**Bassetlaw District Council**

**Request for Quotations (RFQ)** **to appoint an organisation to design a skills audit and focus groups for the Bassetlaw District**

**Guidance Document and RFQ Application Form**

Delivery: 24th March – 31st December 2025 (take into next financial year subject to further funding allocation).

**Call open: Friday 7th February 2025**

**Call Closes: Friday 7th March 2025**

Procurement value £25k (potential for additional funding through SPF 2025/26 to be discussed as part of the request provisionally costed at £20k).

Timeline – the survey needs to be designed in March 2025.

CONTENTS

1. **Introduction**   **2**

**1.1 Basic Outline of the Request 2**

 **1.2 Phase 1 3**

**1.3 Phase 2 3**

1. **Bassetlaw Area Information 4**

**Vision 2040 5**

**Economic Growth Opportunities 6**

1. **Section 1: Instructions to Suppliers 7&8**
2. **Timescales 8**
3. **Section 2: Assessment 9**
4. **Assessment Criteria 10**
5. **Section 3: Supplier Details 11**
6. **Declaration 14**

1. **Introduction**

To enable the Council to support businesses to engage with opportunities, offer targeted business support, and evidence skills and education needs to secure the delivery of higher education courses in the district, from facilities such as The Bridge Skills Hub in Worksop and the West Burton Training Centre (from September 2028), we need to understand demand. This work is being done in addition to existing studies but where possible, should take into consideration wider work that is taking place and where we can draw on, share knowledge and intelligence.

**1.2 Phase 1:**

1.2.1 For our district, develop and design a skills survey to identify the current capabilities of businesses and identify what skills they need to build on and advance in the short to medium term to engage with growth opportunities. The survey could include a variety of engagement strategies ie: through sector based or cross sector focus groups; drop-in surgeries; Q&A sessions; one to one engagement; engagement with local educational institutions.

1.2.2 The survey needs to test general understanding of new and emerging technologies and business techniques to bridge skills, knowledge and behaviour gaps.

1.2.3 Skills attainment in the district is currently below regional and national averages for L3 and above. The district is going to need to go through a process to switch from a dependency of low skilled low paid employment to a highly paid highly skilled workforce and raise aspirations. The district does have a history in engineering, manufacturing and energy production: the survey needs to address how our district aligns with this and the new opportunities. This is going to touch on all ages but in relation to businesses, we need to encourage investment to upskill with a particular focus on higher education L4+.

1.2.4 There are a number of wider skills studies that are being carried out on a national and regional basis to identify what skills are required to support growth sectors and emerging/disruptive technologies but none of these drill down to district level.

1.2.5 To enable the Council to support businesses to engage with opportunities, offer targeted business support, and evidence skills and educational needs, to secure the delivery of higher education courses in the district from facilities such as The Bridge Skills Hub in Worksop and the West Burton Training Centre (from September 2028), we need to understand demand.

1.2.6 This work is being done in addition to existing studies but where possible should take into consideration wider work that is taking place and where we can draw on, share knowledge and intelligence.

1.2.7 Engage with the local business community and regional stakeholders.

1.2.8 Attend the organised Skills Summit - **27th March 2025** - to help design the skills audit survey where businesses and key stakeholder partners can speak directly with businesses on the identified growth opportunities and programmes. They will provide an overview of supply chain opportunities that will be available and outline the skills and experience they will be looking for.

1.2.9 The Skills Summit, taking place on **27th March 2025,** will be integral to the design of the audit and should help inform and understand where businesses’ skills levels are currently, and what they are going to need in the short to medium term to support them to engage with growth opportunities in the district.

**1.3 Phase 2:**

Subject to funding approval, there is an appetite to continue to develop and deliver the skills audit moving forward as the large-scale projects develop across our district. With this in mind, once the survey has been designed in phase one, BDC will be looking to the procured organisation to deliver the skills audit and outline and present the granular results to key stakeholders. Subject to funding allocation approval, further funding will be available to the procured organisation to deliver the designed audit. BDC will work with the procured organisation to: providing building resource where required, connections to our business community and other networks for them to undertake the audit.

