

**Appendix A: Specification**

1. **Background**

Goldsmiths, University of London ([www.gold.ac.uk](http://www.gold.ac.uk)) was founded in 1891, and has been part of the University of London since 1904. We’ve a rich academic history and are known for our creative and innovative approach to delivering subjects and learning and teaching.

* We currently have circa 9,000 students across undergraduate and postgraduate levels
* We attract students from over 100 countries with key international markets being the USA, South Korean, China, Japan, India and northern and western EU countries
* Our student body is split 64:36 undergraduate to postgraduate ([www.gold.ac.uk/statistics/](http://www.gold.ac.uk/statistics/))
* Around 40% of our undergraduate body is from London
* Around 35% of our student population is mature (over 21)
* Goldsmiths’ academic rankings in the QS World University Rankings 2021 include:
  + 12th in the world for communication and media studies
  + 15th in the world for art and design
  + 39th in the world for sociology
  + 41st in the world for anthropology
  + 41st for performing arts
* In the most recent research excellence framework, Goldsmiths was ranked in the UK’s top 25 for research intensity
* Our alumni are all notable and include several Turner Prize winners and recipients of Oscars, Brit Awards, Mercury Music prizes, Ivor Novellos and BAFTAS
  + In total, there are nine Goldsmiths graduates or members of staff who have won the Turner Prize

1. **Executive Summary: the Requirement**

Goldsmiths, University of London has been set challenging student recruitment targets. To achieve these targets, the Communications and Engagement Directorate will use a number of promotional, marketing, recruitment and advertising techniques to attract, recruit and convert the best students for our range of products.

Goldsmiths is looking to appoint an expert supplier to use cutting-edge digital marketing and advertising strategies, alongside a deep understanding of the higher education sector, to offer consultancy-based solutions for each recruitment campaign and support the ongoing delivery and optimisation of any digital advertising activity.

Whilst increasing brand visibility and recognition is important, success will be measured against student recruitment related KPIs such as open day registrations, prospectus downloads, website lead generation, applications and enrolments.

As such, we are seeking to appoint a specialist digital marketing agency to support and deliver our student recruitment campaign by managing core paid for digital marketing and advertising for the next three years. The successful agency will deliver Goldsmiths’ paid digital advertising campaigns, including but not limited to the following channels:

* Paid search (Google, Bing)
* Display (Google, Bing)
* Social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter)
* Video (YouTube)

The agency will also be required to report on campaign performance and have a commitment to continued optimisations and improvements for all campaigns with a consultative approach to account management.

We are looking for an agency who will be a partner and take the time to understand and appreciate Goldsmiths, our community and our portfolio of programmes. The agency will be able to offer consultancy, advice and creative thinking to identify the best possible digital advertising and marketing campaigns and solutions to reach student recruitment targets.

The agency will not be asked to design and develop creative or messaging as we have an in-house marketing team to deliver these. However, the agency should provide consultancy and suggestions for improvements or optimisations. The agency will also have a key eye on future trends and innovations in the digital marketing and advertising sector and adopt an analytical and consultative approach to campaign performance.

The campaigns must be agile and responsive so that they closely follow demand and audience behaviour and allow for swift and precise readjustment of spend where necessary.

The campaigns will need to support key student recruitment objectives, including:

* Brand awareness raising and recognition
* Undergraduate application generation
* Undergraduate offer accepts
* Undergraduate recruitment event sign-ups
* Clearing application generation
* Postgraduate application generation
* Postgraduate offer accepts
* Postgraduate recruitment event sign-ups

1. **Purpose**

The successful agency should have a demonstrable track record of generating undergraduate and postgraduate university applications for both UK and international markets.

The agency will have a demonstrable experience of using analytics and reporting technologies to demonstrate the impact of their work, and establishing a Return on Investment (ROI) model for activity.

The successful agency should be either in partnership with or have approved status with the key search engines and media platforms (e.g. Google Partner). **Please note the award of any contract does not mean the successful supplier will have exclusive rights to provide these services to Goldsmiths.**

The following services are sought:

* Research and insight
* Campaign planning and consultancy
* Digital media buying and campaign delivery
* Digital media and campaign optimisation
* Reporting, evaluation and recommendation

The value of media spend is estimated to be circa £250,000.00 per academic year on digital advertising (however this may fluctuate). The selected agency will be able to demonstrate the lowering of advertising costs throughout the time span of the contract, based on increased knowledge of ROI following the initial campaigns.

