



# Invitation to Quote

**Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Higher Education Funding  
Council for England (HEFCE)**

**Subject UK SBS Identifying innovative and sector leading practice  
in Equality and Diversity**

**Sourcing reference number BLOJEU-CR16056HEFCE**

**UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)**  
[www.uksbs.co.uk](http://www.uksbs.co.uk)

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.  
Registered Office North Star House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 1FF  
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**UKSBS**  
  
*Shared Business Services*

## Table of Contents

Section	Content
1	<a href="#"><u>About UK Shared Business Services Ltd.</u></a>
2	<a href="#"><u>About our Customer</u></a>
3	<a href="#"><u>Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.</u></a>
4	<a href="#"><u>Specification</u></a>
5	<a href="#"><u>Evaluation model</u></a>
6	<a href="#"><u>Evaluation questionnaire</u></a>
7	<a href="#"><u>General Information</u></a>
Appendix	

# Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

## Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping our customers improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading provider for our customers of shared business services in the UK public sector, continuously reducing cost and improving quality of business services for Government and the public sector.

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our customers. This allows our customers the freedom to focus resources on core activities; innovating and transforming their own organisations.

Core services include Procurement, Finance, Grants Admissions, Human Resources, Payroll, ISS, and Property Asset Management all underpinned by our Service Delivery and Contact Centre teams.

UK SBS is a people rather than task focused business. It's what makes us different to the traditional transactional shared services centre. What is more, being a not-for-profit organisation owned by its customers, UK SBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

UK Shared Business Services Ltd changed its name from RCUK Shared Services Centre Ltd in March 2013.

## Our Customers

### Our Customers

Growing from a foundation of supporting the Research Councils, 2012/13 saw Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Services (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UK SBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UK SBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Customers.

## Our Procurement ambition

Our vision is to be recognised as a centre of excellence and deliver a broad range of procurement services across the public sector; to maintain and grow a procurement service unrivalled in public sector.

Procurement is a market-shaping function. Industry derived benchmarks indicate that UK SBS is already performing at or above “best in class” in at least three key measures (percentage savings, compliant spend, spend under management) and compare well against most other measures.

Over the next five years, it is the function’s ambition to lead a cultural change in procurement in the public sector. The natural extension of category management is to bring about a fundamental change in the attitude to supplier relationship management.

Our philosophy sees the supplier as an asset to the business and the route to maximising value from supply. This is not a new concept in procurement generally, but it is not a philosophy which is widely employed in the public sector.

We are ideally positioned to “lead the charge” in the government’s initiative to reform procurement in the public sector.

UK SBS Procurement’s unique selling points are:

- Focus on the full procurement cycle
- Leaders in category management in common and specialised areas
- Expertise in the delivery of major commercial projects
- That we are leaders in procurement to support research
- Use of cutting edge technologies which are superior to those used generally used across the public sector.
- Use of market leading analytical tools to provide comprehensive Business Intelligence
- Active customer and supplier management

***‘UK SBS’ contribution to the Government Procurement Agenda has been impressive. Through innovation and leadership UK SBS has built an attractive portfolio of procurement services from P2P to Strategy Category Management.’***

**John Collington**

**Former Government Chief Procurement Officer**

## Section 2 – About Our Customer

### Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)

HEFCE funds and regulates universities and colleges in England. We invest on behalf of students and the public to promote excellence and innovation in research, teaching and knowledge exchange. In all our activities we aim to:

- ensure accountability for funding and be a proportionate regulator
- act in the public interest and be open, fair, impartial and objective
- be an effective broker between Government and the sector and in doing so, ensure that we are implementing government policy effectively.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/>

## Section 3 - Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.

In this section you will find details of your Procurement contact point and the timescales relating to this opportunity.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Customer Name and address	Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) Nicholson House Lime Kiln Close Stoke Gifford Bristol BS34 8SR
3.2	Buyer name	Liz Vincent
3.3	Buyer contact details	Email: <a href="mailto:research@uksbs.co.uk">research@uksbs.co.uk</a>
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£25,000 exc. VAT
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	<b>All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available <a href="#">here</a>. Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being considered.</b>

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of Issue of Contract Advert and location of original Advert	08/06/2016
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions should be received through Emptoris messaging system	22/06/2016 14:00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	24/06/2016
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	29/06/2016 14:00
3.10	Anticipated rejection of unsuccessful Bids date	06/07/2016
3.11	Anticipated Award date	06/07/2016
3.12	Anticipated Contract Start date	11/07/2016

3.13	Anticipated Contract End date	14/11/2016
3.14	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

## Section 4 – Specification

### 1. Introduction

Should give a brief introduction to the organisation, including the business that the organisation is in.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is seeking to engage a consultant to help us to identify innovative and sector-leading practice in advancing equality and diversity in the English higher education system. This will be achieved through qualitative analysis of self-evaluations to be collected through a call for evidence and the drafting of a report to summarise these findings.

