

# Using Chat to Prioritise Students' Mental Health

The Student Counselling Unit at the University of Pretoria (UP) looked to DotModus to build a first-of-its-kind chatbot that helps connect students to self-help resources and trained counsellors.

## The challenge

UP wanted to provide 24 hour access to primary mental healthcare resources for students. The virtual assistant supplements traditional one-on-one counselling services by allowing students to interactively explore self-help topics and build confidential self-help tool kits containing multimedia resources and guides.

## The solution

The chatbot (or SCU-B) uses several Google Cloud Platform tools (Dialogflow, GKE, Cloud SQL, AppEngine and Cloud Scheduler). DotModus was able to develop an artificial communication entity that effortlessly connects students to mental health resources when they need them most. By working closely with UP's Disability Unit, the team focused on accessibility to ensure equitable access to all students

## The results

The SCU-B chatbot is giving students access to the personalised help they need, at the times they need it most. UP's students face immense pressure both academically and socially and the app is helping manage the resulting anxiety and depression. Furthermore, the anonymised usage reports it generates helps caregivers at the university better understand the mental health needs of their students.

“ The SCU-B initiative comes at a very important time for the university. There is an increased need for primary mental healthcare in a period where people are reluctant to have face-to-face interactions. DotModus' never-say-no attitude allowed us to build every requirement of our idea without compromise.

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Dr. Wimpie Beeken



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## About University of Pretoria

The University of Pretoria (UP) is a multi-campus university located in Pretoria, the administrative capital of South Africa. UP offers high-quality teaching, learning and research expertise across all nine faculties, including South Africa's only Faculty of Veterinary Science, and Africa's top Faculty of Law and business school.

[www.up.ac.za](http://www.up.ac.za)

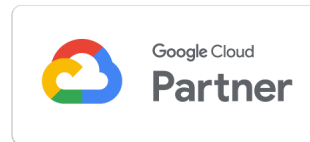
Industry: Education

Primary project location: South Africa

# dotmodus

## About DotModus (Pty) Ltd

DotModus builds custom data analytics and machine learning software that helps reduce costs, improve decision making and streamline operations.



## Products

Google Cloud Platform