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Award

Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment

Buckinghamshire New University

UK5: Transparency notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-030063

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-054328 ([view related notices](#))

Published 4 June 2025, 8:56pm

Scope

Reference

BNU-2412-305

Description

Buckinghamshire New University ("University") has been using the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment ("VLE") since 2012, with the technology now profoundly integrated across the University's students and staff teaching and learning activities.

This renewal will ensure continuity of services, access to support and updates, and the ability to scale and optimise usage based on future requirements. Given the University's long-standing investment in and integration with Blackboard VLE, renewing the Blackboard subscription is crucial to maintaining operational efficiency and supporting ongoing digital transformation initiatives.

Contract 1

Supplier

- Blackboard International B.V.

Contract value

- £1,164,100.33 excluding VAT
- £1,396,920.40 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Earliest date the contract will be signed

16 June 2025

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2031
- 6 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 48190000 - Educational software package
- 72260000 - Software-related services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Other information

Conflicts assessment prepared/revised

Yes

Procedure

Procedure type

Direct award

Direct award justification

Additional or repeat goods, services or works - extension or partial replacement

The award of the contract is permitted in accordance with Section 41 and Paragraph 7 of Schedule 5 to the Procurement Act 2023 on the basis that:

(a) Additional or repeat services;

The public contract concerns the supply of services by the existing supplier which are intended as an extension to, or partial replacement of, existing services in circumstances where-

(a) a change in supplier would result in the contracting authority receiving services that are different from, or incompatible with, the existing services, and

(b) the difference or incompatibility would result in disproportionate technical difficulties in operation or maintenance.

Of particular note:

The University has used the Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) since 2012. The continuity of a VLE is business-critical to the University and renewal of the Blackboard ALLY for Learn SaaS solution is essential to our student and staff teaching and learning experience.

This renewal will ensure continuity of services to students and staff, access to support and updates, and the ability to scale and optimise usage based on future requirements. A change of supplier would result in incompatibility and disproportionate technical and operational difficulties and costs.

The University does not currently have the resources to undertake the implementation of a new VLE system due to several existing, business critical IT projects. Blackboard is considered to be a stable platform and therefore is a low priority for limited IT resource. The cost of change for a VLE would also be very high given the impact on 9,000+ students and c.1500 members of staff. In addition, a 12 month+ implementation period with considerable consultancy cost and retraining is not economically viable at this moment in time. For these reasons the University has decided to re-contract for a further six years with Blackboard International B.V. for the provision of the Blackboard system.

Supplier

Blackboard International B.V.

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PRBP-7423-NZQZ

Databankweg 20

Amsterdam

3821 AL

Netherlands

Email: proposals@anthology.com

Website: <http://www.anthology.com>

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Contract 1

Contracting authority

Buckinghamshire New University

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PZTZ-8956-MMQT

Queen Alexandra Road

High Wycombe

HP11 2JZ

United Kingdom

Contact name: Veronica Fatemi

Email: veronica.fatemi@bucks.ac.uk

Website: <https://www.bucks.ac.uk/>

Region: UKJ13 - Buckinghamshire CC

Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government