HEFCE was established in June 1992 under the terms of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 as a non-departmental public body operating within a policy and funding context set by the Government. HEFCE's main function is to administer grant funding provided by the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills; it funds education, research and associated activities at universities and other HEIs. HEFCE also provides advice to the Secretary of State on funding for higher education and related matters.

### 2. Aims

Should provide details of the main aims and reasons of the tender exercise

In broad terms, the tender contributes to fulfilling a request made by the Secretary of State in the 2016 HEFCE Grant Letter, as explained in the background. The specific aims are as follows:

- To engage with the sector (specifically with equality and diversity practitioners) to understand what works in advancing equality and diversity
- To identify and disseminate of impactful practice in advancing equality in higher education
- To provide an enhanced understanding of the breadth of institutional equality work, enabling HEFCE to hold better informed conversations with institutions about their equality work
- To contribute to HEFCE's own demonstration of due regard to the public sector equality duty

### 3. Objectives

- Any specific objectives should be detailed here
- Can be broken down to include specific outputs and expectations

The overarching objectives of the tender are as follows:

- To develop a methodology for analysing self-evaluations of institutional equality and diversity work collected through a voluntary call for evidence (in liaison with HEFCE)
- To qualitatively analyse these self-evaluations
- To identify examples of sector-leading and innovative practice
- To produce an initial draft for discussion with practitioners at a validation workshop by mid-September 2016 (exact date to be determined)
- To facilitate a validation workshop in late September 2016 (exact date to be determined)
- To produce a final report in advance of the deadline (expected to be 10 October 2016)

Specifically, the validation workshop should:

- Discuss and critically evaluate the draft findings of the analysis

Specifically, the final report should:

- Demonstrate rigorous and consistent analysis of the self-evaluations received through the call for evidence
- Identify a range of examples to highlight and clearly illustrate sector-leading and innovative practice in advancing equality and diversity in the English higher education sector, supported by the discussions at the validation workshop

#### 4. Background to the Requirement

Provide background information to the project to help the contractor understand how it fits in to the business objectives of the procurement. Consider including issues such as:

- any history relevant to the procurement
- recent developments
- a description of the business activities in the area relating to the procurement
- business functions & processes
- organisation & staffing
- roles & responsibilities

In his 2016 Grant Letter for HEFCE, the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills requested that HEFCE scope the possibility of collecting and analysing institutional equality objectives to identify examples of sector-leading or innovative practice in advancing equality:

“Embedding equality of opportunity and fostering diversity are essential for creating the conditions for an excellent higher education system, and we look to the Council to continue to help Universities to achieve this by breaking down barriers and finding innovative solutions. Good progress is being made by the sector in enhancing the diversity of its workforce. We ask that HEFCE continues to chair the Leadership, Governance and Management Diversity Summit, drawing in Research Councils UK as a partner to help lead the change in culture, practices and makeup of the research community. We look to the Council to identify opportunities to influence the pace of change in HE governance, in particular to achieve HEFCE’s agreed Business Plan objective of 40% of governors to be female by 2020 (currently the figure stands at 33.5%). *We would also like the Council to consider what scope there is for analysing HEIs’ Equality Objectives and action plans, which they publish under the Public Sector Equality Duty, with the aim of identifying innovative or sector-leading practice, especially where it has led to demonstrably improved outcomes for disadvantaged groups in the sector.*” (emphasis added)

Following discussions with HEFCE’s Leadership, Governance and Management Strategic Advisory Committee (LGMSAC), it was decided that two streams of work would be necessary to respond to this request.

- (i) Collection and analysis of institutional equality objectives to identify broad themes that institutions are focusing on in their equality and diversity work. This will be a mapping exercise and will not seek to evaluate institutional activity. This will be conducted internally by HEFCE.
- (ii) Analysis of self-evaluations of institutional equality work to identify examples of sector-leading or innovative practice collected through a call for evidence.

