

**Standards and**

**Frameworks**

**Invitation to Tender**

**to deliver**

**Standards & Frameworks Products in Childcare, Career and Community Development**

Tender Ref: 2016-2017

S&F Childcare, Career and Community Development

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**Background**

Strong vocational education and training systems are key to improving growth in our economy, productivity in our workplaces and opportunities for individuals to access good jobs.

Strong vocational systems start with nationally recognised industry led standards. National Occupational Standards (NOS) are the raw material on which high quality apprenticeship frameworks, qualifications and vocational study programmes are built. They give confidence to employers that apprentices are following training that will lead them to full industry competence, and that qualified new recruits will have had a similar grounding wherever they have trained. To individuals they offer a guarantee that their apprenticeship and/or qualification will result in the recognition they deserve and the breadth of skills they need to develop their career with an employer, change jobs within an industry, or move across industries.

So high quality National Occupational Standards, Apprenticeship frameworks and qualifications are important tools in achieving well qualified, competent and productive people.

An essential part of having the right tools is having the right partners to work with to ensure delivery of world class products. We need to work with the best Suppliers we can find to ensure we have the right products, in the right place, at the right time.

### That is why we are inviting you to tender to become a Supplier for Standards and Frameworks.

This document provides you with all the guidance, information and application forms you need to become a Supplier for NOS and Scottish Vocational Qualifications. It sets out the role of Standards and Frameworks, why we need world class Suppliers and what you need to have and do to become one. We tell you what is needed to prepare and submit a tender including timescales and how we will assess your response.

In 2015, it was announced that Government in England would be withdrawing funding from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES). This means that UKCES will cease to operate during Autumn 2016 and the work on Standards and Frameworks will transfer to a new organisation. UKCES will handle this invitation to tender on behalf of the three Devolved Administrations in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales (DA’s), agree contracts and working arrangements with you and monitor delivery up until this time. We will then novate (transfer) the contract agreed for 2016-17 to the new organisation. We will keep you informed on any decisions made in the meantime.

We look forward to receiving your tender and wish you every success.

**SECTION 1 – Commissioning Information**

# Understanding Standards and Frameworks

National Occupational Standards (NOS), apprenticeship frameworks and vocational qualifications are important tools which help employers and individuals with recruitment and entry to the workplace and further progression once in work.

NOS are the raw material on which many apprenticeships and vocational qualifications are currently based in the UK. They provide confidence and a mark of quality to individuals and employers that training and learning reflects what actually happens and is needed in the workplace.



The UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) on behalf of the NOS Governance Group has for many years ensured that high quality NOS, vocational qualifications and apprenticeship frameworks are available to support the aspirations of employers and individuals. An essential part of this role is about ensuring we have the best Suppliers working with us to make sure these important products continue to meet the ever changing needs of employers.

We are now looking for organisations or partnerships of organisations or individuals who can continue to work with us in meeting that aim.

# Who can tender to become a Supplier?

A single organisation or individual, supported by employers and other key partners may have the capability, capacity and knowledge to tender to become a Supplier. However, they must be able to provide evidence of support from employers and other key partners, for the products listed in Appendix 5 - Products.

Due to the breadth of the products listed, we therefore believe that high quality products may be best achieved through effective partnership arrangements between a number of organisations or individuals, each supported by their employers and other key partners. There is no prescription about collaborative arrangements, or the types of organisations who can apply, but they must be able to demonstrate that they can meet the criteria set out in Appendix 2 (Assessment Criteria and Weighting) for all products listed in Appendix 5.

Where a partnership of organisations or individuals is successful in becoming a Supplier, a lead organisation or individual should be identified, who will be responsible for

* + negotiating the contract and delivery dates for each product (with delivery timeline and agreed invoicing points);
	+ robust and effective quality assurance and delivery arrangements with partner organisations/individuals;
	+ delivery of high quality products/outcomes, to quality, budget and time. It is important to recognise that the nominated lead partner will be responsible for meeting the quality criteria for all products which have been commissioned.

# What do we want our Suppliers to do?

We need Suppliers to secure and evidence the leadership of employers to ensure the products they deliver truly reflect the depth and breadth of employers both across the UK.