The £250,000.00 media spend must include all agency fees, VAT (if applicable) and other fees incurred.

The contact will have a total value within the range of £675,000.00 over the term of appointment (March 2022 – August 2024), with an option to extend to be reviewed upon completion of the initial term. Please note, spend in the first year is anticipated to be £175,000.00 owing to the contract commencing mid-way through the academic year.

We anticipate spend levels of circa £250,000 per year, however actual annual spend levels may fluctuate. The rates submitted in the Pricing Submission (Appendix D) will be fixed for the entire contract term, inclusive of extensions. This is a non - exclusive supplier contract.

VFM and ROI will be key in this contract as the College needs to respond to internal audits that measure the efficient use of advertising funds, staff resources and managerial time. Goldsmiths is in a very competitive arena within the HE sector; demonstrable experience of reducing advertising spend whilst maintaining performance and/or maintaining advertising spend whilst increasing ROI will be particularly relevant.

1. **Client team**

The core client team is called Marketing and Events, headed by Colin Cheng, who reports into the Director of Communications, Marketing and Recruitment in Goldsmiths, University of London.

We anticipate the supplier will interact regularly with the Campaigns and Production Manager, the Performance, Marketing and CRM Manager, the Digital Marketing Coordinator and the Head of Marketing and Events.

The Head of Marketing and Events and the appointed agency will jointly deliver the digital advertising strategy and marketing campaign plan(s).

The internal team at Goldsmiths will be responsible for the creation of any digital advertising assets.

The appointed agency will be responsible for the media buying and campaign delivery, monitoring and optimisation, and reporting and evaluation of each campaign.

It is likely that the agency will work with one of these managers as the single point of contact, although they may liaise directly with other members of the team.

The team often works under challenging workload, so queries and issues will require prompt resolutions and a clear escalation procedure within the agency. The appointed agency will need to ensure there is a dedicated point of contact for the Goldsmiths marketing team and, for emergencies, be contactable out of hours.

Goldsmiths is a unique place – both literally and metaphorically. As such, the agency will be happy to visit the Goldsmiths campus and work with relevant teams in person from time to time. There is an expectation that there will be a physical presence from the successful agency during Main Clearing (JCQ results day and the day after).

Many decisions are time bounded, and the client team will need assurance that they can quickly locate the right member of the account team. The agency must demonstrate account team continuity and robust measures in place in case of annual leave and sickness cover.

1. **Brand Guidelines and aesthetic standards**

All and any material produced must be fully brand compliant and meet the high and exacting standards of the Goldsmiths marketing team.

Guidance on brand and campaign design is attached in the following appendices:

* Appendix A.2: Goldsmiths Brand Guidelines
* Appendix A.3: Goldsmiths Campaign Brand Guidelines

Goldsmiths has won awards for the quality of our marketing and communications activity.

We fully intend to do so again and to be recognised as one of the UK’s leading digital marketing universities. We therefore seek an agency who is ambitious and will relish the opportunity of working collaboratively with a creatively minded university and eager to exceed performance metrics.

1. **Results and successes**

The success of this contract will be measured by an increase the number of enquiries, event attendees, applicants and enrolled students. Outstanding numerical conversion rates will be valuable.

Another key success factor will be a confident client team who feel in partnership with an agency they can trust, supported by seamless and campaign reporting, and an agency team who remains committed to continued optimisation and improvements to the advertising activity.

We seek a marketing partner who are confident in meeting our goals so the contract will benefit from two-way collaboration. The agency must be keen to work with us to create a relationship with the client team, always keeping in mind our strategic aims and objectives, as opposed to delivering the contract in a reactive and inconsistent approach.

For this, the selected supplier must demonstrate a fluid and agile account delivery team, regardless of the size of the agency or the scale of their client roster.

A constructive approach and commitment to issues management will also be valued. Likewise, the client team at Goldsmiths will offer the same and take on board constructive feedback where improvements can be made to our practices, processes and strategies when and where relevant to ensure success is measurable for client and agency alike.

