



SMART: FRONT DOOR HIGHER EDUCATION

SERVICE DEFINITION DOCUMENT

G-Cloud 15 Framework | Lot 2b: Cloud Software

SERVICE OVERVIEW

SMART: Front Door for Higher Education provides AI-powered digital access for students, applicants, researchers, and staff to self-serve enquiries 24/7. Built on ICS.AI's OLM (Organisational Language Model) technology, the service delivers accurate, consistent answers grounded in approved university knowledge, with governed escalation to teams and comprehensive audit trails.

The service supports a broad range of higher education access journeys across **Student Services, Research Support, Recruitment & Admissions, and IT Support**. It reduces avoidable demand on professional services teams while maintaining the governance, data protection, and accountability standards required in university environments.

SERVICE TIERS

Tier	Description
Foundation	AI-powered engagement via web. OLM delivers multi-turn conversational support using approved university knowledge with citations. Intelligent triage and governed handover to staff with transcript and structured summary.
Premium	Foundation plus personalised experience using conversation history and transaction memory. Priority routing for time-critical cases, proactive updates, and enhanced analytics.
Specialist	Premium plus dedicated domain agents for Student Services, Research Support, Recruitment & Admissions, and IT Support. Extended workflows, eligibility prompts, and domain-specific journeys.
Ultra	Complete bundle: all channels (Web, Phone, SMS, Email, Mobile, Live Chat), all specialist domains, surge handling (e.g. recruitment cycles), continuous optimisation, cross-service reporting, managed updates, and priority support.

SPECIALIST DOMAINS (CAPABILITY DEPTH VARIES BY TIER)

Student Services

- Support for common student-facing enquiries, including:
- Enrolment and registration
- Fees, funding, and financial support
- Timetables, attendance, and progression
- Wellbeing, support services, and policies

Research Support

- Assistance for academic and research staff, including:
- Research administration and processes
- Grant application guidance and deadlines
- Ethics and governance procedures
- REF and research policy queries

Recruitment & Admissions

- Support for applicants and prospective students, including:
- Course information and entry requirements
- Application processes and deadlines
- Offer management and onboarding
- Conversion and pre-arrival enquiries

Clearing

- Support for clearing applicants and admissions teams, including:
- Course availability and live vacancy information
- Eligibility checks and programme matching
- Application triage and prioritisation during peak demand
- Offer confirmation and conditional decision support
- Applicant communications and status updates

IT Support

- Digital service access for students and staff, including:
- Account access and password support
- Software and system guidance
- Service status and known issues
- Intelligent triage to IT service desks

KEY FEATURES

- Multi-turn conversational AI with context retained across interactions
- OLM answers grounded in approved university knowledge with citations
- Intelligent triage and routing across professional service domains
- Governed handover to teams with transcript and structured summaries
- Role-aware journeys for students, applicants, researchers, and staff
- Accessibility features including plain language and translation
- Analytics tracking containment, escalation, and service demand
- Role-based administration for content, journeys, and governance
- Audit-ready transcripts for compliance and assurance

KEY BENEFITS

- Reduces avoidable demand on professional services and IT teams
- Improves first-contact resolution across student and staff journeys
- Provides consistent, governed information across the institution
- Improves applicant and student experience through 24/7 access
- Frees staff capacity for complex or high-value interactions
- Reveals demand patterns and service pressure points
- Maintains governance with comprehensive audit trails
- Scales to handle seasonal demand peaks (e.g. recruitment cycles)

TECHNICAL ARCHITECTURE

Built on SMART: Platform Core, providing:

- Microsoft Azure deployment with UK data residency
- Multi-LLM orchestration with model routing and cost controls
- Retrieval-augmented generation (RAG) over approved knowledge sources
- Identity integration via Microsoft Entra ID with RBAC
- Connector framework for Microsoft 365 and HE systems
- Web chat widget and embedded experience options
- Optional adapters for telephony, SMS, email, and mobile
- Integration with CRM, service management, and ticketing systems

HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM INTEGRATIONS

The connector framework supports integration with common HE platforms, including:

- Student Information Systems (SITS, Banner, Unit-e, Tribal)
- Research systems (Pure, Symplectic, Worktribe)
- Admissions platforms (UCAS and internal CRMs)
- ERP systems (Oracle, Agresso)
- IT Service Management tools
- Microsoft 365 (SharePoint, Teams, Outlook)
- Knowledge bases and intranet platforms
- Integrations are configured in line with institutional governance and data-sharing policies.