We also need Suppliers to demonstrate and evidence their technical ability to produce the following kinds of products to a high quality, to time and to budget:

* National Occupational Standards (NOS) including translations of NOS in to the Welsh language– both new development and reviews
* Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQs) or alternative competence based qualifications for use in Modern Apprenticeship Frameworks (including credit rating for the SCQF and an assessment strategy) - both new development and reviews

The Quality Criteria at Appendix 4 gives full details on each of the products in scope and the Application Form at Appendix 3 gives full details of what we need suppliers to demonstrate.

Should you be unable to provide strong evidence of any of the above elements (more specifically detailed in the Assessment Criteria) then you **should not** submit a tender.

# What are the aims & objectives?

* **VFM and Quality Products** – we want to secure value for money at the same time as delivering high quality products for end users
* **Real employer leadership** – we want employers from each of the four Nations and across the UK to work with you to set out what they want from the products, when they want them and how many.

# How will all this be achieved?

Page 8 provides a commissioning timetable which outlines the different stages of the process.

**Application to become a Supplier:** Lead organisations/individuals will complete and submit a full tender by 1000 on 07 October 2016 - see Appendices for details of:

* Products to be served
* Delivery arrangements
* UK-wide coverage of employers and employer leadership
* Capability and experience
* Quality processes

Where applicable, in order to achieve our aims, we will **only consider tenders that cover the full range of products listed in Appendix 5** (i.e. NOS and SVQs). Proposals will not be accepted for individual products e.g. NOS only submissions.

Once the award has been issued, successful suppliers will receive a contract to cover the products listed in Appendix 5 which must be delivered and approved by 31 March 2017, Please note that prices shown in Appendix 5 are the maximum values of funding for these products.

# How will my tender be assessed?

Timelines for the assessment and the process are detailed in the Commissioning Timetable on Page 8.

We don’t want this to be a lengthy, onerous process but we do want to ensure that the assessment of your tenders is fair, transparent and rigorous in order that we can get the best Supplier.

# What are the quality criteria arrangements?

The ‘Quality Criteria’ at Appendix 4 clearly sets out quality expectations in relation to NOS and SVQs in a way that will ensure they meet the expectations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The quality criteria have been agreed with all of the three Devolved Administrations (DAs).

We will work closely with all our Suppliers to ensure we provide the support you need to deliver the best possible outcomes. We will check with you how you are progressing against agreed timescales in the funding agreement, work with you to iron out any problems, check progress on expenditure and payments and make sure you are going to meet the quality expectations.

You will be assigned an account manager who will become your first point of contact and work with you on all these matters.

We can only pay Suppliers for products which meet the quality expectations defined in the quality criteria at Appendix 4.

# Our commitment to you.

We will also work closely with you throughout the lifetime of the agreement and individual funding agreements to support your work and to anticipate and resolve any problems.

# We want to hear from you!

We therefore invite tenders from organisations wishing to deliver the work as listed in Appendix 5.

We wish you success in preparing your tender and look forward to working with you in the future.

# Commissioning timetable

Table 1 below details the timetable that will apply.

Organisations should read these and the ‘General information on Tendering’ in Appendix 1 before making a submission

### Table 1: Commissioning timetable

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Planned Completion Date** |
| Commissioning Document (Invitation to Tender) issued | 22 Sept 2016 |
| Closing date for questions regarding the requirement or process | **Noon, 28 Sept 2016** |
| Closing date for UKCES to respond to questions on the requirement or process | **Noon, 29 Sept 2016** |
| **Closing date for submission of full tender by Supplier** | **1000am – 7 Oct 2016** |
| UKCES completes assessment of submitted tenders and invites shortlisted organisations for interview (if required) | 7 Oct 2016 |
| Interviews (if required) – in London | 10 Oct 2016 |
| Successful Supplier notified by email and award made | 11 Oct 2016 |
| Unsuccessful organisations notified & debriefed | 11 Oct 2016 |

UKCES reserves the right to vary these dates as circumstances dictate, but will endeavor to notify organisations as soon as possible.

**SECTION 2 – Appendices**

# Appendix 1 – General Information on Tendering

### General

You should read these instructions carefully before completing the required documents within the appendices.

