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Planning

International Master Agent for International Student Recruitment

NCG

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Scope

Description

Background/Context

Newcastle College University Centre (NCUC) is planning to increase the number of international students studying on our Newcastle city centre campus. The Institution comprises a community of around 2,300 Higher Education Students of which 350 are International students and 10,000 Further Education Students based on a self-contained campus located within the centre of Newcastle.

With the conferment of Taught Degree Awarding Powers, NCG is able to grow with confidence its Higher Education offer and seeks to increase the number of international students studying at NCUC, being mindful to continue to strive for greater diversity in the student body and levels of studies students are undertaking.

NCUC is placed in the heart of Newcastle city centre and provides students with an outstanding learning environment within its self-contained campus with all the added

benefits of being based in a city centre, providing easy access to accommodation, transportation, entertainment and jobs.

Internationalisation has been a core part of the offer at NCUC which has grown and diversified over the years to meet the needs of its current and future students. As the offer at NCUC has grown so has the infrastructure to support international students, which can be seen through the dedicated student support, admissions, and the international development teams that have been established. Currently international student recruitment activity is contained to NCUC but there is the possibility to expand to other NCG Colleges in the future.

The academic portfolio at NCUC covers a wide range of undergraduate courses across Art and Design, Digital Arts, Digital Technologies, Business, Aviation, Engineering, Health, Music and Performing Arts and Sport, offering both full three-year degrees and top-up opportunities. The postgraduate offer is primarily focused around Business and Immersive Creative Technologies, but with the potential for further development to complement the established UG offer.

The desire to grow its international student base builds on the foundation established through the University Centre Strategy, supporting the overall mission of NCG:

"Enabling social mobility and economic prosperity through exceptional education".

HE Strategic Objectives

- Transformative student experience and outcomes.
- Stay and succeed.
- Shaping the places we live and work, through an aligned and inclusive curriculum.
- A culture of community, inclusion and resilience.
- Outstanding digital and physical learning environments.
- Investing in a bright future.

Purpose of pre-market engagement & proposed operating model

The purpose of the engagement is to meet with prospective service providers to exchange information and explore possibilities for NCG to engage an end-to-end service provider who can deliver recruitment, agent management, marketing, admissions and conversion/transition services (excluding CAS issuing).

Scale

NCG hopes to have a partner on board to impact June 2026 entry onwards, subject to onboarding of the selected partner and integration work between the two organisations.

The below is an outline of potential new student enrolment expectations:

Year 1200-250 June 26 (PGT), September 26 (UG/PGT), January 27 (UG/PGT) and June 27 (PGT) entry points

Year 2250-300 September 27 (UG/PGT), January 28 (UG/PGT) and June 28 (PGT) entry points

Year 3300-350 September 28 (UG/PGT), January 29 (UG/PGT) and June 29 (PGT) entry points

Year 4350-400 September 29 (UG/PGT), January 30 (UG/PGT) and June 30 (PGT) entry points

Year 5400-450 September 30 (UG/PGT), January 31 (UG/PGT) and June 32 (PGT) entry points

Target recruitment markets

NCG/NCUC in line with the sector has seen growth from South Asia and is keen to further diversify the countries it currently attracts students from including Sub Saharan Africa, East Asia and the Middle East. Having a greater diversity of students on its campus is important for NCG/NCUC to further enhance the student and staff experience and to mitigate risk linked to geopolitics.

Marketing

The provider will be responsible for marketing and lead generation, which it is envisaged will be mainly via its established agent network, through its established staffing based in key countries and through digital marketing campaigns.

NCG/NCUC will provide its brand guidelines and generic market information to support the partner with marketing activities, which it will expect the provider to follow and implement accordingly.

It is expected the partner will work with NCG/NCUC international office to further enhance and develop marketing material and wider student support materials such as pre arrival and arrival information, as well as the development of virtual open days and other events appropriate to support recruitment KPI's.

Admissions

The provider will be expected to provide all aspects of admissions processing working to agreed entry criteria approved by NCG/NCUC. English language requirements of IELTS 6.0 (or approved equivalent) for UG and PGT will be required from students. The partner will work with NCG/NCUC to review its entry criteria to ensure that they are appropriate for the respective markets, whilst ensuring the highest standards are maintained to ensure student success.

It is expected that the provider will work to a 24-48 hour turnaround response time to applicants. The provider will deliver:

- Enquiry management
- Application screening
- Application processing
- Applicant credibility screening
- Issuing of offer letters and associated T&C's in an approved format agreed with NCG/NCUC.

NCG/NCUC currently uses Unit-e Management Information system, however this has not been developed to support the international application process, which is currently a manual process.

NCG/NCUC is looking for a partner who can utilise their own admissions system, white labelled as NCUC. It is anticipated the partner will provide a data file with all the relevant documentation in an agreed format to NCG/NCUC to allow the institution to issue the applicant with their CAS.

NCG/NCUC will manage the issuing of CAS and use this as a final opportunity to carry out its checks before a CAS is issued.

Following the issue of the CAS the provider will continue to support the applicant to submit their applicant to obtain a visa in a timely manner and support their transition to the UK.

Tuition Fees, deposits and scholarships

Tuition Fees:£12,000 - £13,000 PGT

£12,000 UGT

CAS Deposits: 50%

Scholarships: £1,500 automatic

The provider will not collect any tuition fees on behalf of NCG/NCUC and will ensure all applicants pay deposits direct to NCG/NCUC. NCG/NCUC will provide a mechanism to report daily to the provider of payments received.

Agents

NCG/NCUC works with a limited number of active agents and would seek the successful provider to continue to work with these agents, whilst supporting the identification of suitable agents to represent NCG/NCUC as part of the wider strategy to attract students from diverse markets. In terms of agent management we are looking for a partner who will act as a Master Agent.

As master agent the provider will be responsible for the contractual arrangements with the respective agents and payment of commission. The provider would be responsible for undertaking due diligence of the agents and monitoring of their performance.

Training

The provider will be responsible for ensuring that they use accurate and updated information about NCG/NCUC when undertaking their marketing activity, this includes training of any overseas marketing and recruitment staff employed by the provider to ensure accurate agent training is delivered.

Financial

NCG/NCUC preference is to enter into a commercial revenue share contract with the chosen provider that is based on results i.e. number of students enrolled. Structure and terms of revenue share to be determined.

UKVI

NCG/NCUC is a Higher Education Provider with a track record of compliance. The institution has not had any issues with its Basic Compliance Assessment metrics and annual CAS allocation is currently 220 for the period April 2025 to April 2026.

To view this notice, please click here:

<https://neupc.delta-esourcing.com/delta/viewNotice.html?noticeId=950260280>

Total value (estimated)

- £15,400,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2030
- Possible extension to 30 November 2035
- 10 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 79400000 - Business and management consultancy and related services
- 79600000 - Recruitment services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom
-

Engagement

Engagement deadline

6 June 2025

Engagement process description

Interested suppliers are invited to email Emily Ryan at Emily.Ryan@ncgrp.co.uk.

NCG will conduct individual supplier meetings via Microsoft Teams on Monday 9th June 2025. The meeting will last no more than 45 minutes.

Upon receipt of your email, you will be assigned a meeting time slot.

Suppliers are encouraged to deliver a brief presentation during the meeting to outline their service offer to support NCG to reach its goal.

Contracting authority

NCG

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PJDY-1333-MXVZ

Rye Hill House

Newcastle upon Tyne

NE4 7SA

United Kingdom

Contact name: Emily Ryan

Email: emily.ryan@ncgrp.co.uk

Region: UKC22 - Tyneside

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government