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Contract

Contract for the Provision of Staff and Student Counselling Services

Queen's University Belfast

UK7: Contract details notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2026/S 000-008303

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05624a ([view related notices](#))

Published 30 January 2026, 9:25am

Scope

Reference

250083

Description

Queen's have a requirement for the Provision of Staff and Student Counselling Services. The University's requirements have been spilt into the following two Lots:

Lot 1: Provision of an Employee Assistance Programme

The University is fully committed to the wellbeing of its staff and recognises that many staff have competing demands on their time and resources, both inside and outside work.

The importance of achieving and maintaining a satisfactory work/life balance is fundamental to the maintenance of good health and wellbeing, and counselling has been shown to be of benefit to those who are in need of support and guidance on a wide variety of personal, social and occupational issues.

The Employee Assistance Programme will supplement the other sources of support to staff which include their line management, the People and Culture Directorate, the Occupational Health Service, Trade Union advisers etc.

The current service usage includes approximately 720 personal counselling sessions delivered to approximately 160 new clients per year, using a maximum six session counselling model. Counselling is mainly delivered face to face, but telephone and online video sessions must also be allowed.

Lot 2: Provision of a Student Counselling Hub

By working in partnership with the University's Student Wellbeing and Accessible Learning Support the Supplier will be required to mobilise their diverse and inclusive workforce to provide an effective, timely, confidential and professional psychological therapy and support service through a 'matched stepped care model'.

In addition, the Supplier will have responsible for:

- Appropriate signposting and onward referral to NHS or third sector providers for specialist or longer-term support for complex cases.
- Clinical governance
- Service marketing and accessibility
- Delivery in partnership with the University

Please note that provision of services under Lot 2 is to Queen's University registered students only and does not include students from University Colleges or INTO Queen's.

Suppliers are invited to tender for one or both Lots. There are no restrictions on how many Lots a Supplier can apply for. Each Lot will be evaluated independently against the evaluation criteria as set out in the Tender Response Pack and Queen's reserves the right to award each lot separately. The award in respect of each Lot shall be made to one Supplier.

Lot LOT-0001. Lot 1: Provision of an Employee Assistance Programme

Description

The University is seeking to appoint a Supplier to deliver an Employee Assistance Programme in Queen's University Belfast.

The Supplier must provide the core requirements which must include, but not limited to:

1. Telephone Triage and Support Services
2. Counselling Services
3. Online Wellbeing Support Hub
4. Trauma and Critical Incident Support
5. Management Support Services
6. Manager support and advice
7. Case Management
8. Health and wellbeing promotion and awareness
9. Publicity and awareness of service

The goal is to:

- provide professional, confidential, and accessible support services to improve staff wellbeing.
- focus on mental health, financial wellbeing, legal guidance, and workplace challenges,
- ensure employees receive timely and effective support.

This aligns with Queen's commitment to fostering a healthy and engaged workforce.

Lot LOT-0002. Lot 2: Provision of a Student Counselling Hub

Description

The University is seeking to appoint a supplier to deliver Student Counselling services via a Student Counselling Hub.

The goal is to :

- complement existing nontherapeutic supports offered through University support services.

- Deliver a psychological therapy and support service through a 'matched stepped care model' that empowers students as healthy learners to manage their mental health, build resilience, and develop practical coping strategies.

Supports required include:

- o On-line self-help resource platform that equips students with self-help tools to manage their mental health independently.
- o Guided self-help to support students to implement strategies
- o Short-term, solution-focused talking therapy counselling for students
- o 24/7 helpline
- o low intensity group work and psycho education workshops
- o "Out of Hours" Support calls

In addition, the Supplier will have responsible for:

- Appropriate signposting and onward referral to NHS or third sector providers for specialist or longer-term support for complex cases.
- Clinical governance
- Service marketing and accessibility
- Delivery in partnership with the University

Contract 1. Contract for the Provision of Staff and Student Counselling Services, Lot 1 - Provision of an Employee Assistance Programme

Lots

Lot LOT-0001. Lot 1: Provision of an Employee Assistance Programme

Supplier

- SPECTRUM WELLNESS UK LTD

Contract value

- £300,000 excluding VAT
- £360,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Date signed

1 December 2025

Contract dates

- 11 January 2026 to 10 January 2029
- Possible extension to 10 January 2031
- 5 years

Description of possible extension:

The Contract shall be for a period of 3 years, subject to satisfactory annual review, with the option to extend the contract by up to a further 24 Months .

This option to extend shall be entirely at the discretion of Queen's and shall be subject to satisfactory review of performance.

Main procurement category

Services

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

The Contract shall be for a period of 3 years, subject to satisfactory annual review, with the option to extend the contract by up to a further 24 Months .

This option to extend shall be entirely at the discretion of Queen's and shall be subject to satisfactory review of performance.

CPV classifications

- 85312300 - Guidance and counselling services
- 85312320 - Counselling services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Key performance indicators

Name

Counselling session arranged within 48 hours of contact

First counselling session to take place within 5 days of referral

Fast track - first counselling session to take place within 24 hours of contact

Immediate telephone support provided

First counselling session to take place within 24 hours of contact

A minimum of 6 counselling sessions offered

Employee notified of Change of counsellor as soon as possible, and at least 24 hours before counselling session

Annual satisfaction surveys of the services undertaken with a 50% response from University staff.

Contract 2. Contract for the Provision of Staff and Student Counselling Services, Lot 2 - Provision of a Student Counselling Hub

Lots

Lot LOT-0002. Lot 2: Provision of a Student Counselling Hub

Supplier

- SPECTRUM WELLNESS UK LTD

Contract value

- £2,115,000 excluding VAT

- £2,538,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Date signed

22 December 2025

Contract dates

- 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2029
- Possible extension to 31 March 2031
- 5 years

Description of possible extension:

The Contract shall be for a period of 3 years, subject to satisfactory annual review, with the option to extend the contract by up to a further 24 Months .

This option to extend shall be entirely at the discretion of Queen's and shall be subject to satisfactory review of performance.

Main procurement category

Services

Options

The right to additional purchases while the contract is valid.

options to extend the contract by up to a further 24 Months entirely at the discretion of Queen's and shall be subject to satisfactory review of performance.

CPV classifications

- 85312300 - Guidance and counselling services
- 85312320 - Counselling services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Key performance indicators

Name

Access to appointment

Face to face therapy

Out of Hours Support Call

Self-help education

Out of Hours helpline

Risk management protocol

Reporting

Risk Management Reports

Contract Management

Impact of Intervention

Other information

Applicable trade agreements

- Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)
- Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Open procedure

Special regime

Light touch

Supplier

SPECTRUM WELLNESS UK LTD

- Companies House: 11815511
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PMYZ-3977-MRXZ

Habib House, 9 Stevenson Square

Manchester

M1 1DB

United Kingdom

Email: bids@spectrum.life

Website: <http://www.spectrum.life>

Region: UKD33 - Manchester

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Supported employment provider: No

Public service mutual: No

Contract 1. Contract for the Provision of Staff and Student Counselling Services, Lot 1 - Provision of an Employee Assistance Programme

Contract 2. Contract for the Provision of Staff and Student Counselling Services, Lot 2 - Provision of a Student Counselling Hub

Contracting authority

Queen's University Belfast

- Charity Commission for Northern Ireland: 101788
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PMQQ-8477-XTZM

University Rd

Belfast

BT7 1NN

United Kingdom

Email: procurement@qub.ac.uk

Region: UKN06 - Belfast

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Northern Ireland