These instructions are designed to ensure that all tenders are given equal and fair consideration. Please read the instructions in the procedures for submitting tenders carefully as failure to comply with them may invalidate your tender.

Please note that references to “we”, “our” throughout this document mean UKCES. References to “You” refer to the organisation/individual submitting a tender.

It is important that you provide all the information asked for in the format and order specified. Please contact tenders@ukces.org.uk if you have any doubts as to what is required.

All questions you wish to submit in relation to clarifying the process, specification and requirements should be sent to tenders@ukces.org.uk Questions will be uploaded to a Q&A document along with our response and this will be uploaded to Contracts Finder by the date for our response to questions. The applicant who asked the original question will remain anonymous. Under no circumstances should you attempt to discuss the Invitation to Tender document or its requirements with any member of UKCES staff or the Devolved Administrations.

Please respond to the requirements within this document as fully but as concisely as possible. All tenders should be made using the appropriate forms within the appendices. Tenders received which are not within this template will be rejected.

UKCES will not reimburse any costs of preparing any tender or those incurred in attending any interview panel.

### Inducements

Offering an inducement of any kind in relation to obtaining this contract with the UKCES will disqualify your tender from being considered and may constitute a criminal offence.

### Incomplete or inaccurate submissions

Tenders may be rejected if the information asked for is not given at the time of submitting a tender.

You may submit revised tenders electronically to tenders@ukces.org.uk up to the closing time and date. Please clearly mark your new submission with Version 2, or whatever number is appropriate to clearly show which is your most recent version.

UKCES will only review the most recent email tender and discard all others for each organisation. Once the tender submission date has expired you will not have the opportunity to amend or alter your tender.

Please note that UKCES reserves the right to vary the dates in the published timetable as circumstances dictate, but will endeavor to notify you.

### Electronic Submission

Submissions should be e-mailed to tenders@ukces.org.uk (which is a confidential e-mail account) by the due date; the subject of the email should include the reference ‘**2016 S&F Childcare, Career and Community Development.**

When submitting a proposal electronically please:

* Ensure that your proposal **reaches us by 1000am on 7 October 2016.** You should allow time for the electronic transfer of information, please remember that the larger the file size the longer it takes to transfer.
* Only tenders submitted to the correct email address will be accepted. Submitting your application or copying it to any other UKCES or Devolved Administration e-mail address (even to a personal email address of a staff member in those bodies) will invalidate your proposal.
* It is your responsibility to ensure that copies of any electronic documents or attachments are appropriately secure and “tamper” proof.
* Emails containing large files as attachments can be delayed or blocked by e-mail systems. To minimise delays in submission caused by technical difficulties, e-mails should not be greater than 15MB in size. If necessary attachments should be compressed or zipped and pictures or photographs should be removed.
* Submissions which are close to the 15MB limit MAY NOT reach the tenders@ukces.org.uk inbox.
* Proof of sending on or before the deadline does not constitute proof of receipt. In fact, most portals will bounce/reject your proposal if not received in full by the due date and time.
* All submissions which reach the tenders@ukces.org.uk will trigger an automated email response confirming receipt. Individual personal receipt emails will not be sent.
* If you DO NOT receive this automated email response your tender has NOT been received. Please contact tenders@ukces.org.uk or telephone 01709 774877 and speak with the Procurement Manager before the deadline. Please note we do not have the authority to give an extension of the deadline at this point.
* Late submissions cannot be considered, whatever the cause of the delay.

### Receipt and Acceptance

Tenders will be received up to the time and date stated and the time and date of the specified deadline are not negotiable. Those received before the due date will be retained unopened until then and will not be accessed by the UKCES.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your tender is delivered no later than the appointed time. UKCES accepts no responsibility for tenders that were received after the stated deadline, whatever the cause of the delay.

### Debriefing

Debriefing will be available on unsuccessful tenders on written request to tenders@ukces.org.uk. Please respond promptly if you would like feedback.

### VAT

Current advice is that this activity falls outside the scope of VAT and the overall funding values exclude VAT. UKCES has applied to HMRC for confirmation of this position and you will be advised should the situation change.

