



Social Mobility  
Commission

Social Mobility Commission  
1 Horse Guards Road  
London  
SW1A 2HQ

Dear Researchers,

**INVITATION TO TENDER (ITT) for UNIVERSITY BENCHMARKS FOR BETTER SOCIAL MOBILITY**

Your organisation along with others is invited to offer a tender for provision of the above, to the specification outlined in the attached documents. Enclosed are:

[Document 1 Specification of the requirement.](#)

[Document 2 Instructions on the tendering procedures.](#)

[Document 3 Departmental standard requirements.](#)

[Document 4 List of attachments.](#)

[Document 5 Declaration and information to be provided by the tenderer.](#)

[Attachments Draft Terms and Conditions and Evaluation Criteria](#)

[Annex 1 Conflicts of Interest](#)

Please read the instructions on the tendering procedures carefully. Failure to comply with them may invalidate your tender which must be returned by the date and time given below.

An electronic copy of your tender must be submitted to [contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk](mailto:contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk) no later than **4pm on 20 November 2023**. Late tenders will **not** be considered.

If having read the enclosed specification you decide not to submit a tender, I would be grateful if you could send your reasons (though you are under no obligation to do so) to [contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk](mailto:contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk), at the above address marked 'No Tender'.

Please contact me if you have any questions about the tendering procedure.

Yours sincerely,

Summer Nisar

Director of the SMC Secretariat, Social Mobility Commission

## SPECIFICATION

### 1 Background

The Social Mobility Commission (SMC) monitors progress towards improving social mobility in the UK and promotes social mobility in England. It is an independent statutory body created by an Act of Parliament and is sponsored by the Cabinet Office.

In March 2022, the government published the [Inclusive Britain policy paper](#). It set out the government's actions in response to the recommendations made by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (CRED). The paper highlighted a number of recommendations which overlap with areas of interest for the Social Mobility Commission (SMC), particularly the focus on enhancing social mobility through educational choices.

The SMC has committed to take forward Action 53 of the Inclusive Britain report. It states: "To help disadvantaged students to choose the right courses for them and to boost their employment prospects, the Social Mobility Commission will seek to improve the information available to students about the labour market value of qualifications and, where possible, the impact of those qualifications on social mobility."

To achieve this, the SMC has been working on multiple projects which can help deliver on Action 53. One of these was to publish a [report](#) that summarises the evidence base on the labour market outcomes resulting from studying qualifications in both higher (HE) and further education (FE).

The next step is to develop and publish a set of benchmarks for access to universities. The SMC recently published a [blog post](#) outlining a proposed idea for these new sets of university benchmarks. The main driver for this project is the need for a set of university benchmarks which can better capture social mobility. We can potentially achieve this by using a single measure of deprivation that provides a fuller picture of the distribution of access. Using this measure we can look at the rates of students from each background who get into each university. This can then be compared to the overall proportion of students who meet the university entry requirements. By combining these two measures, we could potentially identify if there are subgroups of the student population that have greater chances of access to certain universities compared to other subgroups.

### 2 Objectives

The aim is to develop a benchmark for every university in the UK.

This would involve:

1. Understanding the proposed idea and developing a methodology. This would also involve identifying the requisite data sources.
2. Testing the idea with experts, and agreeing with the SMC on a final methodology.
3. Accessing the requisite data sources (submitting formal applications for access where necessary).
4. Cleaning and wrangling the data to be fit for analysis.
5. Producing the benchmarks for each university.
6. Sharing the underlying data and charts for each university in an agreed upon

format which meets our accessibility guidelines.

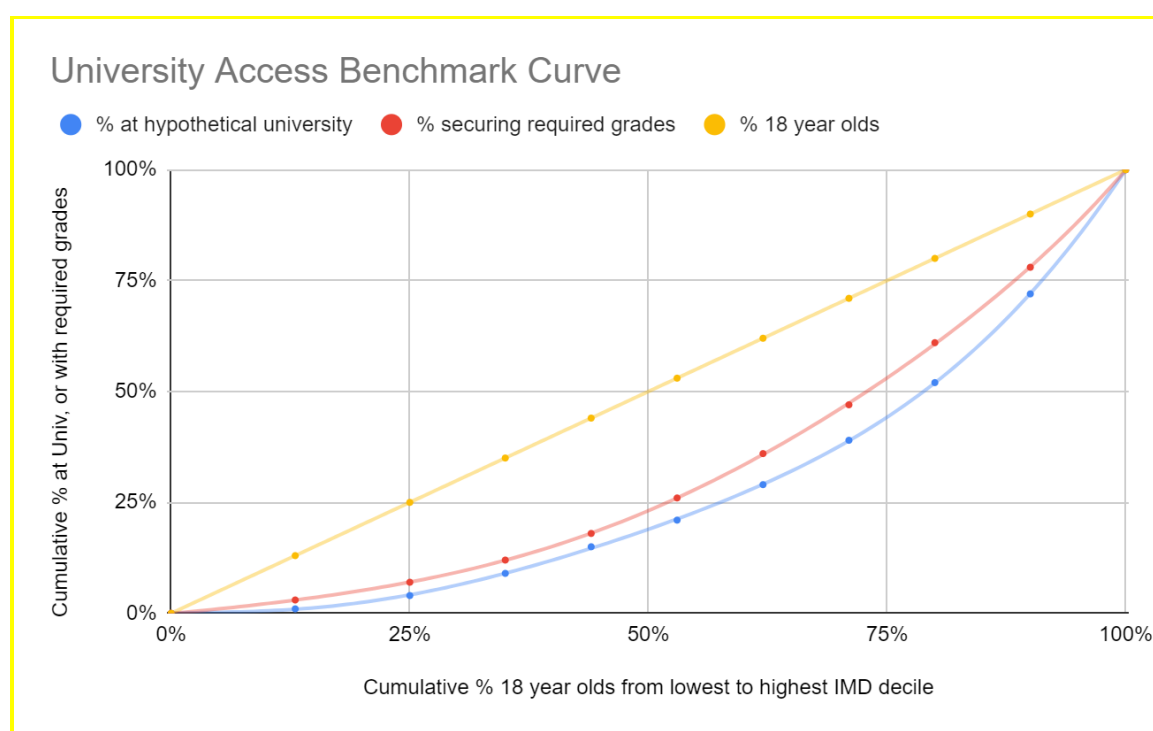
### 3 Approach

The SMC would like to develop the benchmarks using the following approach:

We would like to calculate the benchmark in a similar way as the [Gini Coefficient](#) and [Lorenz Curve](#). This would enable us to create a new “Social Mobility Coefficient” and “Access Curve” using data which covers a measure of deprivation - such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) - as well as academic qualifications and university entrance.

