

Navigating the Impact of Covid-19 on Employees

Hamilton Rentals helps a professional services firm ensure its workforce is able to undertake the remote exams and assessments that are key to achieving Chartered Professional status.

A highly responsive solution from Hamilton Rentals streamlines the delivery of laptops to employees undertaking remote invigilation exam options.

Background:

Empowering people to be the best that they can be

Committed to attracting and nurturing the best talent, this leading professional services firm ensures its people have access to expert tutors and on-the-job learning opportunities that will build their skills in their selected business speciality.

This extends to ensuring that the resources and tools are in place to support employees achieve the professional legal and accountancy certifications they will need to practice on the first attempt.

Why Hamilton Rentals?

At a time of significant disruption and stress, Hamilton's ability to rapidly set up a workable and highly efficient process ensured the firm's employees were not disadvantaged when it came to achieving and maintaining their professional certification journey.

"Even when we had to ask for emergency help getting a laptop out to people on the same day, they moved heaven and earth to accommodate such last minute requirements."

On the rare occasion that exam candidates encountered technical problems when doing their pre-exam system checks, Hamilton's technical specialists were just a phone call away.

"This was important to us, as their calm advice and guidance proved invaluable for remotely addressing basic user errors that could have prevented someone from participating in a live online exam event."

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The requirement:

Dealing with disruption

When national lockdowns first came into force, professional bodies were forced to close their exam centres and initiate online qualification platforms that would allow people to remotely undertake assessments and exams.

“Our people dedicate significant time and effort to passing exams that will lead to the successful completion of a professional qualification. So we were pleased that external bodies like the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) were quick to introduce remotely invigilated and monitored exams which meant our candidates could continue to press ahead with their qualification process,” explains the Professional Qualifications Leader at the firm.

However, the ultra-sensitive nature of the work the firm undertakes for clients means the firm’s laptops contain high security features that make it impossible for users to log onto online exam platforms. This created a problem for any candidate who didn’t have a personal laptop of their own that they could use to sit exams.

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The solution:

A flexible and responsive service

External exam bodies have created a set of tightly defined technology requirements for candidates that want to sit their exams remotely. To ensure the entire exam process can be videoed and monitored – including security and ID checks - candidates must use a computer or laptop with a strong internet connection, a webcam and microphone.

Prior to sitting the exam, candidates are advised to familiarise themselves with the onboarding process and exam software so that unforeseen technical issues don't impact their performance on the day. Which means people needed to be able to test out the laptops they plan to use a few days before logging in to undertake the live exam.

"We're a lean team managing a multitude of tasks, so this new additional process had to be streamlined, easy and fool proof," explains the firm's Professional Qualifications Leader.

"Hamilton Rentals devised digital forms to capture all key candidate details and technical requirements – like whether Microsoft Word or Excel would be needed in addition to basic 'vanilla' internet access – and created a quick and easy information sharing and reporting process so we can keep track of progress."

This ensured an appropriately loaded laptop could be seamlessly shipped direct to people's homes a couple of days prior to an exam, and subsequently collected at a pre-agreed date and time.



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The outcomes:

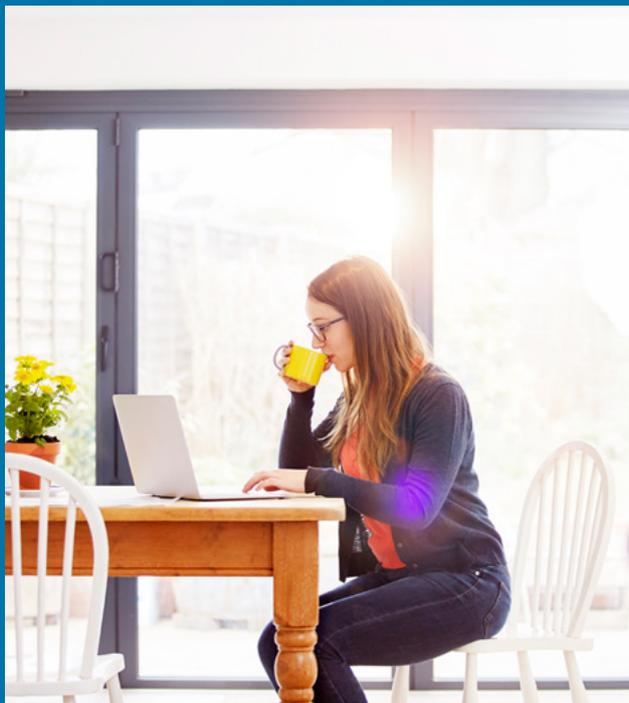
Streamlined and responsive execution

The inherent flexibility of the laptop rental service meant that every candidate's individual needs are supported. While some candidates may require a machine for just a few days, others may need to retain devices for longer to complete a series of mock examinations.

"We've refined the system, and everything now happens like clockwork. Today, we're able to ensure every laptop meets the exact technical specifications demanded by an individual exam body for a specific exam and is then scheduled for direct delivery into the hands of candidates by an agreed time and date."

Over the past year, more than 800 laptops have been shipped to employees who have been able to complete their advanced learning assessments and exams without a hitch.

"The experience of the last year has prompted us to think about how we will support our people going forward. Although exam centres are starting to re-open, many professional bodies plan to continue offering remote exams into the future. Which means our people will have even greater choice as to where and how they take their qualifications."



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