### IPR

National Occupational Standards and SVQs are public goods developed and reviewed via public funding.

The IPR for the products will rest with the Crown. IPR for any background information or research will rest with the Supplier. It will be a condition of the contract that the Supplier must ensure that all the products are made publically available, free of charge, anywhere in the UK, to all employers, Government and government bodies and anyone who has an interest in them.

# Appendix 2: Assessment Criteria and Weighting

Applications will be scored against the criteria identified in Table 2 below. The assessment criteria are designed to secure the best Supplier

Tenders must provide evidence that meets the criteria in Table 2. Weighting and minimum pass marks applied to each criterion are indicated in the table. Tenders must meet the minimum score for each assessment criteria. Failure to meet the minimum score for any one criterion will mean the tender is rejected in full.

### Table 2: Assessment criteria and weighting

|  |
| --- |
| **Application to become a Supplier** |
| **Assessment Criteria** | **Criteria Detail** | **Weighting** | **Minimum Pass Mark** |
| Evidence of Support & Commitment | * Provide evidence of support for and commitment to cover the products. e.g. direct support from employer groups, supplier letters of support, across all nations of the UK.
* Demonstrate how you will ensure depth and breadth in employer leadership and support from across the UK throughout the lifetime of the agreement. This should be evidenced for example through employer governance structures including membership, employer charters/ service level agreements, use of technology to consult a wide range/ high volume of employers.
 | Pass/Fail | Pass required |
| Capability | * Demonstrate your and, where applicable, partner organisations capability, skills, capacity and experience in relation to delivering Standards and Frameworks products
* NOS – development and review
* SVQ/alternative competence based qualification structures and related credit rating activities and development of assessment strategies – development and review

NB: You must be able to provide evidence of your capability to provide all of the above products. | Pass/fail | Pass required |
| UK-wide Coverage | * Demonstrate your and, where applicable, partner organisations abilities to meet the requirements of the Standards and Frameworks products in relation to policy and differences in products in:
	+ Scotland
	+ Wales
	+ Northern Ireland
	+ UK-wide (NOS only)

  | 30% | A min. score of 5 out of 10 |
| Delivery Arrangements | * Describe the delivery arrangements for the products identified in Appendix 5 including a clear rationale to include:

o Partnership arrangements and agreements or other structures to ensure delivery to time, quality and to meet the demands of employers and end users. | 30% | A min. score of 5 out of 10 |
| Quality Processes (UK wide) | * Demonstrate an understanding of the quality requirements needed to deliver the outputs within scope:
	+ NOS – development and review
	+ SVQ/alternative competence based qualification structures and related credit rating activities and development of assessment strategies – development and review
* Demonstrate how the required quality assurance will be implemented by:
	+ The lead organisation
	+ Partner organisations (if applicable)
* Define how the lead organisation will manage the overall quality
 | 40% | A min. score of 5 out of 10 |

The UKCES on behalf of the NOS Governance Group may undertake due diligence on Suppliers before entering into a contract.

Any questions relating to the commissioning document, tender process and procedure must be submitted in writing to tenders@ukces.org.uk. In order to ensure a fair and transparent process in which all organisations considering submissions have access to the same information, the Q&A will be circulated to all organisations/individuals who submitted questions and will be published on [www.gov.uk/contracts-finder](http://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder) under the commissioning document title ‘2016 Standards and Framework products in Childcare, Career and Community Development

If applicants are required to attend an interview, the UKCES will make contact as soon as possible to make arrangements, with interviews taking place 10 October 2016.

