

case study

Facilitating access to mandatory training

Resolution, the association of family lawyers, has combined video, case studies, role play and answer sharing to ensure that new members are compliant with the association's mandatory Code of Practice.



The background

Resolution was founded in 1982 and was formerly known as the Solicitors Family Law Association (SFLA). It campaigns for the improvement of family law and the family justice system and is committed to developing and promoting the highest standards of practice. Resolution supports the development of family lawyers through its national and regional training programme, through publications and good practice guides and through its accreditation scheme. Resolution also trains and accredits mediators and is the only body providing training and support for collaborative lawyers in England and Wales.

Resolution has almost 6000 members. Membership is open to every family law solicitor, legal executive or paralegal and to be eligible professionals must confirm that they abide by the association's Code of Practice. Members are required to undertake compulsory training in the Code within 12 months of their joining.

The problem

Previously the training had only been available as a half-day classroom-based course. However, similar to many professional associations, Resolution was facing more demand than it could meet with face-to-face training alone. They decided to create an online training course in the Code of Practice that could be offered as an alternative to the classroom-based course, ensuring that all new members have access to training.

The solution

Many of Nelson Croom's professional development courses follow a non-linear structure which enables a flexible approach to learning. Professionals can learn in a way and at a pace that suits them, and more experienced learners don't need to spend time in areas that they are more familiar with. This allows them to concentrate on the subjects where they are less strong. As a requirement of membership, the

Resolution course is more akin to a compliance course meaning that the course needs to ensure all learners cover all areas. We've facilitated this by the use of a logical sequence of "next" buttons and steps.

In addition, Resolution wanted to use some video material to illustrate examples of the emotional side of dealing with this area of the law to emphasise how sensitively cases must be handled. We have integrated the video into the active experience by using it to stimulate debate and discussion between learners.

Nelson Croom's "sharing answers" technology helps to bring a sense of community to the online learners. For certain activities, all responses are recorded anonymously and learners can choose to view what others have said. This is particularly powerful in activities where learners reference past and present experiences and how the Code might apply. Through "sharing answers" learners benefit from understanding how others deal with and respond to similar situations and issues.

The results

The online course takes around 3 hours to complete and is offered as an alternative to the classroom-based course so that everyone has access to training in the Code of Practice.

So far it has been proving very successful with some excellent feedback:

"I was most impressed by the ease of navigation and quality of content."

"This is good and clear"

"I like the availability of other people's answers"

"I thought it an excellent course. I also thought the format was very user friendly."