See figure 1.0 below which contains a mock-up for a hypothetical university to illustrate the approach.

Figure 1.0: A mock-up of our new university access benchmark



On the X-axis, we have the cumulative percent of 18 year olds by each decile of a deprivation measure (in this case we use the IMD). On the Y-axis, we have the cumulative percent of 18 year olds with the required grades to enter the university. On the lines, each dot represents an IMD decile. The red line represents the cumulative proportion of students in the population. The yellow line represents the situation in which grades are uniformly distributed by IMD decile. The gap between the blue line and the yellow line represents the Gini-coefficient. In theory this will be a number between 0 (total equality in which each IMD decile has the same proportion of students entering) and 1 (total inequality). The gap between the blue and red lines represent the social mobility gap in which students from some IMD deciles are disproportionately less likely to enter the university than others, even once accounting for the grade distribution. This gap is what we refer to as a Social Mobility Coefficient.

Table 1.0 contains the underlying data for figure 1.0

Table 1.0: Proportion of 18 year olds in each IMD decile by grades and access to university

IMD Decile	% 18 year olds "Cumulative Population"	% 18 year olds securing required grades	% 18 year olds students at hypothetical university	Equal distribution
0	0%	0%	0%	0%
1	13%	3%	1%	10%
2	25%	7%	4%	20%
3	35%	12%	9%	30%
4	44%	18%	15%	40%
5	53%	26%	21%	50%
6	62%	36%	29%	60%
7	71%	47%	39%	70%
8	80%	61%	52%	80%
9	90%	78%	72%	90%
10	100%	100%	100%	100%

First it is worth noting that the distribution of 18 year olds across IMD deciles may not necessarily be uniform. This means we may not find that 10% of all 18 year olds are in each decile. Instead, there may be a skew where, for example, 13% of all 18 year olds in the country are in the bottom (1st) decile. Table 1.0 shows that the 1st IMD decile (the bottom 10%) represents 13% of all 18 year olds in the country. The 2nd decile, cumulatively represents 25% of all 18 year olds in the country (and thus implies that the 2nd decile itself contains 12% of all 18 year olds).

In figure 1.0, the blue line represents the cumulative proportion of students who are at the university by each IMD decile, which we refer to as the 'Access Curve'. Table 1.0 shows that, for the 1st decile, there are 3% of 18 year olds in the country who have the required grades for this hypothetical university. But only 1% of all 18 year olds with the grades to enter the university actually enter it.

For the second decile, there is a cumulative total of 7% of all 18 year olds with the required grades to enter the university. Of all the 18 year olds who enter the university, 4% are captured in the first 2 deciles. By the 10th decile, 100% of all 18 year olds with the required grades to enter the university and 100% of all 18 year olds who actually enter the university are accounted for.

The Social Mobility Coefficient is unique in that it provides a single summary measure that takes into account the experiences of students in all IMD deciles, and can be used to compare universities with each other, and over time.

Using this approach we would capture a wider picture across the distribution of students, rather than only a single group of students who meet one disadvantage

criteria, such as those eligible for free school meals.

These measures may be able to show the extent to which unequal admissions at university are a result of prior attainment or factors related to student preferences and admissions processes. This could act as a diagnostic tool to help identify where a university may need to review their entry practices to ensure their entrance and catchment area decisions are focussed across prospective students from all backgrounds. By doing so, universities may be able to improve social mobility.

## **4 Reporting**

### Deliverable 1: Short report with a proposed methodology for developing the benchmarks

This will cover:

- Which data sources would be used, how they will be accessed (e.g. explaining if requests for access need to be submitted to the institutions holding the data). For example, will it require access to the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) dataset?
- A mock up of what the benchmark charts would look like for universities using simulated data.
- An assessment of whether each benchmark would be at the overall university level or at a university and subject combined level, or if it would be possible to develop both. The value of doing it by a combination of university and subject would be that each benchmark would be more targeted and also account for the case in which entry requirements at a university vary by subject.
- A 1 to 2 page document outlining the proposed methodology.
- Testing the methodology with other experts.
- An estimated timeframe for delivery.

### Deliverable 2: A cleaned dataset

This will cover:

- The data from which the final charts can be produced, All data will have been processed, wrangled, linked, and ready-to-use. A quality assured dataset with evidence provided of the checks conducted to meet government standards for publication.
- An annotated and commented data cleaning script . This will be clearly annotated with comments to explain each set of the steps used to produce the dataset. This script should be produced in R, and be reproducible. It should be simple enough for any analyst to generate the same final dataset from the raw data.

### Deliverable 3: Charts for each university and an overall table

This will cover:

- A chart for each university which meets our accessibility guidelines produced in R which can be published on our website.

- A reproducible R script to generate the benchmark charts. This will be clearly annotated with comments to explain each set of steps used to run the calculations and produce the: Gini coefficients, Lorenz Curves and charts. This script should be simple enough to follow so that a new analyst with access to the cleaned dataset could reproduce each of the Gini coefficients, Lorenz Curves and charts.
- Evidence of robust quality assurance checks to meet the government standards for publication.
- Each chart should be accompanied with one to two paragraphs of narrative which outline what they tell.

#### Deliverable 4: A lay summary document of the methodology

This will cover:

- The language used should be simple enough for the lay reader to understand.
- The document will explain how the benchmarks can be interpreted and roughly how they were created. It should also highlight the caveats to ensure the content is not interpreted in a misleading manner.
- This document should be short and concise, of no more than a page in length.

#### Deliverable 5: A technical specification document outlining the methodology in detailed terms

This will cover:

- A detailed technical document which would explain each step required to produce the benchmarks. It should cover sufficient detail to allow an analytical reader to be able to reproduce the same benchmarks if they had the same data and code files.
- The document would specify the variables used from each dataset and the reasons for this.
- It would also outline any assumptions and caveats with the data and methodology.
- It should be written as if it were to be published as a supplementary document on our website and / or gov.uk.

#### Deliverable 6: A final report

This will:

- Introduce the benchmarks and why they are important
- Contain key findings and charts with narrative
- Be written in simple english and be in the SMC publication style
- Have been quality assured with evidence of checks
- Be of between 20 and 40 pages in length including charts
- Contain a section explaining how to interpret the benchmarks (and the caveats / limitations to them)
- Describes how these benchmarks compare to other headline benchmarks - such as those by the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA).
- Be suitable for publication on GOV.UK and thus meet Cabinet Office publication standards in terms of language used, graphics / colour scheme and other formatting.