This tender aims to engage an external consultant to conduct the second stream of work.

As expressed in the aims, the project findings should simultaneously inform the higher education sector by disseminating examples of good practice and provide HEFCE with better information about institutional equality work.

This tender has been coordinated by the Institutions Directorate at HEFCE. A concurrent related project to analyse REF environment submissions for evidence of what works in advancing equality and diversity in the higher education research community is being coordinated by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Directorate at HEFCE.

Under the Equality Act 2010, HEFCE is defined as a public authority and thus subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty. This means that in dispensing our public function, we must take positive steps to ensure the elimination of discrimination, promotion of equality of opportunity and fostering of good relations. We have set out how we plan to do this in the HEFCE Equality and Diversity Statement and Objectives 2016-17.

This tender forms part of our supporting work for this document.

## 5. Scope

- be specific on what is to be included
- what is excluded
- what is optional

The tender includes subsequent qualitative analysis of self-evaluations provided by institutions, follow-up interviews with institutions, facilitation of a validation workshop in September 2016 and the drafting of a final report. The tender is limited to analysis of institutions that have been designated to receive HEFCE funding.

The tender excludes defining sector-leading and innovative practice. A workshop will be organised in July 2016 at which equality practitioners will be convened to inform, for the purpose of this research, criteria for what may be construed as a sector-leading and innovative practice in the higher education sector. It is expected that the consultant will attend this workshop, but the parameters will be informed by the practitioners' input at the event.

The tender excludes developing the call for evidence. This will be informed by the discussions at the workshop mentioned above and will be developed and circulated by HEFCE (to be published in late July 2016).

The tender excludes identifying broad trends in equality and diversity activity in higher education. This will be completed in a separate stream of work to investigate what institutions are focusing on in their equality objectives and will be led by an internal HEFCE project team, as explained in the background information. The findings of this work stream will form part of the same final report.

## 6. Requirement

This is a statement of what is to be delivered and forms the main body of the specification. The 'golden rule' is that specifications need to be Clear, Concise and Unambiguous. It also:

- details what will be expected of the contractor under the contract
- how you see the contract operating to ensure aims and objectives are met
- details specific tasks, outputs and expectations
- do not embed critical requirements in background information – contractors may miss them
- list the important elements of the requirements first, and work through to least important

Specify requirements as:

- *Mandatory* -essential requirements that must be met
- *Desirable* – requirements that whilst bringing benefits are not essential
- *Information* – requirements that request supplementary detail that may be helpful to the overall picture

**Note:** As a general rule, no information should be provided about the proposed budget availability. The

intention is to ensure enough detail is provided about the scope of the project to enable the contractor to gauge the size of the task themselves given their detailed and specialist knowledge, without leading on price.

Tenderers should explain in detail the knowledge and experience that equips them to complete the following key tasks:

- Development of an appropriate evaluation methodology (mandatory)

The consultant will work with HEFCE to produce a methodology for analysing the self-evaluations collected through the call for evidence. This will ensure there are clear criteria for identifying innovative and sector-leading practice in advancing equality and diversity in the higher education sector. These criteria will be determined by the outcomes of the workshop with equality practitioners in July 2016.

- Rigorous and consistent qualitative analysis based on a clearly defined methodology (mandatory)

The consultant will conduct analysis of the self-evaluations in accordance with the established methodology. This should combine desk analysis with in-depth interviews with institutions. We are seeking tenders that bring informed thinking and expertise of similar analytical work to this contract. We invite tenderers to set out and justify the methodologies they propose to use in the delivery of this project, and to consider all possible conflicts of interests and raise any problematic issues in their tender document. In outlining their proposed approach, tenderers should address any ethical issues in the design and implementation of the project.

- Liaising with stakeholders and partners (mandatory)

The consultant will be expected to maintain a regular dialogue with the project team at HEFCE. Given the relatively short timescale to which the project must run, it is anticipated that this dialogue should happen on a weekly basis for the majority of the life of the project. They will also be expected to liaise with the team leading a concurrent project to assess the REF environment submissions for evidence of what works in advancing equality and diversity in the higher education research community.

- Facilitating and organising a workshop event (mandatory)

The consultant will be expected to facilitate a validation workshop in September 2016 to verify the initial findings of the research. This event will be attended by equality and diversity practitioners and will aim to critically evaluate the findings summarised in the draft report.

