



## Epic achieves ISO 14001 environmental standard

Epic has become the first key player in the UK e-learning market to achieve the ISO 14001:2004 Environmental Management Standard, confirming its commitment to long-term environmental protection.

The international standard requires procedures for managing environmental aspects of a business, with targets for waste reduction and energy efficiency.

Alec Keith, Epic's Environmental Co-ordinator explains, "We're really proud of this achievement. Many of our staff were already actively involved in environmental issues, so it seemed logical for the company to build on this enthusiasm. We certainly weren't short of volunteers, although being based in a Grade 2 listed building presented several challenges in terms of energy efficiency."

The company introduced the 'E3R' initiative – Epic Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. This involves a comprehensive recycling scheme for plastic, electrical waste, card etc, together with paper-free project



processes and an environment-friendly travel policy. The company has even negotiated with HMRC to agree its own Cycle, Train and Bus to Work schemes, reducing staff's public transport prices.



Alec continues, "It was a great idea to brand E3R right from the start, giving it an identity of its own. Someone also suggested that as Co-ordinator I should be known as 'the Jolly Green Giant', which seems to have stuck. The Giant even has his own email address!"

Epic started the initiative in the Summer of 2008. Realising they required specialist help, they worked alongside Michael Gourlay, an Environmental Consultant. Michael comments, "I'm impressed by the speed with which Epic managed to gain accreditation. Their enthusiasm



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for environmental issues meant they were ready for inspection with 6 months, whereas most organisations of this size take at least a year.”

Alec explains, “Basically, if it doesn’t move, it gets recycled and if it’s turned on it gets turned off. We set ourselves some tough targets, particularly for energy reduction and can’t believe how much we’re saving on electricity. In addition, we now send virtually nothing to landfill.”

With a large proportion of its business coming from the public sector, ISO 14001 is crucial for Epic’s future success. As Alec explains, “We’re seeing more and more public sector bids that require suppliers to demonstrate high levels of environmental compliance. This accreditation differentiates us from our competitors.”

Having achieved accreditation, Epic aren’t resting on their laurels. A staff suggestion scheme has inundated the team with further ideas for reducing energy usage and for recycling. “We’re now looking at Phase 2, with plans for relocating our server rooms and for replacing old air conditioning units. Looking at the potential cost savings, our Finance Director is delighted!”