the needs of teams who continue to work remotely. We are now able to facilitate Processfix workshops and training online via our new purpose-built studio in Milton Keynes. For more information as to how your remote teams can benefit from the fully interactive Processfix experience online, contact us at info@processfix.com.

## NEWSFLASH!

### Buckingham, UK – August 2020

Processfix restart in-person workshops with the Admissions team at the University of Buckingham



## Blended learning accelerated by COVID-19



Martin Bean, Vice-Chancellor of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in Australia

### How much notice were you given?

We were just getting ready for the first semester of the year. We have a large number of international students from China, so the first challenge was to identify what we would be able to do for them as our borders started to close. But that quickly morphed into a challenge for all our students. Following the initial announcement in March, a State of Emergency was declared and the following week we suspended face-to-face teaching and were working in a fully remote way. It was remarkable how our staff responded. They both climbed and moved mountains in a matter of days.

### What were the key challenges faced?

Luckily at RMIT we embarked on a series of digital initiatives over the last five years that helped us transition very effectively. We deployed best-in-class cloud-based learning and collaboration systems, including a universal learning management system and consistent learning design framework. Three years ago, we launched RMIT online, predominately aimed at working adults to allow access to post-graduate programmes, micro-credentials and short courses, allowing us to nurture the underlying instructional design. As a result, we were able to move more than 94,000 students and 12,000 staff, including our students and

staff in Vietnam and our offshore partners into remote ways of working almost immediately.

But I have always been clear that technology itself does not create great teaching. What technology does offer is a range of tools to help us create the best teaching and learning for our students. Because we were able to deploy the technology, we were able to provide what our community needed very quickly. The real challenge has been how to support our academic community to make the heroic transition into remote teaching.

### What has impressed you the most?

What I have really loved is the imagination and creativity of our staff. We provided the infrastructure but then this remarkable thing happened - everyone started to identify ways to enrich the learning experience for our students. Our teams have done the most amazing things in this difficult period. As an example, at our world-renowned School of Fashion and Textiles, you would normally see students laying out materials on big tables and displaying their creativity on mannequins. Almost immediately the team flipped the course parameters so that our students began working with recycled materials that they can find in their homes and designing outfits for potatoes as a way of understanding fit with a kitchen staple! It has been an incredible experience for all despite the obstacles the pandemic has

thrown in our way. I think that our students will look back on this time as being incredibly formative and enriching.

### What are the implications for RMIT?

We will be continuing to work in a largely remote way for some time as we are one of the most severely affected states in Australia. But as we start to plan for re-opening, I have learned already that it is much easier to close something than to open it back up. It is a real art form to work this out.

For the longer term there is the additional burden of a significant revenue hole because so many international students were unable to join us at the beginning of their academic year – and that has lost us about 20% of our annual income. The challenge is how we resize the cost base of the University given such a dramatic drop in revenue not just for one year, but over the 3-4 year period those students would have been with us.

### Finally, how do you see the future developing?

Educationally, I believe this experience will change the way we learn at all levels. For some years now our social lives have been blended through technology and now the same phenomenon has been unlocked in learning. COVID-19 has accelerated technology to augment teaching, and I do think that we will start to see more lifelong learning, with stackable micro-credentials.

Most importantly though, what should never change is the focus on delivering great outcomes. Great teaching has nothing to do with the physical or digital space, but to do with instructional design. What I'm looking forward to is not a focus on whether online is better or worse than face-to-face, but instead on what is the best way to use the blended opportunity to deliver great outcomes for our students.

## About us

Organisations rely on processes to get things done. Often these simply evolve over time and become inefficient ways of working. Processfix bring powerful, proven and behaviour-changing techniques to bear in a professionally facilitated environment.

We focus on engaging your teams in their own improvement, empowering them to re-evaluate the way they do things and to develop new and improved ways of working that transform performance and deliver immediate results.

Whether you require rapid improvement workshop facilitation, an organisational wide process improvement programme or to develop and train your team. Processfix specialise in engaging your people, delivering immediate benefits and instilling continuous improvement across your organisation.

## And Finally...

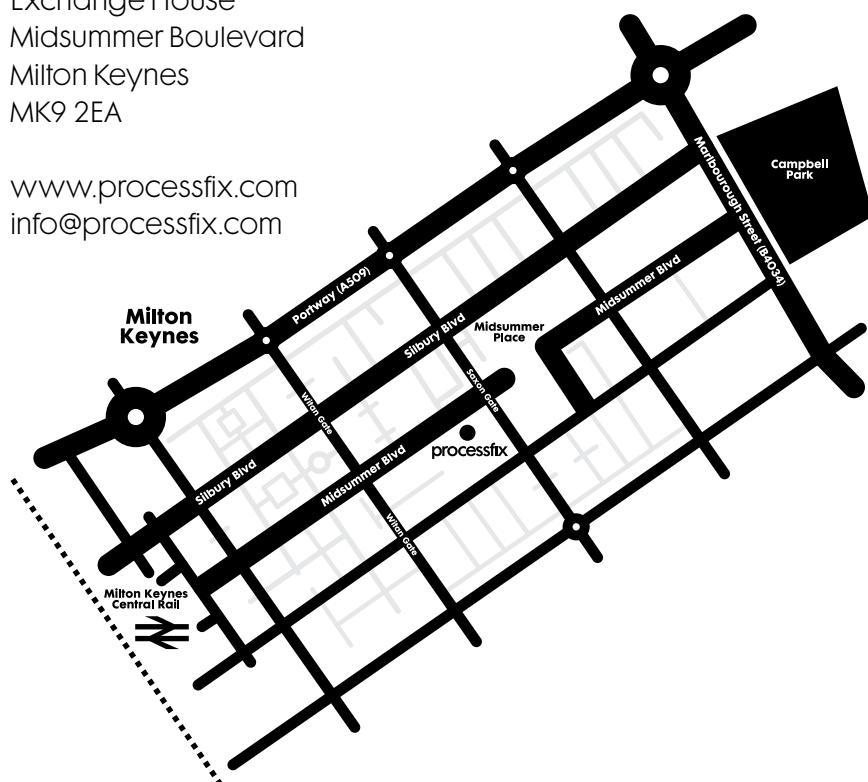
Processfix workshops and training now available live and online from our purpose built studio in Milton Keynes



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