**Appendix 3 –: Supplier Application Form**

|  |
| --- |
| **Lead Organisations Name:** |
|  |
| **Lead Organisations Contact Name:** | **Contact Details:***(address, email, telephone number)* |
|  |  |
| **Potential Partner Organisations (if applicable):** |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Evidence of Support & Commitment** |
| **Weighting – Pass/Fail** |
| **Minimum Pass Mark – Pass Required.** |
| * ***Provide evidence of support for and commitment to cover the products. e.g. direct support from employer groups, supplier letters of support, across all nations of the UK.***
* ***Demonstrate how you will ensure depth and breadth in employer leadership and support from across the UK throughout the lifetime of the agreement. This should be evidenced, for example, through employer governance structures including membership, employer charters/service level agreements, use of technology to consult a wide range/high volume of employers.***
 |
| *Insert answer here* |

|  |
| --- |
| **Capability** |
| **Weighting – Pass/Fail** |
| **Minimum Pass Mark – Pass Required.** |
| * ***Demonstrate your and where applicable, partner organisations capability, skills, capacity and experience in relation to delivering the specified Standards and Frameworks products:***
	+ ***NOS – development and review***
	+ ***SVQ/alternative competence based qualification structures and related credit rating activities and development of assessment strategies – development and review***

***NB: You must be able to provide evidence of your capability to provide all of the above products.*** |
| *Insert answer here* |
| **UK-wide Coverage** |
| **Weighting – 30%** |
| **Minimum Pass Mark – 5 out of 10** |
| * ***Demonstrate your, and where applicable, partner organisations abilities to meet the requirements of the Standards and Frameworks products in relation to policy and differences in products in:***
	+ ***Scotland***
	+ ***Wales***
	+ ***Northern Ireland***
	+ ***UK-wide (NOS only)***
 |
| *Insert answer here* |

|  |
| --- |
| **Delivery Arrangements** |
| **Weighting – 30%**  |
| **Minimum Pass Mark – 5 out of 10** |
| * ***Describe the delivery arrangements for the products including a clear rationale to include:***

o ***Partnership arrangements and agreements or other structures to ensure delivery to time, quality and to meet the demands of employers and end users.*** |
| *Insert answer here* |

|  |
| --- |
| **Quality Processes (UK wide)** |
| **Weighting – 40%** |
| **Minimum Pass Mark – 5 out of 10** |
| * ***Demonstrate an understanding of the quality requirements needed to deliver the outputs within scope:***
	+ ***NOS – development and review***
	+ ***SVQ/alternative competence based qualification structures and related credit rating activities and development of assessment strategies – development and review***
 |
| *Insert answer here* |
| * ***Demonstrate how the required quality assurance processes will be implemented by:***
	+ ***The lead organisation***
	+ ***Partner organisations (if applicable)***
 |
| *Insert answer here* |
| * ***Define how the lead organisation will manage the overall quality***
 |
| *Insert answer here* |

**FINANCIAL AND COMMERCIAL CRITERIA (PASS OR FAIL)**

*Please complete this section and include it within your tender.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| How many years have you been trading? |  |
| What was your actual turnover in the last 2 financial years? | **Y/E Turnover:** | **Y/E Turnover:** |
| What was your actual trading result in the last 2 financial years? (profit/loss) | **Y/E Profit/Loss:** | **Y/E Profit/Loss:** |
| What were your balance sheet total reserves in the last 2 financial years? | **Y/E Reserves:** | **Y/E Reserves:** |
| If asked would you be able to provide at least one of the following: |
| A copy of your most recent audited accounts. | **Yes / No** |
| A statement of your turnover, profit and loss account and cash flow for the current year of trading. | **Yes / No** |
| During the last financial year which single organisation or group was your primary customer?What percentage of your annual turnover did this customer account for? | Name:%: |
| Has your organisation met the terms of its banking facilities and loan agreements (if any) during the past 12 months? | **Yes No****No such terms** |
| If ”**No**” what were the reasons and what has been done to put things right? |
| Has your organisation met all its obligations to pay its creditors and staff during the past 12 months? | **Yes / No** |
| If ”**No**” what were the reasons and what has been done to put things right? |
| Are you currently involved in any legal disputes or are any pending? Have you had any judgements against you for which reparation, compensation or costs are still outstanding? | **Yes / No****Yes / No** |
| If ”**Yes**” give brief details – sufficient not to prejudice the legal process. |

Please record the value of insurance cover for current policies where payments are up to date.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Value of Employers Liability insurance cover |  |
| Value of Public Liability insurance cover |  |
| Value of Professional Indemnity insurance cover |  |
| Other cover. Please provide details |  |

### By submitting this document, you are confirming that:

* The information contained in this form is correct. All organisations mentioned have been consulted and have agreed roles, responsibilities and are financially viable.
* On the date of submission of this tender, the organisation you represent and the staff proposed for this work are not subject to conflicts of interests in the context of this application. You undertake to inform the UKCES without delay of any change to this situation after the date of submission of the tender.