## Reporting requirements

The audience for this research will be UK policy makers, academics, stakeholders addressing poverty, inequality and social mobility issues, and the general public. All outputs should be clearly written, use plain English and be easily understood by people who are not necessarily experts in the area. The successful supplier is responsible for the final outputs. It is expected they will respond constructively to feedback on the drafting of all outputs from the SMC Secretariat and Commissioners; and build time into their work plan for this engagement accordingly. This work will result in material which is to be published on the *socialmobility.independent-commission.uk* website. The Commission may also choose to produce single-page policy briefs and reports from the main research outputs. Products should be in electronic format, using a style guide as supplied by the Social Mobility Commission, and should include the underlying data for charts, where applicable.

## **5 Management Information and ways of working**

As this work plan is collaborative in nature, there will be a significant level of interaction with SMC's Secretariat. At a minimum, the successful supplier will be asked to:

- Attend a project kick-off meeting
- Attend monthly meetings with the Secretariat
- Attend a midpoint review including engagement with commissioners and/or the technical panel
- Hold regular video/phone calls and email correspondence with the SMC secretariat member who is managing this project, as well as others, as needed
- Communication as needed, when barriers and challenges arise.

## **6 Dependencies and Liaison**

Tenderers should indicate if they are reliant on any third party with any information, data or undertaking any of the work specified.

## **7 Risk Management**

Tenderers should submit as part of their proposal a one-page summary on what they believe will be the key risks to delivering the project and what contingencies they will put in place to deal with them.

A risk is any factor that may delay, disrupt or prevent the full achievement of a project objective. All risks should be identified. For each risk, the one-page summary should assess its likelihood (high, medium or low) and specify its possible impact on the project objectives (again rated high, medium or low). The assessment should also identify appropriate actions that would reduce or eliminate each risk or its impact.

Typical areas of risk for a research project might include staffing, resource constraints, technical constraints, data access, timing, management and operational issues, but this is not an exhaustive list.

## **8 Monitoring Techniques**

Tenderers should indicate how you will monitor the project to ensure it is delivered in terms of quality, timeliness and cost.

## **9 Data Collection**

It is not expected that any data collection will be required for this project.

## **10 Costs and Budget**

Given the breadth of this project's scope and methodology, we expect proposals to be up to £60,000.00 exclusive of VAT.

All costs should be quoted exclusive of VAT but please indicate if the project will attract VAT.

If your proposal includes costs for sub-contractors these costs must be shown inclusive of any VAT element (e.g. sub-contractor's costs to you are £5,000 plus VAT, your proposal should show sub-contractors costs as £6,000 inclusive of VAT @ 20%).

**10.1** A detailed breakdown of costs is required within the proposal (excluding VAT).

Your tender should provide a detailed breakdown of costs on the basis of:

- project management and professional time;
- survey costs (if applicable);
- secretarial and administrative costs;
- travel and subsistence (please note details below);
- stationery, postage and telephone; and publicity.

Costs should be shown separately by financial year and where more than one type of methodology is involved the costs need to be shown separately for each element, e.g.:

- group discussions;
- personal interview;
- telephone survey;
- postal survey; and
- desk research.

**10.2** Payments will be made by BACS transfer following receipt of a valid invoice.

**10.3** The successful tenderer should provide details of discounts for prompt payment.

## **11 VAT**

**11.1** Please state clearly when submitting prices whether or not VAT will be charged.

**11.2** Where the contract price agreed between SMC and contractor is inclusive of any VAT, further amounts will not be paid by SMC should a vatable supply claim be made at any later stage.

**11.3** Where the overall contract price is exclusive of VAT, SMC will pay any VAT incurred at the prevailing rate (currently 20%). If the VAT rate changes SMC will pay any VAT incurred at the new rate.

**11.4** It is the responsibility of tenderers to check the VAT position with HMRC before submitting a bid.

## INSTRUCTIONS ON TENDERING PROCEDURES

- 1 These instructions are designed to ensure that all tenders are given equal and fair consideration. It is important therefore that you provide all the information asked for in the format and order specified.
- 2 Bidders must submit their Bids before **4pm on 20 November 2023**. All Bids must be submitted to [contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk](mailto:contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk). Failure to return Bids by the time and due date or in the required format may disqualify Bidders from consideration.
- 3 A clarification process will operate during the ITT stage as explained below. The objective of this process is to give Bidders the opportunity to submit questions to the Contracting Authority where they require clarification on the information provided. This is not an opportunity for Bidders to seek additional information to that already provided.

Bidders should submit clarification questions via email to [contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk](mailto:contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk). Questions received by any other method will not receive a response.

The Contracting Authority will seek to answer questions within 5 working days following the day of receipt. Bidders are urged to review the ITT documentation immediately upon receipt and identify and submit any clarification questions as soon as possible and in any event no later than **10 am on 16 November 2023**. Any questions received after this time may not be answered.

If the Contracting Authority considers any question or request for clarification to be of general significance, both the question and the response will be communicated, in a suitably anonymous form, to all Bidders who have expressed an interest before the closing date for the submission of the ITT.

All responses received and any communication from Bidders will be treated in confidence and provision will be made for Bidders to request clarification in confidence (this request must be clearly marked at the outset of each question stating the reasons why such a question is commercial and in confidence), but in responding to such requests the Contracting Authority will reserve the right to act in what it considers a fair manner and in the best interests of the Procurement, which may include circulating the response to all Bidders.

Bidders should note that no further information in addition to that provided in the ITT documentation will be provided about the Procurement at this time. Under no circumstances should Bidders approach the Contracting Authority, their staff or advisors seeking further information in relation to the requirements of the Procurement. Any such approaches (direct or indirect) may result in the Bidder's exclusion from further consideration in the Procurement process.

- 4 Please note that references to the 'Department' or "Social Mobility Commission" or "the Commission" throughout these documents mean [Minister for the Cabinet Office](#).
- 5 SMC is happy to accept bids from single organisations or consortia of organisations. Where a consortium/Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) is formed to submit a tender, this must only be submitted by and in the name of, the supplier chosen as the "Lead" supplier for that consortium/SPV.

## Contract Period

- 6 The contract is to be completed by 14 March 2025, with the potential to renew for 12 months if negotiated and agreed between SMC, the supplier, and the Department.