Once the audit is complete, phase 2 will be to compile the results of the audit and present to our key stakeholders.

**Bassetlaw Area Information**

Bassetlaw is a wonderful place to live, work and visit with historic town centres, a patchwork of villages and parishes, stunning countryside, and superb connectivity. Characterised by an abundance of green open space, our historic market towns of Worksop and Retford, and their surrounding villages, offer residents and visitors a wide range of leisure, heritage, and cultural facilities: from Creswell Crags, Clumber Park and the Welbeck Estate to the Chesterfield Canal, Mayflower Pilgrims Gallery, and Bassetlaw’s Green Flag Award winning parks.

The growing town of Harworth and Bircotes offers easy access to South Yorkshire and the north of England via the A1 and M18 road networks and from Retford, you are less than two hours from London, Birmingham, Manchester, and Newcastle by train.

Our unique location gives access to the economies of both the Midlands Engine and the Sheffield City Region which makes Bassetlaw an incredibly attractive place to do business. Well-established manufacturing, warehousing and logistics providers already call Bassetlaw their home, in addition to multi-national businesses such as Laing O’Rourke, DHL, Cerealto, Brunton Shaw and Trelleborg which all have operations in the district.

Bassetlaw was once a heartland of coal-fired energy production with three power stations within its borders. And now, with the siting of the STEP prototype energy fusion project at West Burton in East Bassetlaw, it will be at the forefront of developing clean energy technologies for net zero Britain. The multi-billion project will provide new opportunities for residents and businesses in research and development, green technologies and advanced manufacturing and engineering.

**Bassetlaw in 2025**

Our journey to transform the district has a strong starting point. We have a growing population, above average economic activity, and planned housing growth for future employees.

Bassetlaw in 2025 shows a district full of potential. With 118,327 residents, our population continues to grow with a notable increase in the number of under 15-year olds, providing the workforce of the future.

The vast majority of the working age population in Bassetlaw has at least one qualification (95.2%), with GCSE attainment in Maths and English by age 19 being high at 76%. Just under a third of residents are educated to degree level and above.

Attainment levels for the district drop behind the national average level 3 and above are typically behind the national average. Data to Dec 23 (NOMIS) shows the highest qualifications held as;

Qualification RQF1 and above 62,900 (Bassetlaw 93.6% - GB 89.0%)

Qualification RQF2 and above 61,300 (Bassetlaw 91.4% - GB 86.5%)

Qualification RQF3 and above 38,800 (Bassetlaw 57.8% - GB 67.8%)

Qualification RQF4 and above 26,500 (Bassetlaw 39.6% - GB 47.3%)

We have a strong culture of apprenticeships dating back to the coal-fired power stations of the 1960s. As a result, 830 new apprenticeships were started in 2021/22. Bassetlaw has 55,780 homes spread across 63,688 hectares of stunning countryside and benefits from over 10,000 acres of woodland. People are generally happy (7.29 out of 10) and satisfied with life (7.28 out of 10). Overall satisfaction with the local area as a place to live is good at 71% and we aspire to raise this further.

Housing provision is growing with 766 new homes completed in the last year. A further 952 homes are under construction with plans for the Council’s first ninety modular, low-carbon homes to be built in 2023 - 2027.

Bassetlaw is also a wonderful place to do business with two business forums and a Business Improvement District (BID) in place. Bassetlaw District has a well-established employment and skills governance model with an established Skills and Employment Board, Skills and Employment Partnership, Employability Collaboration Group and the new Bassetlaw Business Alliance. These established groups are the platforms used to engage and consult with the wider business and stakeholder community in Bassetlaw and North Nottinghamshire. We have 5,105 enterprises in Bassetlaw and our three-year business survival rate is 59%. Our economic activity rate of 84.4% is significantly higher than the England average of 78.8%.

The average annual salary is £27,090 with the private sector being the largest employer (81%).

Census 2021 figures show that in Bassetlaw, the population size has increased by 4.4%, from around 112,900 in 2011 to 118,400 in 2021. 71,600 (60.5%) of the population are of working age (Census 2021).

