



Allianz Insurance plc Bristol

Service beyond the call is something every telephone contact centre aspires to – and exactly what the staff of Allianz Insurance get from City of Bristol College.

Instead of having to trek from their call centre to the college, Allianz's staff members stay where they are and the college assessors come to them.

"It would have a big impact on our levels of service if we had to send people to college," says Jackie Finning, Allianz's Training Co-ordinator. "It would take them at least 25 minutes to get to college and 25 minutes back – and a lot longer during the rush hour."

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City of Bristol College's willingness to deliver training and assessment on Allianz's terms was a big factor in the insurer's decision to use the college.

"We had meetings with a couple of colleges but we chose City of Bristol College because of their knowledge and flexibility," says Jackie.

"We're just about to do some more training with them which will include the Retail Financial Apprenticeship. We will be having workshops and the college will be delivering the training here with half the staff attending in the morning and half in the afternoon.

"Our operational hours are until 8pm and, although we aim to get people trained on the day shift, we have to take part-time hours into account. However, the college are prepared to send an assessor in whenever we require them to fit in with our working shift patterns."

Allianz, which has offices in Bristol, needed sales training with sustainable benefits because although previous sales training had been delivered, the sales message needed to be reinforced. Retention was proving to be an issue with sales staff leaving every three to six months.

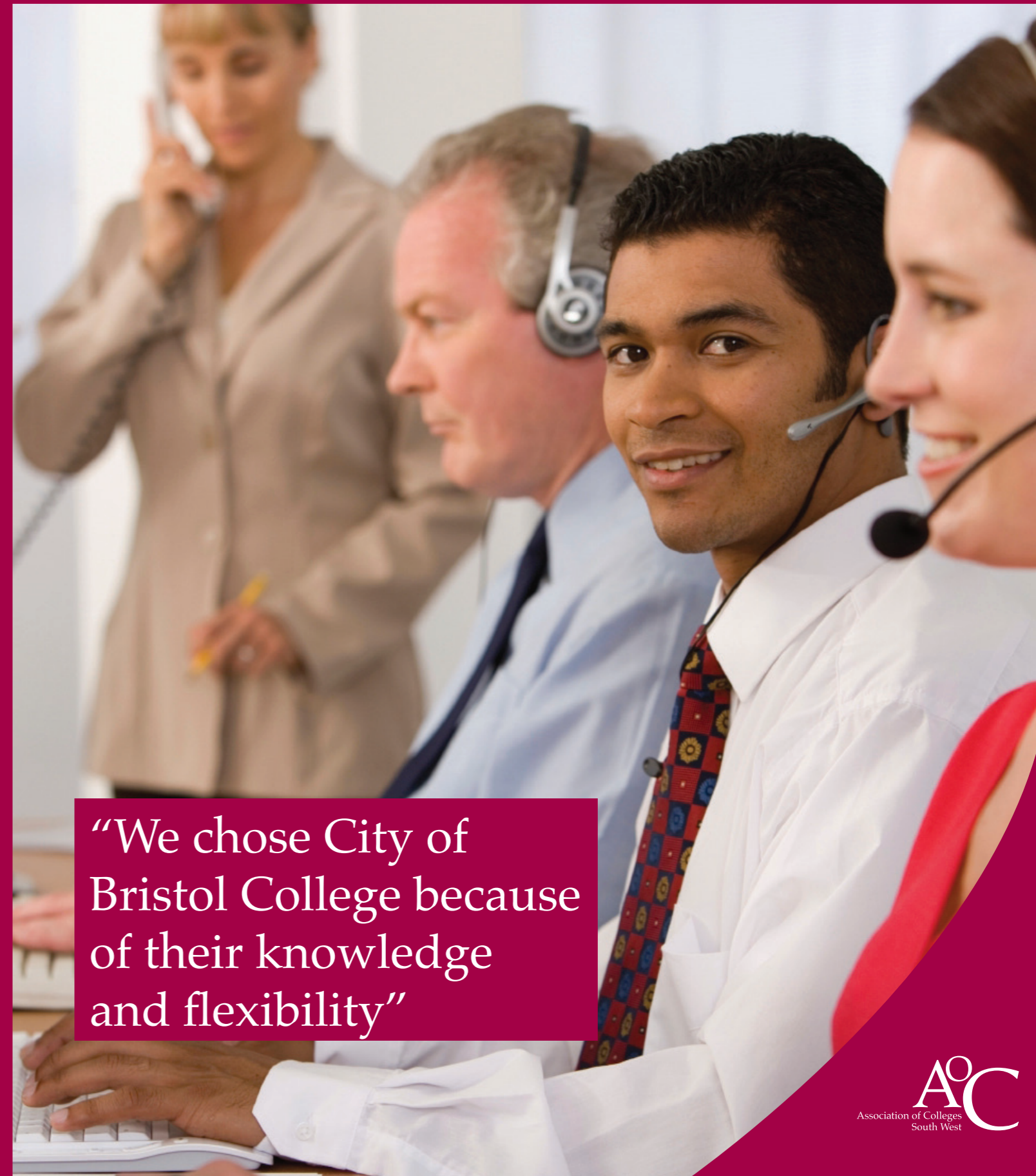
Allianz wanted to increase the number of sales leads, increase the number of sales closed, improve staff retention, and raise staff motivation.

A programme of NVQs in Telesales, Contact Centre Management, Customer Service and Administration helped motivate staff by offering them the chance to gain a qualification.

"Although the training is subsidised by Government funding, there's still a cost to the business in terms of time," says Jackie. "However, the time we put in gives a return on investment and helps new staff in the company as those who have completed their NVQs can mentor new people."

Jackie says she would definitely recommend City of Bristol College to others.

"The college's account manager, Shahida MacDougall, has been very good, drives meetings and offers updates as and when required. It's a relationship built on trust and two-way communication. We want to work on our terms as well as working with the college."



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