## Incomplete Tender

- 7 These instructions are designed to ensure that all tenders are given equal and fair consideration. Tenders may be rejected if the information asked for in the ITT and Specification is not given at the time of tendering.

## Indicative procurement timetable

- 8 The proposed timetable for this procurement process is as follows. This is intended as a guide and, while The Commission does not intend to depart from the timetable, it reserves the right to do so at any time, including by shortening or lengthening any stage

Tender documents issued	3 November 2023
Last day for submission of clarifications	10 am on 16 November 2023
Last day for SMC to respond to clarifications	10 am 17 November 2023
Deadline for tender responses to be received	4pm on 20 November 2023
Tender Evaluations	21 November - 7 December 2023
SMC announcement of preferred bidder	8 December 2023
Contract commencement	11 December 2023
Project initiation meeting	w/c 18 December 2023
Deliverable 1: Present a proposed methodology for developing the benchmark	31 January 2024
Deliverable 2: A cleaned dataset	2 months following data access received
Deliverable 3: Charts for each university and an overall table	2 months following deliverable 2
Deliverable 4: A word document outlining the methodology in simple terms	1 month following deliverable 3
Deliverable 5: A technical document outlining the methodology in detailed terms	1 month following deliverable 4
Deliverable 6: Final report	1.5 months following deliverable 5

## **Receipt of Tenders**

- 9 Tenders will be received up to the time and date stated. Those received before the due date will be retained unopened until then. Any Tender received after the Closing Time, and / or submitted by any means other than through [contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk](mailto:contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk) may be rejected by the Department. It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that their tender is delivered not later than the appointed time. It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that their tender is delivered not later than the appointed time.

## **Acceptance of Tenders**

- 10 By issuing this invitation SMC is not bound in any way and does not have to accept the lowest or any tender, and reserves the right to accept a portion of any tender, unless the tenderer expressly stipulates otherwise in their tender.

## **Inducements**

- 11 Offering an inducement of any kind in relation to obtaining this or any other contract with SMC will disqualify your tender from being considered and may constitute a criminal offence.

## **Confidentiality of Tenders**

- 12 Please note the following requirements, you must not:
- Tell anyone else what your tender price is or will be, before the time limit for delivery of tenders.
  - Try to obtain any information about anyone else's tender or proposed tender before the time limit for delivery of tenders.
  - Make any arrangements with another organisation about whether or not they should tender, or about their or your tender price.
  - Failure to comply with these conditions may disqualify your tender.

## **Costs and Expenses**

- 13 You will not be entitled to claim from SMC any costs or expenses which you may incur in preparing your tender whether or not your tender is successful.

## **Debriefing**

- 14 Following the award of contract, debriefing will be available to unsuccessful tenderers on request.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

- 15 The tender process will be conducted in a manner that ensures tenders are evaluated fairly to ascertain the economically most advantageous tender.
- 16 Your response to the tender specification will be evaluated using the criteria set out in Document 4 Section 2 - Evaluation Criteria.

## **Tender Period**

- 17 Due to the intensive evaluation process SMC requires tenders to remain valid for a period specified in Document 5.

## Basis of the Contract

- 18 The specification in Document 1, and the terms and conditions in Document 4 Attachment 1, together with any special requirements, will form the basis of the contract between the successful tenderer and the Secretary of State for Education.

## Format of Bids

- 19 Tenderers should present their proposals in the following format:

### Section 1 Summary of Proposal

### Section 2 Meeting the Specification:

- Methodology including constraints and possible solutions;
- Project management - Tenderers should indicate how they will monitor the project to ensure it is delivered in terms of quality, timeliness and cost. Tenders must include a work plan/Gantt chart that clearly shows the key activities and milestones leading up to the final report. It should mirror the detail on the budget template.
- Staffing, including short staff profiles covering examples of key relevant experience and individual/staff expertise and qualifications. Proposed distribution of duties should be clearly stated if the bid involves sub-contracting or collaboration between different providers; and
- Outputs, including how the findings will be presented.

### Section 3 Cost and Charging Arrangements

Costs should be shown separately by financial year and where more than one type of methodology is involved the costs need to be shown separately for each element, e.g.:

- group discussions;
- personal interview;
- telephone survey;
- postal survey; and
- desk research

Your tender should provide details of the costs required to meet each of the deliverables. Costs should be split by financial year and should indicate if they are:

- Project management and professional time
- Administrative costs (e.g. of the intervention)
- Other

For example:

Activity	Type of Cost (i.e. project management)	Personnel	Total days	Total Cost
Date rates:				
TOTAL ex VAT				

All costs should be quoted exclusive of VAT but please indicate if the project will attract VAT.

If your proposal includes costs for sub-contractors these costs must be shown inclusive of any VAT element (e.g. sub-contractor's costs to you are £10K plus VAT, your proposal should show sub-contractors costs as £12K inclusive of VAT @ 20%).

The department will also conduct its own due diligence checks in relation to bidder's financial viability and may request additional financial information to be provided as part of this process. Whilst the department will attempt to mitigate any financial risks it may, at its own discretion, reject a bid where it assesses the financial risk to be too great to proceed with the award of the contract.

#### **Section 4      Risk Management**

- Outline, in no more than one-page, the key risks to delivering the project and what contingencies will be put in place to deal with them.
- A risk is any factor that may delay, disrupt or prevent the full achievement of a project objective. All risks should be identified.
- For each risk, the one-page summary should assess its likelihood (high, medium or low) and specify its possible impact on the project objectives (again rated high, medium or low). The assessment should also identify appropriate actions that would reduce or eliminate each risk or its impact.

#### **Section 5      Data Security**

- Provide a plan that explains how departmental and/or personal data will be protected.

#### **Section 6      References**

#### **Section 7      Declarations, Undertakings and Attachments** (see Document 5)

Sections 1 - 4 should not exceed 4 sides of A4 and sections 5 - 6 should not exceed 2 sides of A4, for a combined **total of 5 pages**. Any bids above that will not be considered. Embedded links will not be considered, nor will Annexes that exceed the 5-page count.

#### **Conclusions**

- 20      Whilst every endeavour has been made to give tenderers an accurate description of the Commission's requirement, tenderers should make their own assessment about the methods and resources needed to meet those requirements.