12,500 individuals are classed as economically inactive, which accounts for 18.4% of the working age population (Nov 24). 87.7% (11,00) ‘Do not want a job’ and 12.3% ‘Want a job’. 28.1% of those economically inactive were aged 50-64 years. In Oct 2023 411 individuals were Pre-WCA, 590 had limited capability for work and 2,144 had limited capability for work and work related activities. Source: DWP State of the District Report June 2024. Nomis data shows that in Dec 23 4,219 were inactive due to long-term sickness or disability.

The total claimant count in Bassetlaw in Nov 2024 was 2,380 individuals - 3.3% compared to 3.7% in the East Midlands and 4.2% for Great Britain. This is made up of 1,260 males (3.5%) and 1,120 females (3.1%). The claimant count of those aged 18-24 years was 5.7% (460 individuals), 25-49 years 4.2% (1,385 individuals) and 50+ 2.1% (530 individuals). Source: ONS Claimant Count.

For the period Jan 22-Dec 22, 46.4% of those with a disability were not in employment (7,100 individuals); 30.7% of those aged 50-64 years were not in employment (8,400); the employment rate gap between male and female was 13.2%. The district had seen an increase in the number of UC claims partially due to natural migration from those in receipt of legacy benefits.

The district is predominately rural with Worksop and Retford being the largest urban areas followed by Harworth and Bircotes and Tuxford.

**Vision 2040**

The Council adopted Vision 2040 in 2023 with an overarching objective for Bassetlaw to become the greenest, most sustainable district in which to live and work, building on its legacy of energy production, manufacturing, and logistics to power the net zero economy. To deliver this vision, the Council has identified six strategic ‘pillars’ or foundations on which the Bassetlaw of 2040 should be built.

**Identity** - We will build a stronger sense of identity for Bassetlaw as a place to live and work, rooted in its commitment to powering the net zero economy.

**Skills** - We will develop the skills that will be needed to power the UK’s manufacturing industry and green economy, using wage growth to address deprivation and inequality.

**Business** - We will become a wonderful place to ‘do business’ by proactively investing in offices, connectivity and supporting infrastructure.

**Environment** - We will mitigate the impacts of climate change through green energy planning, improving building efficiency and enhancing natural environments.

**Facilities for all** - We will promote partner investment in high-quality education, health and other facilities which should be easy for everyone to access.

**Healthy district** - We will encourage sustainable living and promote good mental and physical health for all Bassetlaw residents.

**Economic Growth Opportunities**

In the last few years, the Council has attracted investment that will deliver international, national, and regional growth. This includes:

* **Thatcham Research**, the UK’s not-for profit’ insurer funded through the automotive research centre, acquired Gamston Aviation Ltd in 2022 to create a centre of excellence for the research and testing of future mobility systems.

<https://news.thatcham.org/thatcham-research-to-develop-new-centre-of-excellence-for-future-mobility-solutions/>

* **Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) Programme** – it was announced in October 2022 that West Burton would be the home of the STEP prototype fusion energy plant. The multi-billion project is of international, national, and regional significance that is going to create billions of pounds in Gross Value Added (GVA) to the UK economy through job creation and supply chain opportunities during the construction stage and once operational.
* **Trent Clean Energy Supercluster Vision** (DRAFT AT PRESENT)considers the possibilities presented by STEP and the West Burton site alongside growth opportunities and connections that are presented by two other former coal fired power station sites in nearby, High Marnham and Cottam in relation to redevelopment, investment, and employment opportunities.
* **East Midlands Investment Zone –** one of the three tax site is Explore Park (formerly the Centre of Excellence for Modular Construction, CEMC). The 40.46 hectare site located in Bassetlaw and Bolsover Districts. A masterplan has been developed to secure advanced manufacturing and green technologies occupiers.
	+ The East Midlands Investment Zone core objectives of the Investment Zone are:
		- To establish the East Midlands as the national centre of excellence for green industry and advanced manufacturing sectors;
		- To support investment by indigenous businesses to promote employment and productivity growth within target sectors.
		- To sustain innovation that can secure local growth at the cutting edge.
		- To provide access to opportunity for local residents and businesses, supporting local regeneration and community wealth building; and
		- To deliver the East Midlands Investment Zone net zero ambition.
* **Apleyhead Site** – 118 hectares major employment development site located on the A57 east of Worksop, near the Apleyhead junction of the A1. A planning application is to be submitted for the entire site with details of the initial infrastructure and first phase of the development which includes a large purpose-built distribution facility that will create circa 2,000 jobs. The site can accommodation units from 100,965 sqft (9,380 sqm) to 1,182,049 sqft (109,816 sqm). It is estimated that the entire site will deliver 4,000+ jobs and this doesn’t include wider supply chain benefits. Construction is expected to start in 2025 and finish in 2036.

