



Queen Alexandra College

Queen Alexandra College (QAC) empowers young adults with learning difficulties and disabilities to achieve their ambitions and lead fulfilling lives.

The College has been at its current location since 1903. Their original purpose was to provide education for young people who were blind or visually impaired. Today, in addition to supporting people who have a visual impairment, they offer education, support and guidance for students on the autism spectrum, those with moderate to severe learning difficulties, and students with physical and other disabilities.

Background

QAC had remained with the same contractor for both catering and cleaning services for a significant number of years, on a rollover contract. They felt it was time to test the market to determine if best value was being achieved.

Brief

The commercial objective was to achieve benchmarked/evidenced financial best value. In addition, QAC wanted us to help them:

- ▶ Improve the catering and cleaning services by introducing greater efficiencies
- ▶ Ensure minimal disruption to students during the process
- ▶ Provide enhanced services for students after the process
- ▶ Achieve greater efficiency and best practise

Approach

As it had been many years since QAC had gone out to tender, when we were planning the project, we allowed extended timelines to enable thorough preparation of specifications at each stage of the review. This also ensured the project was run with minimal disruption to busy staff and students with complex needs such as autism, where change can be extremely disruptive.

We ran two separate tenders consecutively, to appoint specialist providers for the catering and cleaning contracts, using a compliant tender process to achieve best value.

Once both service providers had been appointed, we facilitated the contract mobilisations and subsequent performance monitoring of both contracts to ensure they delivered upon both specifications and their bid commitments. This meant QAC could remain focused on the day-to-day teaching and running of the school.

Outcomes

The tender resulted in ABM and CleanTEC being appointed, providing services that were aligned with QAC's needs. The mobilisations were successful and QAC is seeing a far more efficient operation. Significant cost savings on both catering and cleaning have been achieved, totalling £70,000+ per annum. Across the five-year contract, this will result in over £350,000 worth of savings.

►► *Neil Cook at Litmus was instrumental in the successful awarding of our Catering and Cleaning contracts. His expertise, attention to detail, tenacity and market knowledge were invaluable in us securing two favourable agreements that both met our needs at the time and have settled in well to our unique and complicated environment. Both contract awards have resulted in a financial gain per annum and an increase in accountability and service outcomes. Litmus' contract is an excellent source of recourse, and their follow up monitoring has helped us keep both new contractors honest. I would have no hesitation in highly recommending both Neil and Litmus' services in securing excellent outcomes.* ◀◀

Paul Teasdale,
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