## DEPARTMENTAL STANDARD REQUIREMENTS

### Freedom of Information

- 1 SMC is committed to open government and to meeting their responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, all information submitted to SMC may need to be disclosed in response to a request under the Act. If you consider that any of the information included in your tender is commercially sensitive, please identify it and explain (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure if a request is received, and the time period applicable to that sensitivity. You should be aware that, even where you have indicated that information is commercially sensitive, we may still be required to disclose it under the Act if a request is received. Please also note that the receipt of any material marked 'confidential' or equivalent by SMC should not be taken to mean that we accept any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking. If a request is received, we may also be required to disclose details of unsuccessful tenders.

### Publication of Contract

- 2 Under the Government's Transparency requirements we are obliged to publish the contract between SMC and the successful tenderer(s) in full. The successful tenderer(s) should identify any information regarded as commercially sensitive and explain (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure and the time period applicable to that sensitivity. You should be aware that, even where you have indicated that information is commercially sensitive, we may still be required to disclose it if the public interest in disclosure outweighs withholding the information. See ['The Transparency of Suppliers and Government to the Public'](#) for more detail.

### Information Sharing Across Government

- 3 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.
- 4 For these purposes, SMC may disclose within Government any of the Contractor's documentation/information (including any that the Contractor considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Contractor to SMC during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Contractors taking part in this competition consent to these terms as part of the competition process."

### Cyber Essentials Scheme

- 5 The Government has introduced its new Cyber Essentials Scheme in consultation with industry to mitigate the risk from common internet-based threats.
- 6 It is mandatory for new Central Government contracts, which feature characteristics involving the handling of personal data and ICT systems

designed to store or process data at the OFFICIAL level of the [Government Security Classifications scheme](#) to comply with Cyber Essentials requirements.

- 7 All potential bidders for Central Government contracts, featuring the above characteristics, should make themselves aware of [Cyber Essentials](#) and the requirements for the appropriate level of certification “or equivalent”.
- 8 As this requirement features the above characteristics, you are required to demonstrate in your tender response that:
- Your organisation will be able to secure **Cyber Essentials** certification prior to contract award; or
  - Your organisation has equivalent evidence to support that you have appropriate technical and organisational measures to mitigate the risk from common internet-based threats in respect to the following five technical areas:
    - A. Boundary firewalls and internet gateways - these are devices designed to prevent unauthorised access to or from private networks, but good setup of these devices either in hardware or software form is important for them to be fully effective.
    - B. Secure configuration – ensuring that systems are configured in the most secure way for the needs of the organisation
    - C. Access control – Ensuring only those who should have access to systems to have access and at the appropriate level.
    - D. Malware protection – ensuring that virus and malware protection is installed and is up to date
    - E. Patch management – ensuring the latest supported version of applications is used and all the necessary patches supplied by the vendor have been applied.

Any equivalent evidence must be verified by a technically competent and independent third party.

- 9 The successful tenderer will be required to provide evidence of **Cyber Essentials** certification “or equivalent” (i.e. demonstrate they meet the five technical areas the Cyber Essentials Scheme covers) prior to contract award.
- 10 The successful tenderer will be required to secure and provide evidence of **Cyber Essentials** re-certification “or equivalent” (i.e. demonstrate they meet the five technical areas) on an annual basis.
- 11 Details of certification bodies are available at:  
<https://www.cyberstreetwise.com/cyberessentials>

## Data Security Standards

- 12 For contracts which require the holding or processing of either personal data and/or OFFICIAL data the successful contractor will need to assure SMC that they can comply with the Department’s security standards.
- 13 Departmental security standards are listed as contract clauses in an annex to this letter (see Document 4 – Attachment 1 - Draft Terms and Conditions).

## **Prompt Payment Policy**

- 14 Government's aim is to pay 80% of all correctly submitted invoices within 5 days of receipt and we are 100% committed to paying correctly submitted invoices within 30 days of receipt from the day of physical or electronic arrival at the nominated address of the Department.
- 15 The payment period will be deemed to have started when a correctly submitted invoice reaches the nominated address or emailed to [contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk](mailto:contact@socialmobilitycommission.gov.uk). Contractors can assume receipt to be two days after mailing (by first class post). The thirty day "clock" therefore commences two days after mailing first class.
- 16 A correct invoice is one that is:
- delivered in timing in accordance with the contract;
  - that is for the correct sum;
  - In respect of goods / services supplied or delivered to the required quality (or are expected to be at the required quality);
  - include the date, supplier name, contact details and bank details;
  - which quote the relevant purchase order / contract reference;
  - which has been delivered to the nominated address.
- 17 Any correctly submitted invoices that are not paid within 30 days will be subject to the provisions of the Late Payment of Commercial Debt (Interest) Act 1998.

## **Sub-contracting to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)**

- 18 SMC is committed to removing barriers to SME participation in its contracts, and would like to also actively encourage its larger suppliers to make their sub-contacts accessible to smaller companies and implement SME-friendly policies in their supply-chains. This can be achieved by advertising subcontracting opportunities on Contracts Finder and implementing the principles of the SME and Growth Agenda in your own organisation.
- 19 To help us measure the volume of business we do with SMEs, we will be asking SMC suppliers to provide us with information about the size of your own organisation and those in your supply chain. We may ask about volumes of business that will flow from this contract down your supply chains, and ask you to quantify that for us. This data will help us contribute towards Government targets on the use of SMEs. We may also publish success stories and examples of good practice on our website.

## **Armed Forces Covenant**

- 20 The Armed Forces Covenant is a public sector pledge from Government, businesses, charities and organisations to demonstrate their support for the armed forces community. The Covenant was brought in under the Armed Forces Act 2011 to recognise that the whole nation has a moral obligation to redress the disadvantages the armed forces community face in comparison to other citizens, and recognise sacrifices made.

- 21 The Covenant's 2 principles are that:
- the armed forces community should not face disadvantages when compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services.
  - special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given most such as the injured and the bereaved.
- 22 The Department encourages all Tenderers, and their suppliers, to sign the Corporate Covenant, declaring their support for the Armed Forces community by displaying the values and behaviours set out therein.
- 23 Guidance on the various ways you can demonstrate your support through the Corporate Covenant is at [The Corporate Covenant](#).
- 24 If you wish to register your support you can provide a point of contact for your company on this issue to the Armed Forces Covenant Team at the address below, so that the MOD can alert you to any events or initiatives in which you may wish to participate. The Covenant Team can also provide any information you require in addition to that included on the website.
- Email address: [covenant-mailbox@mod.uk](mailto:covenant-mailbox@mod.uk)
- Address: Armed Forces Covenant Team
- Zone D, 6th Floor, Ministry of Defence,
- Main Building, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2HB
- 25 Paragraphs 20-25 above are not a condition of working with SMC now or in the future, nor will this issue form any part of the tender evaluation, contract award procedure or any resulting contract. However, SMC very much hopes you will want to provide your support.