- Producing a final report (mandatory)

The consultant will summarise the findings in a final report to be received by HEFCE in October 2016. This report should demonstrate rigorous and consistent analysis of the self-evaluations received through the call for evidence, and identify a range of examples to highlight and clearly illustrate sector-leading and innovative practice in advancing equality and diversity in the English higher education sector. The finding should be supported by the discussions at the validation workshop.

## 7. Timetable

- Lists key targets and/or milestones expected to be achieved
- Can act as a performance indicator to enable stage or interim payments to be made against measurable deliverables.
- Be specific on when you expect the outputs to be delivered
- If the completion date is fundamental to the success of the project, then say so

An indicative timeframe laying out the key milestones for this project is presented below. It is based around a target publication date to coincide with HEFCE's Strategic Advisory Committees Conference on 14 November 2016.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Target date</b>
Contract start	w/c 11 July 2016
Workshop 1	w/c 11 July 2016 (London)
Call for evidence published	18 July 2016
Call for evidence closes	2 September 2016
Draft report completed	23 September 2016
Workshop 2	w/c 26 September 2016 (London)
Final report completed	w/c 10 October 2016
Report launch	14 November 2016 (London)

## Section 5 – Evaluation model

The evaluation model below shall be used for this ITQ, which will be determined to two decimal places.

Where a question is 'for information only' it will not be scored.

The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS, the Customer and any specific external stakeholders UK SBS deem required. After evaluation the scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ( $5+5+6 = 16 \div 3 = 5.33$ ))

Pass / fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool

Scoring criteria			
<b>Evaluation Justification Statement</b>			
In consideration of this particular requirement UK SBS has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. UK SBS considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.			
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Understanding	20%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Project Plan and Risk Management	20%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Methodology	20%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Team and Capability to Deliver	20%

## Evaluation of criteria

### Non-Price elements

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 100, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the percentage of the evaluation criteria allocated to that question.

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 20% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 20.

**Example** if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 12% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 20 ( $60/100 \times 20 = 12$ )

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 10% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 10.

**Example** if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 6% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 10 ( $60/100 \times 10 = 6$ )

The same logic will be applied to groups of questions which equate to a single evaluation criterion.

The 0-100 score shall be based on (unless otherwise stated within the question):

0	The Question is not answered or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the selection question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.
80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

**Example**

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

Your final score will  $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

**Price elements** will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100. All other bids shall be scored on a pro rata basis in relation to the lowest price. The score is then subject to a multiplier to reflect the percentage value of the price criterion.

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100.

Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80

Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.

Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.

Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Where the scoring criterion is worth 50% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 50.

In the example if a supplier scores 80 from the available 100 points this will equate to 40% by using the following calculation:  $\text{Score/Total Points} \times 50$  ( $80/100 \times 50 = 40$ )

The lowest score possible is 0 even if the price submitted is more than 100% greater than the lowest price.

## **Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire**

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

Guidance on completion of the questionnaire is available at <http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

**PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY**

## Section 7 – General Information

### What makes a good bid – some simple do's ☺

#### DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions.
- 7.3 Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise e-sourcing tool prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be rejected.
- 7.4 Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission we may reject your Bid.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the Emptoris messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that typically we will release the answer to the question to all bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution
- 7.6 Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.7 Do consider who your customer is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every customer's needs.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear and concise contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.11 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

## What makes a good bid – some simple do not's ☹

### DO NOT

- 7.12 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.13 Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.14 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.15 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Customer to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you.
- 7.16 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or Customer staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.17 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not offer UK SBS or Customer staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.20 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.21 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.

## Some additional guidance notes

- 7.23 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool may be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.24 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered.
- 7.25 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.26 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.27 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.28 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of UK SBS.
- 7.29 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.30 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.31 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.32 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.33 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders may only amend the Contract terms if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract and UK SBS fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.
- 7.35 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.36 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.37 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.

- 7.38 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal UK SBS reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks UK SBS may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.
- 7.39 All timescales are set using a 24 hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.40 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, UK SBS may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to UK SBS during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.41 From 2nd April 2014 the Government is introducing its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme to replace the current Government Protective Marking System (GPMS). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC from 2nd April 2014. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

UK SBS reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

## USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

- [Emptoris Training Guide](#)
- [Emptoris e-sourcing tool](#)
- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Tenders Electronic Daily](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)