# Appendix 4 –Quality Criteria

**National Occupational Standards (NOS)**

NOS provide evidence-based benchmarks of competent performance which underpin occupational and vocational learning and development, apprenticeships and qualifications. To remain current NOS must reflect changes within industries and sectors e.g. changes to labour markets, job design and working practices, legislation, Government policy etc.

NOS should be developed and will be approved in line with the following key principles. National Occupational Standards must:

* + Work for businesses across the UK. Although some standards may be developed with a specific nation in mind, all three DAs must be consulted to ensure that they comply with policy.
	+ Be approved via the NOS QA process which can be found on the NOS database under ‘Admin’ then ‘Guidance’
	+ Be reviewed and agreed by a representative sample of relevant employers and stakeholders in each of the four UK Nations (English employer consultation requirements remain to ensure NOS is applicable UK wide)
	+ Be based on rigorous, high quality LMI
	+ Be developed to the agreed NOS template which will be provided at the time of negotiation
	+ Be freely available to all employers
	+ Be written in clear, plain language with a minimum of jargon
	+ Support employability by clearly showing the employability skills required for effective performance in each occupation
	+ Be suitable for use to inform sector qualification priorities

NOS should be translated in to Welsh by an appointed translator, and sent to the Welsh Government for quality assurance sampling. Where content changes are proposed by the Welsh Government, the Supplier should ensure that the full suite of NOS is reviewed and amended by the appointed translator. Every attempt should be made to ensure that Welsh versions are ready as soon as possible after the English NOS are published.

## Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and/or alternative competence based qualifications

Suppliers must ensure that revised/new SVQ structures, credit rating activity, assessment strategy and core skills signposting:

* + Are developed in line with SQA Accreditation guidelines and processes
	+ Are approved by SQA Accreditation

Suppliers are required to adhere to SQA Accreditation timelines for approval and submit evidence of completion to the in accordance with the Funding Agreement order to trigger payments. For SVQs (and/or alternative competence based qualification) this will be a letter/email confirming completion from SQA Accreditation.

Please note that all activities agreed with successful Suppliers for 16/17 are required to be completed **and** approved by the **31 March 2017.**

# Appendix 5 – Products

The products which are included in the scope of this commissioning document are within table 3 below.

### Table 3: Products

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Output Details** | **Nation** | **Review, New or Translation** | **Output Completion Date** | **Output Price** |
| 1 | SVQ | SVQ 2 Playwork at SCQF Level 6 | Scotland | Review | 31 March 2017 | £2,000 |
| 2 | SVQ | SVQ 3 Playwork at SCQF Level 7 | Scotland | Review | 31 March 2017 | £2,000 |
| 3 | SVQ | SVQ 4 Playwork at SCQF Level 8 | Scotland | Review | 31 March 2017 | £2,000 |
| 4 | NOS | Career Development  | Wales | Translation  | 31 March 2017 | £5,550 |
| 5 | SVQ | SVQ 2 Community Development Work at SCQF Level 5 | Scotland | Review | 31 March 2017 | £3,000 |
| 6 | SVQ | SVQ 3 Community Development Work at SCQF Level 7 | Scotland | Review | 31 March 2017 | £3,000 |
| 7 | NOS | Playwork Level 2 | Wales | Translation | 31 March 2017 | £5,550 |
| 8 | NOS | Playwork Level 3 | Wales | Translation | 31 March 2017 | £5,550 |
| 9 | NOS | Playwork Level 4 | Wales | Translation | 31 March 2017 | £5,550 |
| 10 | NOS | Supported Employment | UK Wide | Review\* | 31 March 2017 | £10,000 |
| 11 | NOS | Supported Employment | Wales | Translation | 31 March 2017 | £5,550 |
| 12 | NOS | Career Development | UK Wide | New\*\* | 31 March 2017 | £10,000 |

\* Outputs completed which meet the quality criteria payment can be claimed and paid early