### **Conflicts of interest**

- 26 SMC may exclude an organisation if there is a conflict of interest which cannot be effectively remedied. The concept of a conflict of interest includes any situation where relevant staff members have, directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure.
- 27 Where there is any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise then it is the responsibility of the organisation to inform SMC, detailing the conflict in a separate Appendix. Provided that it has been carried out in a transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by SMC should not represent a conflict of interest for the organisation.

### **Disability Confident Scheme**

- 28 The Cabinet Office is a Disability Confident leader. Through the Disability Confident campaign, the government is working with employers to remove barriers, increase understanding and ensure that disabled people have the opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.

- 29 SMC encourages other employers to sign up to the disability confident scheme. It is open to all employers and there are three levels ranging from 'Committed' to 'Leader' with employers having to meet certain criteria to reach each level.
- 30 Employers who sign up to the disability confident scheme ensure that they can:
- draw from the widest possible pool of talent;
  - secure and retain high quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hardworking;
  - save time and money on the costs of recruitment and training by reducing staff turnover;
  - keep valuable skills and experience;
  - reduce the levels and costs of sickness absences; improve employee morale and commitment by demonstrating that they treat all employees fairly.
- 31 Disability confident employers can use the disability confident branding in their communications and when advertising jobs.
- 32 Find out more about the aims of disability confident, why becoming a disability confident employer will be good for your business and how you will be supported through your journey to being a Disability Confident leader [here](#).

### **Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults**

- 33 The standard Terms and Conditions include provisions to put in place safeguards to protect children and vulnerable adults from a risk of significant harm which could arise from the performance of this Contract. The potential Contractor will agree to these safeguards with SMC before commencing work on the Contract.
- 34 In addition, the potential Contractor will carry out checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS checks) on all staff employed on the Contract in a Regulated Activity. The DBS check must be completed before any of the Contractor's employees work with children in Regulated Activity.

## **LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

- 1.** DRAFT TERMS AND CONDITIONS
- 2.** EVALUATION CRITERIA

## DECLARATIONS AND INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED BY THE TENDERER

### 1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion

You will be excluded from the procurement process if there is evidence of convictions relating to specific criminal offences including, but not limited to, bribery, corruption, conspiracy, terrorism, fraud and money laundering, or if you have been the subject of a binding legal decision which found a breach of legal obligations to pay tax or social security obligations (except where this is disproportionate e.g. only minor amounts involved).

Please answer the following questions in full. Note that every organisation that is being relied on to meet the selection must complete and submit the self-declaration.

<b>2</b>	<b>Grounds for mandatory exclusion</b>	
<b>Q No</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>2.1(a)</b>	<p><b>Regulations 57(1) and (2)</b>  The detailed grounds for mandatory exclusion of an organisation are set out on this <a href="#">web page</a>, which should be referred to before completing these questions.  Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below and listed on the <a href="#">webpage</a>.</p>	
	Participation in a criminal organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 2.1(b)
	Corruption.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 2.1(b)
	Fraud.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 2.1(b)
	Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 2.1(b)
	Money laundering or terrorist financing	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 2.1(b)
	Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 2.1(b)
<b>2.1(b)</b>	If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.	

	Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction, Identity of who has been convicted If the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents.	
<b>2.2</b>	If you have answered Yes to any of the points above, have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self-Cleaning)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>2.3(a)</b>	<b>Regulation 57(3)</b> Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>2.3(b)</b>	If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid, or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines.	

Please Note: Social Mobility Commission reserves the right to use its discretion to exclude a potential supplier where it can demonstrate by any appropriate means that the potential supplier is in breach of its obligations relating to the non-payment of taxes or social security contributions.

<b>3</b>	<b>Grounds for discretionary exclusion</b>	
<b>Q No</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Regulation 57 (8)</b> The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this <a href="#">web page</a> , which should be referred to before completing these questions. Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation.	
<b>3.1(a)</b>	Breach of environmental obligations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1 (b)</b>	Breach of social obligations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1 (c)</b>	Breach of labour law obligations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1(d)</b>	Bankrupt or is the subject of insolvency or winding-up proceedings, where the organisation's assets are being administered by a liquidator or by the court, where it is in an arrangement with creditors, where its business activities are suspended or it is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under the laws and regulations of any State?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1(e)</b>	Guilty of grave professional misconduct?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1(f)</b>	Entered into agreements with other economic operators aimed at distorting competition?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1(g)</b>	Aware of any conflict of interest within the meaning of regulation 24 due to the participation in the procurement procedure?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1(h)</b>	Been involved in the preparation of the procurement procedure?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1(i)</b>	Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes please provide details at 3.2

<b>3.1(j)</b>	Please answer the following statements	
<b>3.1(j) - (i)</b>	The organisation is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required for the verification of the absence of grounds for exclusion or the fulfilment of the selection criteria.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1(j) - (ii)</b>	The organisation has withheld such information.	
<b>3.1(j) -(iii)</b>	The organisation is not able to submit supporting documents required under regulation 59 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.1(j)-(iv)</b>	The organisation has influenced the decision-making process of the contracting authority to obtain confidential information that may confer upon the organisation undue advantages in the procurement procedure, or to negligently provided misleading information that may have a material influence on decisions concerning exclusion, selection or award.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If Yes please provide details at 3.2
<b>3.2</b>	If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures have been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self-Cleaning)	

### **Taking Account of Bidders' Past Performance**

The Social Mobility Commission may assess the past performance of a Supplier (through a Certificate of Performance provided by a Customer or other means of evidence). The Social Mobility Commission may also assess whether specified minimum standards for reliability for such contracts are met.

In addition, the Social Mobility Commission may re-assess reliability based on past performance at key stages in the procurement process (i.e. supplier selection, tender evaluation, contract award stage etc.). Suppliers may also be asked to update the evidence they provide in this section to reflect more recent performance on new or existing contracts (or to confirm that nothing has changed).

### **Non-payment of taxes/social security contributions**

The Social Mobility Commission reserves the right to use its discretion to exclude a supplier where it can demonstrate the supplier's non-payment of taxes/social security contributions where no binding legal decision has been taken.

Please note that this section relating to tax compliance only applies where the Social Mobility Commission has indicated that the contract is over £5 million in value.

