

Industry:  
**Education**

Number of employees:  
**900**

Average employee age:  
**40**

Male to female ratio:  
**75:25**

Online to offline ratio:  
**95:05**

RG launch date:  
**October 2015**

Programme remit  
**SmartHub®  
Discounts**

# Employee engagement platform centralises benefits for higher uptake, unites employees with bespoke branding, and produces annual ROI of more than £13K

Hastings Academies Trust used the segmentation power of Reward Gateway's employee engagement platform and bespoke branding to seamlessly integrate new employees, resulting in 68% engagement and an annual ROI of more than £13K.

## The challenge



Client contact:  
**Peter O'Connor**  
Hastings Academies Trust  
and University of Brighton  
Academies Trust Human  
Resources Director

When welcoming new employees, ensuring the proper communications channels are in place is all the more important as the organisation's first communication must be branded and relevant to that new hire.

To properly incorporate new employees from the University of Brighton Academies Trust, Peter O'Connor, Human Resources Director for both Trusts, needed a platform that would embrace both existing and new employees, while also

creating targeted and relevant messages for the variety of site locations.

The organisation was familiar with Reward Gateway, since Hastings Academies Trust already offered the company's employee discounts and childcare vouchers to employees at its nine schools.

The biggest issue for the new project was to ensure that existing benefits access would be available to all employees, but carefully segmented to only be accessible for the relevant employees, e.g. Hastings Academies Trust wouldn't see the University of Brighton Academies Trust content and vice versa.

## The approach

To make the platform inclusive for the newly welcomed University of Brighton Academies Trust employees, a whole new logo, colour palette, and font set were created bespoke by Reward Gateway's in-house Design Team.

The design for the new employee engagement platform incorporated colours from each of the individual Trusts and used the existing benefits programme name, My Academy Rewards, as it was relevant to the whole employee population.



*The new logo created for the My Academy Rewards SmartHub® platform.*

**“Branding our SmartHub® to incorporate the identity of both trusts without losing the look and feel that Hastings Academies Trust employees were familiar with was hugely important to us,” Peter says. “Reward Gateway found a way to update and unite the branding of the hub, which streamlined our offerings.”**

Though the Academies' new platform helped to unite their employees under one benefits brand, Peter's team were still conscious that they had to deliver relevant information to each individual.

“We couldn't have united our diverse workforce without Reward Gateway's innovation,” Peter says.

The segmentation features in SmartHub®, a product by Reward Gateway, helped to create a platform where Hastings Academies Trust employees would only see specific content for them, such as news feeds, local discounts and EAP.

University of Brighton Academies Trust employees would only see relevant news and offers for them, as well as a rotating message highlighting different promotions. Through segmentation, this welcome message was replaced with an alternative tile for Hastings Academies Trust employees.

All of the links to values, vacancies, and policies were segmented to direct employees to the relevant information depending on which Trust they belonged to.

## The results

The platform's use is far-reaching — since its launch, the unified brand has allowed the integration of four more schools to seamlessly link into the platform. Prior to the relaunch of My Academy Rewards, engagement was at 25% – it now stands at 68% over the last 12 months. This increased usage is seen in benefit take up, too, with total spend through shopping discounts at over £87,000, saving Hastings Academies employees over £9,200.

The organisation is just beginning its story with My Academy Rewards, with plans to incorporate hosted videos from the leadership team and to work with the Reward Gateway team to refresh content every quarter to encourage increased engagement.

Within the platform's first year, annual ROI stands at £13,500 within, which is hugely important to the Peter and his team as being in the public sector means spending is constantly scrutinised.

“Every day I get asked by at least one stakeholder from each trust about the performance of My Academy Rewards. It's so great to be able to tell them with pride how much we are saving the Academy, whilst at the same time giving our people a new affection for the work they do.”

Peter O'Connor

Hastings Academies Trust and University of Brighton Academies Trust HR Director

**68%**  
of employees regularly engage with platform

**£87K**  
total employee spend

**£13.5K**  
annual ROI

