

The challenge

The city of Oxford presents a challenging recruitment environment. Oxford Brookes University competes for staff with four large hospitals and a new city centre shopping mall, as well as the University of Oxford. The area also suffers from transport issues which add to the challenge of finding people to work in the city.

Managers who needed to recruit staff at Oxford Brookes found that agencies without an understanding of the specific challenges in the local labour market struggled to find candidates for them. As a result, there was not a standardised approach or consistent supplier choice across the University. Roles remained vacant or were filled with candidates who were not the best fit.

What happened?

Impressed by the strong supplier selection on the SUPC Temporary and Permanent Recruitment Agreement, the procurement department ran a mini-competition covering lots one, two, five and six (admin, ancillary, corporate services and IT). They took the opportunity to get to know the suppliers and talk to them about the market. This helped enormously in making the best choices for the University.

The procurement department worked hard



to engage the HR department and heads of recruiting departments, asking them to input to supplier questions and rating. Not only did they feel involved, their understanding of what to look for when filling a vacancy increased.

The outcome

The University has seen a number of benefits from using the SUPC framework to appoint suppliers:

- Quality of candidates has improved.
- More staff are using contracted suppliers because they recognise the quality of the

agencies on the framework. This means more university spend is going through a compliant route to market.

- A clearer pricing structure.
- Opportunities to move staff from temporary to permanent employment, both for new appointments and for people who have been with the University longer-term.

An additional benefit is the agencies' contribution to student employability through attendance at job fairs; agencies provide opportunities for a wider range of relevant experience.

Finding suppliers who had a local presence and understanding was important to us. Using the right agencies for us enables us to appoint the right candidates at the right price in a challenging market.

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Selecting recruitment agencies that provide the right candidates at the right price

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