GOVERNANCE, SECURITY & COMPLIANCE

- Role-based access control for users, journeys, and knowledge sources
- Policy controls for prompts, outputs, and escalation thresholds
- Approved knowledge sources with review and version control
- Full audit logging for prompts, responses, routing, and handovers
- Sensitive data handling with redaction and minimisation
- Human-in-the-loop controls for high-risk or sensitive workflows
- WCAG 2.2 AA compliant interfaces
- GDPR compliant with UK data residency
- Agentic Dome security layer for controlled AI behaviour

IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

- **Discover & scope** – priority domains, journeys, success metrics
- **Configure governance** – policies, roles, access controls
- **Build & ground** – connect knowledge sources and service content
- **Integrate** – identity, SIS, CRM, research and IT systems
- **Test & assure** – evaluation, accessibility, security review
- **Pilot & iterate** – controlled rollout, monitoring, tuning
- **Scale & operate** – lifecycle management, optimisation, reporting

SUCCESS MEASURES

- Containment and deflection rates by domain
- First-contact resolution
- Escalation accuracy and misroute rate
- Average handling time reduction
- Demand insight and repeat contact analysis
- Student, applicant, and staff satisfaction indicators

CHANNEL ADD-ONS

Web channel included as default. Additional channels available:

Tier	Description
Phone	Call transcription, intent detection, after-call summaries, warm transfer
Email	Enquiry classification, draft replies, thread summarisation
SMS	Two-way messaging with opt-in/out handling
Mobile	In-app assistant, notifications, secure sessions
Live Chat	Real-time agent-assisted chat with AI escalation, co-browsing, and queue management

These are available via SMART: Front Door – Channel Add-ons.

DEPENDENCIES & PREREQUISITES

- SMART Platform Core (included with any SMART product)
- Microsoft Azure subscription (UK or EU hosted)
- Microsoft Entra ID for identity management

USER SUPPORT

The response time is 24 hours, depending on the contract signed by the client and applies during working hours from Monday to Friday. The Support levels are as follows:

Level	Description	Response
Level 1: Urgent	System not responding or critical function loss that affects all users.	24hr fix/workaround
Level 2: High	A function loss that causes significant disruption to business and users.	Priority response
Level 3: Normal	Function loss that affects some users but will not stop them from being able to do other tasks.	Standard response
Level 4: Low	A cosmetic issue or a minor function loss that affects some users.	Scheduled response

This service, up to an agreed number of hours per month, is included in the cost of the Licence for the SMART: Front Door. Additional support hours can be purchased if required.

DISCLAIMER

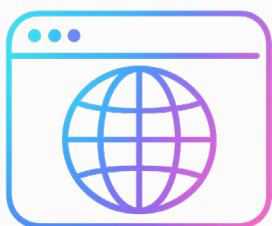
This service description was prepared for G-Cloud 15 and will remain on the Digital Marketplace for the duration of the framework period (up to 24 months). As AI technology and our platform capabilities evolve rapidly, specific features, integrations, or functionality described in this document may have changed since publication.

Before purchase, we recommend contacting ICS.AI to confirm current capabilities and any new features that may have been added since this description was published.

CONTACT

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Learn more about ICS.AI, our services, and how we support the UK public sector with responsible AI



<https://www.ics.ai/>

EMAIL US

Contact our team with questions about our services, G-Cloud offerings, or to start a conversation



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BOOK A MEETING

Schedule a call with our team to discuss your requirements or learn more about our services



[book a meeting](#)