Section 1: Instructions to Suppliers

* 1. 1. **Submission of Quotes**
			1. All quotes must be submitted in writing via the Authority’s Employment and Skills email: employmentandskills@bassetlaw.gov.uk no later than the time and date shown on the front of this document.
			2. Bidders may seek clarification on any of the points contained in the invitation to quote and any associated documents; these should be submitted in writing through BDC’s Employment and Skills email address: employmentandskills@bassetlaw.gov.uk in sufficient time to allow the Authority to supply the information before the deadline for receipt of quotes.
			3. If you experience any problems accessing the Employment and Skills email, please contact us on 01909 533190.
			4. Quotes must be submitted no later than the time and date shown on the front of this document; the Authority reserves the right to accept late quotes only where it can be shown conclusively that this was due to reasons beyond the control of the bidder.
		2. **Contract Terms & Conditions**
			1. A copy of the standard terms & conditions of contract to be used have been published alongside this document.
		3. **Data Protection**
			1. The bidder shall ensure that any information that is provided as part of the tender process is at all times compliant with their obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulations ((EU) 2016/679).
			2. Any contract specific requirements in respect of data, being subject to data protection legislation, are set out in the specification and contract documents.
		4. **Confidentiality**
			1. All documents, contracts, and other information issued by the Authority relating to the quote shall be treated by the supplier as private and confidential for use only in connection with the quote and any resulting contract, and shall not be disclosed in whole or in part to any third party without the prior written consent of the authority.
			2. All information provided by suppliers as part of a quote return will be treated as confidential, notwithstanding any obligation on the authority arising under the provisions of Freedom of Information or related legislation, or any other requirement for the disclosure of information applicable under the law of England and Wales.
		5. **Freedom of Information**
			1. The Authority is subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and may be obliged to disclose information (including information provided by bidders) in accordance with the requirements of this legislation.
			2. Bidders should state if any information supplied by them is confidential or commercially sensitive or should not be disclosed in response to a request for information under the Act and should state why they consider the information to be confidential or commercially sensitive. This will not guarantee that the information will not be disclosed but will be examined in the list of the exemptions provided in the Act.
		6. **Intellectual Property**
			1. Unless otherwise specified or agreed, it is the intention of the Authority that all intellectual property rights in all works or supplies provided in relation to this quote which are written or produced on a bespoke or customised basis, including, without limitation, all future such rights when the said works are created, shall be owned by the authority, and the supplier shall ensure that it executes all documents necessary to effect such ownership.
			2. Where the supplier provides existing intellectual property rights protected material to the authority in relation to this quote, it shall disclose this to authority; warrants it has the right to do so; and shall fully indemnify and hold the authority harmless against all loss or liability arising from any third party intellectual property rights claims arising both from such existing material and in relation to any such bespoke work.
			3. Except as provided above, both parties retain ownership of their pre-existing intellectual property rights protected material.

**Timescales –** The successful provider will commence work no later than 31 March 2025.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Outline Dates**  | **Activity**  |
| Requests for quotations close  | 23:59 Friday 7th March 2025  |
| Quotations evaluation process  | 11th March 2025  |
| Contracting period  | 17th March 2025  |
| Contract commencement  | w/c 24th March 2025 |

It is an expectation that the procured organisation will engage with our local stakeholders as outlined in the specification.

