



Farnborough College  
of Technology

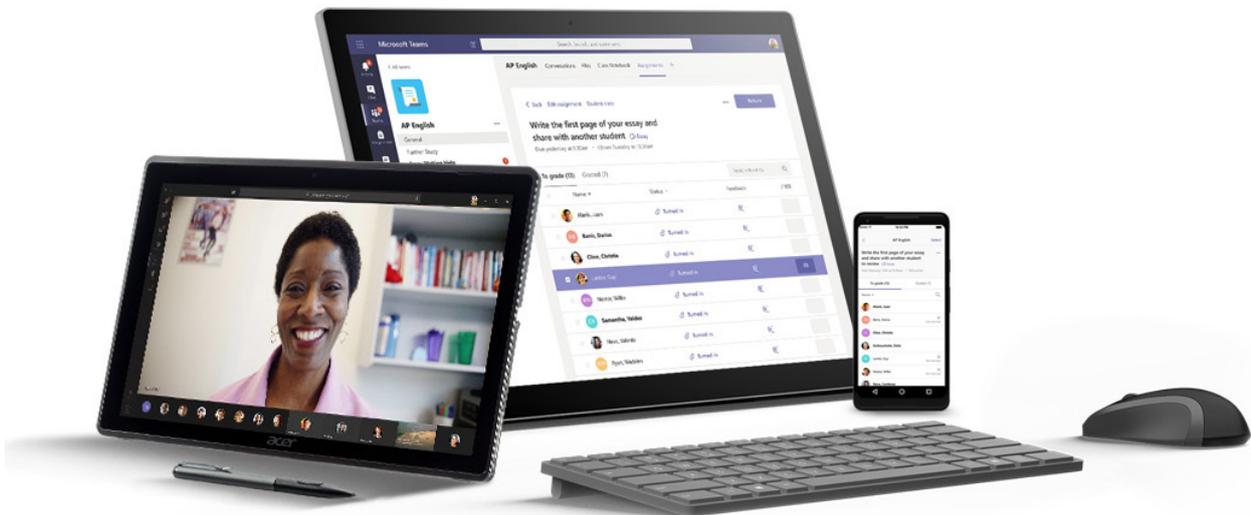
Rated outstanding in all areas, Farnborough College of Technology consistently ranks among the top 10% for further education and apprenticeship success.

Operating across campuses in Farnborough and Aldershot, the college embraces state-of-the-art technologies and facilities to support around 8,000 students in their studies.

These include a £7.7m University Centre, Construction College and Emerging Technologies Centre and enable delivery of an impressively broad range of subjects and qualifications.

It has also pioneered Online Blended Learning which combines home studies with the ability to take part in classes, discussions and talk directly to lecturers via a PC, laptop or mobile phone.

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fluent in technology



### Business Needs

The college had long harboured ambitions for migrating to Teams from its ageing, end-of-life PBX.

“It had been on the agenda for about two years,” explains computer services manager, Ben Travers. “We always wanted to move to Microsoft Teams because of the additional functionality, the unified communications. We knew the ability to hold meetings outside the building would be such a benefit.”

Then Covid-19 accelerated ambition into action.

The initial lockdown and uncertainty over any future restrictions led Travers to invite tenders for that migration and implementation of direct routing

Replacing that ageing, on-premise PBX, direct routing would enable calls to be made and received over the college’s SIP trunks from anywhere, at any time and via any device. The low-cost subscription service also incorporates enterprise grade encryption and security which, for example, would be essential when safeguarding staff making off-site calls.

### The Solution

Avoira’s attitude, experience and competitiveness were key to our winning an eight way tender. “We had positive discussions with Avoira. Any question put forward was answered,” recalls Travers. “They were also very competitive and had completed a Teams migration at another college which gave us good feedback.”

Our proposition coupled Teams and the Avoira Direct Routing managed integration service with provision of head and handsets.

For the latter, the college majored on Yealink’s T55A Teams phone. “It does everything we want it to, is small, looks good and is one of Microsoft’s top recommended Teams phones,” enthuses Travers. These were ideal for staff members who may not want to give up their phones, and for placement in common areas.

Front-line staff – receptionists, PAs and the like – have been equipped with the higher spec T58A Teams videophone.

For headsets, JPL’s 502S were specified. “We thought a plug-in rather than Bluetooth headset would be easier for staff and, because they weren’t a big cost, we could give every member of staff their own so they wouldn’t need share,” says Travers. “They’re a nice fit and calls are clear.”

### Business Benefits

“The benefits have been massive. It’s changed the college which wouldn’t have been able to operate without Teams” concludes Travers.

“There’s a confidence about teaching online out of the office. In terms of teaching and learning Teams is being used a lot more and the engagement with students has been pretty good.

He reports Avoira’s implementation was also impressively – and necessarily – swift, achieved ahead of the new academic year deadline.

**“They’ve been quick to assist and have always got some sort of resolution for an issue. They even gave us a buy-back deal on our old phone system which was very nice!”**

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