“Occasion of Tax Non-Compliance” means:

any tax return of the Supplier submitted to a Relevant Tax Authority on or after 1 October 2012 is found to be incorrect as a result of:

1. Relevant Tax Authority successfully challenging the Supplier under the General Anti-Abuse Rule or the Halifax Abuse Principle or under any tax rules or legislation that have an effect equivalent or similar to the General Anti-Abuse Rule or the Halifax Abuse Principle;
2. the failure of an avoidance scheme which the Supplier was involved in, and which was, or should have been, notified to a Relevant Tax Authority under the DOTAS or any equivalent or similar regime; and/or

The Supplier’s tax affairs give rise on or after 1 April 2013 to a criminal conviction in any jurisdiction for tax related offences which is not spent at the Effective Date or to a penalty for civil fraud or evasion.

From 1 April 2013 onwards, have any of your company’s tax returns submitted on or after 1 October 2012; (Please indicate your answer by marking ‘X’ in the relevant box).		
3.1	Given rise to a criminal conviction for tax related offences which is unspent, or to a civil penalty for fraud or evasion;	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3.2	Been found to be incorrect as a result of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HMRC successfully challenging it under the General Anti-Abuse Rule (GAAR) or the “Halifax” abuse principle; or</li> <li>• a tax authority in a jurisdiction in which the legal entity is established successfully challenging it under any tax rules or legislation that have an effect equivalent or similar to the GAAR or the “Halifax” abuse principle; or</li> <li>• the failure of an avoidance scheme which the Supplier was involved in and which was, or should have been, notified under the Disclosure of Tax Avoidance Scheme (DOTAS) or any equivalent or similar regime in a jurisdiction in which the Supplier is established.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>If answering “Yes” to either 3.1 or 3.2 above, the Supplier may provide details of any mitigating factors that it considers relevant and that it wishes the Social Mobility Commission to take into consideration. This could include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corrective action undertaken by the Supplier to date;</li> <li>• Planned corrective action to be taken;</li> <li>• Changes in personnel or ownership since the Occasion of Non-Compliance (OONC); or</li> <li>• Changes in financial, accounting, audit or management procedures since the OONC.</li> </ul> <p>In order that Social Mobility Commission can consider any factors raised by the Supplier, the following information should be provided:</p>		

- A brief description of the occasion, the tax to which it applied, and the type of “non-compliance” e.g. whether HMRC or the foreign tax authority has challenged pursuant to the GAAR, the “Halifax” abuse principle etc.
- Where the OONC relates to a DOTAS, the number of the relevant scheme.
- The date of the original “non-compliance” and the date of any judgement against the Supplier, or date when the return was amended.
- The level of any penalty or criminal conviction applied.

## **Defining Different Types of Organisations**

The Cabinet Office is keen to collect information about SMEs. We are particularly interested in discovering how many SMEs apply for our contracts through the tendering process. Completion of the table below is for departmental information purposes only and will have no effect on the evaluation process outcomes. Government is committed to changing how it does business to make sure that small companies, charities and voluntary sector organisations are included and encouraged to compete for our contracts.

A voluntary sector organisation may also be a SME if it has the same attributes.

Definition; A SME must be autonomous, an EU Company not owned or controlled by a non-EU parent, and employ less than 250 staff and have sales below €50 million.

Source

-[http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/sme\\_definition/sme\\_report\\_2009\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/sme_definition/sme_report_2009_en.pdf)

Please complete the table below.

Describe your Organisation	
What type of supply arrangement best describes you in relation to this bid.	Delete as appropriate
1. We are a SME by definition	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. We are a Charity or Voluntary Sector Organisation (VSO)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. We are a mutual organisation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. We anticipate using a supply chain to deliver against this service.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. We estimate that that our service delivery will be i.e. 40% delivered by VSO's/SMEs	.....%
6. If none of the above applies please describe the type of organisation you are:	
7. Please provide us with your Dun and Bradstreet Number, or a consortium, the lead bidder's number.  <a href="http://www.dnb.co.uk/dandb-duns-number">http://www.dnb.co.uk/dandb-duns-number</a>	

The Department uses Dun and Bradstreet Numbers to manage its data around suppliers; we strongly encourage all suppliers to apply for a free Dunn's number. The link to apply is: -<http://www.dnb.co.uk/myduns> - add 'GOVERNMENT SUPPLIER' as a reason for requesting your D&B DUNS number.

Do not delay returning your tender if you do not already have a Dun and Bradstreet number, returning your tender within the deadline is more important.

## Declarations

1 ..... (Name of tenderer)  
declares that we accept Social Mobility Commission's standard terms and conditions included at Document 4 Attachment 1 as the basis of the contract; and

2 agree that the Social Mobility Commission may disclose the Contractor's information/documentation (submitted to Social Mobility Commission during this Procurement) more widely within Government for the purpose of ensuring effective cross-Government procurement processes, including value for money and related purposes.

3 declare that we have not communicated to any other party the amount or approximate amount of the tender price other than in confidence and for the express purpose of obtaining insurances or a bond in connection with this tender. The tender price has not been fixed nor adjusted in collusion with any third party, and

4 declare that the tender will remain valid until (*insert a date*) and that we are not entitled to claim from the Social Mobility Commission any costs or expenses incurred in preparing the tender or subsequent negotiations whether or not the tender is successful.

Signed on behalf of the Tenderer .....

.

**Attachment 1**

**[Draft Terms and Conditions](#)**

## Attachment 2

### Evaluation Criteria

Tenders will be assessed on both quality and cost. An 80-20 split will be applied with 80% of the total score for quality and 20% for cost.

#### Quality

Bids will be assessed against 5 questions. The maximum score is 100.