* 1. Assessment

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| --- |
| * + 1. **Programme Delivery**
 |
| Please detail the process you would undertake to design and deliver a skills audit. Please explain how you would implement the audit across the district giving consideration to Bassetlaw district and the information contained within the specification (Business demographic/rurality/future industry requirements/attainment levels). (40% of evaluation score 20% design/20% delivery) (1000 words) |
| Answer:  |

|  |
| --- |
| * + 1. **Experience**
 |
| Please demonstrate your experience in designing and delivering a similar project. Please identify what achievements and outcomes will be realised. Please provide 2 x case studies providing evidence of similar audits you have carried out. (20% of evaluation score) (up to 500 words – case studies not included) |
| Answer:  |

|  |
| --- |
| **2.3 Programme Content** |
| Please provide describe the steps you will undertake to assist with phase 1 and phase 2 of the procurement process providing a detailed timeline.If you can, please provide costs for each phase and a description of what the costs will cover, e.g. staff time; travel, venue hire etc. in response to this question and complete the excel spreadsheet provided (40% of evaluation score 20% phase 1/ 20% phase 2) No more than 1000 words. You can provide supplementary documentation to support your response in this question.  |
| Answer: |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria**  |  |
| **Quality**  | 60%  |
| **Cost**  | 40%  |
| **Scoring Criteria per Question**  |  |
| **Programme Delivery**  | 40%  |
| **Experience**  | 20% |
| **Programme Content**  | 40% |

Each question will be assigned a score according to the following criteria. Failure to achieve a rating of satisfactory (i.e. a minimum unweighted score of 3 or above) in any one or more categories may result in the bid being disqualified at the Authority’s discretion:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Assessment Criteria** | **Score** |
| **Unacceptable:** either no answer is provided, or the answer fails to demonstrate that any of the key requirements in the area being measured will be delivered. | 0 |
| **Poor:** fails to demonstrate how the basic requirements in the area being measured will be addressed, giving rise to serious concerns that acceptable outcomes would be not delivered against the specification. | 1 |
| **Weak:** barely demonstrates how the basic requirements in the area being measured will be addressed, giving rise to concerns whether acceptable outcomes would be delivered against the specification. | 2 |
| **Satisfactory:** demonstrates how the basic requirements in the area being measured will be addressed so as to deliver acceptable outcomes against the specification. | 3 |
| **Good:** demonstrates how most of the requirements in the area being measured will be addressed so as to deliver good outcomes against the specification. | 4 |
| **Excellent:** demonstrates clearly how all of the requirements in the area being measured will be fully addressed so as to deliver excellent outcomes against the specification. | 5 |

**Stage 3. Moderation**

Funding will be awarded to the applicant with the highest score.

The Council reserves the right to invite applicants to an interview when scores are very close and/or clarification is required.

**Notification of request for quotation outcome**

Once the outcome of the assessment process has been notified to all applicants, organisations can request feedback on their applications and scoring.

**Further information**

For further information or questions, please email: employmentandskills@bassetlaw.gov.uk

* 1. Supplier Details

|  |
| --- |
| Name of legal entity or sole trader |
| Unique name of legal entity or name of individual |  |
| Trading Name(if different to above) |  |
| Contact Details in relation to this invitation to quote  |
| Title |  |
| Forename |  |
| Family name |  |
| Job title |  |
| E-mail |  |
| Telephone no. |  |
| Address line 1 |  |
| Address line 2 |  |
| Address line 3 |  |
| Town |  |
| County |  |
| Post Code |  |
| Company registration numbers (Where applicable) |
| Registration number with Companies House |  |
| Registration number with equivalent body (e.g. FCA) |  |
| Charity registration number |  |
| VAT registration number |  |
| Company Structure |
| Type of organisation(e.g. PLC, Ltd, LLP, CIC, IPS; Other partnership; Sole trader) |  |
| Size of organisation: Please state total number of employees(including directors and part-time staff) |  |
| Please confirm the organisations key personnel who will deliver the project  |  |
| Confirm you can meet the timescales to deliver on the milestones as stated in this specification  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of insurance | Minimum required: | Supplier's standard level of indemnity: |
| Employers' liability | £10,000,000 |  |
| Public/Product liability | £5,000,000 |  |
| Professional Indemnity (to be held for a minimum of 3-years upon contract completion)  | £1,000,000 |  |

Please confirm whether you already have or can commit to obtain prior to the commencement of the contract, the levels of insurance cover indicated above. If there is likely to be an issue with obtaining these levels, or you believe them to be excessive for the requirement, please contact us via the portal before the stated deadline date.

