

## OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

### Oxford Brookes University

Oxford Brookes is one of the UK's leading modern universities and enjoys an international reputation for teaching excellence and innovation as well as strong links with business and industry.

The University's key priorities is the delivery of an outstanding student experience, the further development of their world-class research, furthering its international outlook, a positive commitment to its wider community and creating sector-leading, high quality services for the future.

### Background

The University had a catering management contract with Chartwells, which had been in place for circa. 20 years. For many years Chartwells only employed the management team whilst the remaining catering staff stayed on the University's payroll. This situation gradually changed in the last few years of the contract in that each time a University member of staff left it was agreed the replacement would be recruited by Chartwells on their terms and conditions of employment and payroll. This would mean there was consistency across the whole catering team.

However, at the point of tender 50% of the catering staff were still on the University's payroll.

Under the new contract the University wanted all of the catering staff to be employed by the service provider.

### Brief

After a mini competitive tender under the London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) catering consultancy framework, we were appointed to work with Oxford Brookes on the procurement of a new catering contract to run for a five year period, with the option of an extension for an additional two years.

The University was looking to develop a partnership approach to the catering contract and had already carried out preliminary conversations with suppliers on the LUPC catering supply framework.

The scope of consultancy involved working with the Project team to provide support and expertise with:

- ▶ Developing a specification to enable flexibility and innovation whilst ensuring key objectives were met;
- ▶ Developing an evaluation criteria;
- ▶ Reviewing the LUPC contract terms and conditions to ensure they adequately covered all areas;
- ▶ Evaluating the technical and financial side of the bids received; and
- ▶ Securing a commercial outcome for the University that represented best value in the market.

▶▶ *Finding the right partner to help us deliver our catering vision was key; we welcomed the expertise and knowledge that an external provider like Litmus can bring. For us, it was far more than just getting a contract in place; it was about establishing a strong partnership ethos where we worked in alignment towards shared goals and enjoyed a mutually successful relationship.* ◀◀

## Approach

Throughout the tender project we worked in partnership with the Oxford Brookes Campus Services team.

It was agreed that we would run a further tender using the LUPC framework for catering outsourced services.

Using the LUPC documentation we developed the specification to ensure that it met the University's requirements and weighted the evaluation criteria to place an emphasis on those elements that were most important to Oxford Brookes.

Once the documentation had been finalised, all companies on the LUPC framework were invited to participate in the mini competition and those that expressed an interest were invited to a bidders' meeting and to the different campus locations.

Across the tender process we were involved in the following activities:

- ▶ Coordinating responses to bidder clarification questions;
- ▶ Supporting evaluation of the bidder proposals;
- ▶ Managing the bidder clarification meetings;
- ▶ Participation in the evaluation moderation session;
- ▶ Final clarifications with the preferred bidder; and
- ▶ Writing the tender report and recommendation for submission to the University Executive Board.

## Outcomes

- ▶ A new service provider was appointed on a five-year contract with the option of a further extension for two years;
- ▶ The service provider agreed to invest in the catering facilities to improve the customer experience and grow sales;
- ▶ A strong commercial outcome was achieved for the University balanced by the opportunity for the service provider to earn more money for excellent performance; and
- ▶ A performance management system and communication framework that encouraged a partnership approach was put in place.



**For more information about Litmus get in touch:**

Email us at [mailbox@litmuspartnership.co.uk](mailto:mailbox@litmuspartnership.co.uk)

[www.litmuspartnership.co.uk](http://www.litmuspartnership.co.uk)