Question	Criteria	Weight	Max possible score
1. Does the proposal describe a robust method / suitable approach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrates a clear understanding of the idea for developing university benchmarks, setting out the data requirements and high level analytical approach</li> <li>• Creative and constructive thinking demonstrated by the proposed methodological approach to this project in meeting the objectives</li> <li>• The suitability of the proposed approach to deliver against requirements of the study, and identification of any opportunities to add value to this</li> <li>• The quality, timing and suitability of proposed outputs</li> </ul>	6	30
2. Team and organisational experience in conducting research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of staff in relevant research techniques, demonstrating experience in analysing published material using Longitudinal Education Outcomes data</li> <li>• Having accredited researcher status and can access secure data via the Assured Organisational Connectivity (AOC) or via another data sharing agreement with the DfE and / or ONS</li> <li>• Experience of specific research in higher education participation and familiarity with subject area</li> <li>• Evidence of experience in the challenges and considerations involved in the relevant type of research</li> <li>• How the skills and experience of the team will be used and managed to best effect (where there is a partnership please include specific about how this will be managed, add value and any experience of successful collaboration)</li> </ul>	5	25

3. Risks and mitigations and data protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That the risks and challenges are considered and mitigation integrated into the proposed methodology</li> <li>• Consideration of ethical, confidentiality and data protection issues</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>
4. Presentation of data, findings and recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear articulation of plans for presenting the findings in clear and eye-catching ways</li> <li>• Evidence of ability to deliver high quality research and outputs</li> <li>• Ability to write good quality reports with clear findings and workable recommendations, tailored to their audiences</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>
5. Project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear plan for communication and demonstration of a collaborative approach to taking the work forward, working closely with SMC as appropriate</li> <li>• Evidence of organisational capacity, project management and quality assurance procedures, to deliver the project in the specified timescales and quality</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>

#### Scoring scale

0	Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.
1	Response meets less than half the stated requirement. It is partially relevant but generally poor and lacks relevant detail.
2	Response meets some but not all of the stated requirements. Lacks detail on how the requirement will be fulfilled in several areas.
3	The response meets the stated requirement. Answers are relevant and acceptable but may lack some detail.
4	The response fully meets the stated requirement in all areas. Answers are clear, relevant and elements of the response exceed the requirement by offering some added value.
5	The response exceeds the requirement in all areas. Answers are comprehensive, unambiguous and offer significant added value to the requirement which benefits SMC.

Quality scoring will represent 80% of the overall evaluation. A bidder who receives a score of less than 60 will not be considered. Below is an illustration of how the scoring will apply for the quality aspect.

<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Quality score</b> (for example, purposes only)	<b>Calculation</b>	<b>Final Quality Mark</b>
A	60	$60 \times 0.8$	48
B	55	N/A	N/A
C	80	$80 \times 0.8$	64
D	75	$75 \times 0.8$	60

### Financial scoring

Financial scoring represents 20% of the overall evaluation. The bidder with the cheapest overall price will receive 20 marks and all other bids will be marked as a proportional variance from the top scoring bid. The formula being used for Relative Assessment for this procurement is:

$$\text{Bid Score} = (\text{Lowest Price/bid price}) \times 20$$

E.g. a bid that is 10% more expensive will receive 18 marks; one that is twice the price will receive 10 marks. An illustrative example is provided below:

<b>Supplier</b>	<b>Price</b> (for example, purposes only)	<b>Calculation</b>	<b>Final Finance Mark</b>
A	50k	n/a	20
B	55k	$(50/55) \times 20$	18
C	70k	$(50/70) \times 20$	14
D	100k	$(50/100) \times 20$	10

**Total score**

This is the sum of the two scores. An illustrative example drawing on the prior examples:

Supplier	Final Quality Mark	Final Price Mark	Total score
A	48	20	68
B	N/A	18	N/A
C	64	14	78
D	60	10	70

In the above scenario Supplier C would be awarded the contract.

## ANNEX 1: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

For research and analysis, **conflict of interest** is defined as the presence of an interest or involvement of the contractor, subcontractor (or consortium member) which could affect the actual or perceived impartiality of the research or analysis.

*A conflict of interest for this project would include the circumstance in which a contractor, sub-contractor or member of a consortia has had prior involvement with the scheme which is being evaluated, either through governance or delivery of services.*

Where there may be a potential conflict of interest, it is suggested that the consortia or organisation designs working arrangements such that the findings cannot be influenced (or perceived to be influenced) by the organisation which is the owner of a potential conflict of interest. For example, consideration should be given to the different roles which organisations play in the research or analysis, and how these can be structured to ensure an impartial approach to the project is maintained.

The process by which this is managed in the procurement process is as follows:

1. **During the bidding process, organisations may contact the Cabinet Office to discuss whether or not their proposed arrangement is likely to yield a conflict of interest.** Any responses given to individual organisations or consortia will be shared with all tendering organisations (in a form which does not reveal the questioner's identity).
2. **Contractors are asked to sign and return the Conflict of Interest Declaration Form (below) to indicate whether or not any conflict of interest may be, or be perceived to be, an issue.** If this is the case, the contractor or consortium should give a full account of the actions or processes that it will use to ensure that conflict of interest is avoided. In any statement of mitigating actions, contractors are expected to outline how they propose to achieve a robust, impartial and credible approach to the research.
3. **When tenders are scored, this declaration will be subject to a pass/fail score,** according to whether, on the basis of the information in the proposal and declaration, there remains a conflict of interest which may affect the impartiality of the research.

Potential conflicts of interest may include (but are not restricted to);

- For evaluation projects, a close working, governance, or commercial involvement in the project under evaluation
- A professional or personal interest in the outcome of this research
- Current or past employment with relevant organisations
- Payment (cash or other) received or likely to be received from relevant organisations for goods or services provided (including consulting or advisory fees)
- Gifts or entertainment received from relevant organisations
- Shareholdings (excluding those within unit trusts, pension funds etc) in relevant organisations
- Close personal relationship or friendships with individuals employed by or otherwise closely associated with relevant organisations

## Conflict of Interest Declaration Form

Organisations **must** complete either part 1 or 2. Please return this form with your ITT documentation.

*A declaration of interest will not necessarily mean the individual or organisation cannot work on the project; but it is vital that any interest or conflict is declared so it can be considered openly.*

*Failure to declare or avoid conflict of interest at this or a later stage may result in exclusion from the procurement competition, or in Cabinet Office exercising its right to terminate any contract awarded.*

### Part 1

I have nothing to declare with respect to any current or potential interest or conflict in relation to this research (or any potential providers who may be subcontracted to deliver this work, their advisers or other related parties). By conflict of interest, I mean, anything which could be reasonably perceived to affect the impartiality of this research, or to indicate a professional or personal interest in the outcomes from this research.

If my situation or that of my organisation changes during the project in terms of interests or conflicts, I will notify the Cabinet Office immediately.

Signed .....

Name .....

Position .....

OR

### Part 2

I wish to declare the following with respect to personal or professional interests related to relevant organisations (insert name(s) below):

- .....
- .....

Where a potential conflict of interest has been declared for an individual or organisation within a consortium, please clearly outline in your tender the role which this individual or organisation will play in the proposed project and how any conflict of interest has or will be mitigated.

If my situation or that of my organisation changes during the project in terms of interests or conflicts, I will notify the Cabinet Office immediately.

Signed .....

Name .....

Position .....