**Turnover**

A quoting organisation will be deemed to pass a financial viability test to perform the contract providing that it can demonstrate the following:

* An assessment of the quoting organisations turnover value for each of the last two years will be undertaken.  Based upon Public Contract Regulations 2015 the value of the contract will not exceed 50% of a company’s turnover.
* In addition, the Authority will undertake an external credit check on the organisation to establish its financial stability. Any organisation rated with a risk indicator of “Average risk” or better will be considered for evaluation.

|  |
| --- |
| **Financial**  |
| Please indicate and attach to your application, **one** of the following to demonstrate your organisation’s financial standing |
| 1. A copy of audited accounts for the last two years.
 |[ ]
| 1. A statement of the turnover, Profit and Loss Account/Income Statement, Balance Sheet/Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Cash Flow for the most recent year of trading for this organisation.
 |[ ]
| 1. Alternative means of demonstrating financial status if any of the above are not available (e.g. forecast of turnover for the current year and a statement of funding provided by the owners and/or the bank, charity accruals accounts or an alternative means of demonstrating financial status).
 |[ ]

Is your company a Small- Medium Enterprise\* (SME)? YES/NO

\*An SME is an enterprise which has less than 250 employees and has a turnover less than £25 million.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Have you had any County Court judgements (or equivalent) made against the company in the last three years?

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  | No |  |  If yes, how many? ……………………………….. |

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|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  **Company Resources:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Management & Admin |  | Operations |  |

 |
| **Equal Opportunities:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Do you operate a written policy on Equal Opportunities and Race Equality covering recruitment and employment matters? | Yes |  | No |  |
|  |
| In the last 3 years have any findings for discrimination been made against your organisation by a court or tribunal? | Yes |  | No |  |
|  |

 |
| **Quality:****Does your Company hold any current accreditation for your quality systems?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Yes |  | No |  |  Accreditation ………………………………… |
| Do you have a dedicated Quality Manager / Consultant? | Yes |  | No |  |
|  |

 |
| **Evidence of registration with appropriate professional/trade body(s):****Either insert required details or state ‘None’** |
| **Health & Safety:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Do you have a written Health & Safety Policy? | Yes |  | No |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Do you have a risk assessment process? | Yes |  | No |  |

**In the last 3 years how many prosecutions, prohibition notices and improvement notices have your company received?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Prosecutions |  |
| Prohibition Notices |  |
| Improvement Notices |  |

**(Please provide details on a separate sheet)** |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Environmental:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Do you have a written Environmental Policy? | Yes |  | No |  |

(Please provide details of any environmental initiatives you have/are running to minimise the environmental impact of your operations.) |

**DECLARATION**

I declare that the details submitted in this Request for Quotation Form are correct.

I declare that the applicant is the organisation which it is proposed will enter into a formal contract with the Council if awarded the contract.

I understand that the information disclosed in this application form will be used in the evaluation process to assess my firm's general suitability and competence to conduct the service to be tendered by Bassetlaw District Council.

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**SUPPLIER CHECKLIST**

Suppliers should ensure that they have completed the following sections before returning their quotation responses:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SECTION HEADING** | **COMPLETED?** |
| **Supplier Details** | 🞏 |
| **Type of Insurance** | 🞏 |
| **Turnover and Financials** | 🞏 |
| **Company Resources** | 🞏 |
| **Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety** | 🞏 |
| **Questions 1, 2 & 3 including Case Studies** | 🞏 |
| **Budget Profile Spreadsheet** | 🞏 |
| **Declaration** | 🞏 |