1. **Agreement with the Successful Agency**

Following the conclusion of the tender process, the successful agency will attend a campaign KO meeting. It is expected that the new agency will be in place to deliver campaigns beginning from 1 March 2022 (which is when the current supplier contract ends).

The agency will then be expected to provide regular campaign reports on a monthly basis, and consultancy sessions as and when required to establish any readjusting, refocusing and re-strategising of the campaigns to support continued delivery against target.

Within a month of the notification of contract award to the successful supplier, and to ensure that both sides of the agreement are aware of each other’s expectations, the first task will be the establishing of a joint service level agreement and performance KPIs to monitor the success of the relationship. These KPIs will then form part of the final contract. Routine failure to meet KPIs and deliver against the service level agreement may require a reduction in agency fees as compensation.

1. **Management of the Contract with the Successful Agency**

Our marketing and communications activity benefits from significant focus and collaboration. We have invested time in getting our framework and channels right. This has included developing key messages for recruitment, updating our brand toolkit, evolving our CRM campaigns, and continually improving our website.

The client team value direct input into the campaign strategy and delivery, but equally value a collaborative partnership with the agency. The agency must enjoy marketing challenges and look for innovative solutions to them. The ability to provide consultancy based on these principles is critical to the success of the relationship.

The appointed agency will work on a regular basis with a single point of contact at Goldsmiths (TBC upon contract awarding).

Where appropriate, both parties should seek clarity on what actions and work are to be carried out by the agency and what is to be carried out by the client team.

1. **Technical Specification**
   1. **Digital Marketing, Consultancy and Media Buying:**

To achieve our objectives, the appointed agency must be able to demonstrate and provide the following activity:

* Media buying and delivery
  + Search advertising campaign delivery
  + Display advertising campaign delivery / programmatic advertising delivery
  + Social media campaign delivery
  + Video advertising campaign delivery
* Strategy, consultancy and reporting
  + Pre, during and post campaign planning and evaluation against KPIs
  + Responsive approach to in-cycle pressure points
  + Digital marketing solutions and advice for recruitment and brand objectives

The key campaigns and audience for the contract include:

* Brand awareness raising and recognition
* Undergraduate application generation
* Undergraduate offer accepts
* Undergraduate recruitment event sign-ups
* Clearing application generation
* Postgraduate application generation
* Postgraduate offer accepts
* Postgraduate recruitment event sign-ups

The agency will need to deliver these for both UK and overseas target audiences.

Please note, the agency may be requested at times, to support digital marketing campaigns for teams in addition to the Student Marketing and Events teams (primarily the UK Student Recruitment and International Student Recruitment teams). These typically include things like dedicated international student recruitment brand awareness campaigns or taster day promotion for UK pre-18 students. These campaigns will be charged in addition to the above stated budget.

**9.2 Demonstrating and reporting ROI**

The department must demonstrate return on investment on these campaigns to senior management. The team must also have the ability to justify key advertising spend through digital media as opposed to other recruitment strategies (e.g. student fairs, recruitment agents, OOH and so on).

To meet this objective, the agency must demonstrate the ways in which they will:

* Monitor the performance of advertising spend
* Make recommendations for advertising based on previous performance
* Adjust spend mid campaign to meet targets
* Optimise advertising mid campaign to meet targets
* Ensure any additional content requirements are clearly communicated to the client team well in advance of campaign KO (for example, landing page changes)
* Track advertising spend through to enquiry, application and enrolment
* Identify new channels and opportunities to explore
* Identify opportunities to make savings in areas of underperformance
* Set goals for each element of the campaign activity
* Report on all advertising campaigns
* Establish, monitor and report ROI on each advertising spend in relation to recruitment outcomes

The successful agency will be tasked with working with the Head of Student Marketing and Events to develop media plans to meet overall student recruitment targets, achieve specific campaign outcomes and deliver digital advertising campaigns.

**9.3 Commission on placing Media Buying spend**

Any commission received by the agency for placing advertising bookings must be deducted from any cost to Goldsmiths.

Any management fees are to be calculated as a percentage of the University's advertising spend that is placed with the successful digital agency. For example, if Goldsmiths places £5,000.00 of ad spend, and agency’s management fee is 10%, then the management fee earned by the agency is £500.00.