

Request for Proposal



Request for Proposal (RFP) on behalf of Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

Subject UK SBS PS16149 Reviewing Post-16 Education and Training Establishments in England Support for the Area Review process

Sourcing reference number PS16149

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.ukpbs.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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VAT registration GB618 3673 25
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Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

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

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

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

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

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

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

Our Customers

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

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

Our Customers who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Section 2 – About Our Customer

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) is the department for economic growth. The department invests in skills and education to promote trade, boost innovation and help people to start and grow a business. BIS also protects consumers and reduces the impact of regulation.

BIS is a ministerial department, supported by 47 agencies and public bodies.

Our priorities for 2016 to 2017 include:

- business and enterprise
- competitiveness and exports
- science and innovation
- apprenticeships and skills
- higher education
- labour markets

We have around 2,500 staff working for BIS plus around 500 people working for UK Trade & Investment in the UK.

Our partner organisations include 9 executive agencies employing around 14,500 staff.

We have BIS offices in London, Sheffield, Billingham, Cardiff, Darlington, Glasgow, Manchester, Nottingham, Runcorn and Watford.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills achievements include:

- Funding 457,000 apprenticeship starts in 2010-11 Academic Year
- Committing £75 million to support innovation in technology-based SMEs
- Helping 25,000 UK businesses (mainly SMEs), employing over 13 million people, to make the most of opportunities for growth in overseas markets; Growth Accelerator is a new Department for Business funded-service to help up to 26,000 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) grow as much as they can over three years. Working with an experienced coach, businesses will receive a personalised growth plan, training and workshops, networking and peer to peer support. SMEs can also learn how to develop their leadership and management capability.
- With the Cabinet Office, leading the review of 1,200 regulations across Government as part of the Red Tape Challenge, more than half of which will be scrapped or improved.

<http://www.bis.gov.uk>

Section 3 – Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Customer Name and address	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
3.2	Buyer	Ben Osborne
3.3	Buyer contact details	Professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	<p>The total requirement is valued at a maximum value of £394,000.00 excluding VAT and is divided into five lots. One supplier will be appointed per lot. However suppliers can bid for more than one lot which may result in them being awarded more than one or all lots. Values are excluding VAT.</p> <p>Lot 1: £85,540.00</p> <p>Lot 2: £105,280.00</p> <p>Lot 3: £52,640.00</p> <p>Lot 4: £85,540.00</p> <p>Lot 5: £65,000.00</p>
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	<p>All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available here.</p> <p>Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being considered.</p>

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of posting of Contract advert to OJEU.	11/07/2016
3.7	Date RFP available to Bidders	15/07/2016
3.8	Bidder conference (if relevant)	Not required

3.9	Latest date / time RFP clarifications should be sent be received through Emptoris	09/08/2016 14:00pm
3.10	Latest date / time RFP clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders through Emptoris	10/08/2016 14:00pm
3.11	Closing date and time for Bidder to request RFP documents	18/08/2016 14:00pm
3.12	Closing date and time for Bidder to submit their response ('the deadline')	19/08/2016 14:00pm
3.13	Clarifications	Week Commencing 22/08/2016
3.14	Notification of proposed Contract award to unsuccessful bidders	29/09/16
3.15	Anticipated Contract Award Date	08/09/2016
3.16	Commencement of Contract	09/09/2016
3.17	Bid Validity Period	90 Days

Section 4 – Specification and about this procurement

Background to Requirement

As set out in the Governments policy document “Reviewing post 16 education” the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Department for Education (DfE) is currently overseeing the review of all FE and Six Form Colleges in England. BIS and DfE are separate Government Departments, reporting ultimately to their respective Ministers who are accountable to Parliament.

The reviews themselves are locally steered reviews, overseen by the FE Commissioner and the Sixth Form College Commissioner, and carried out by FE Advisors. Support is provided via JARDU (Joint Area Review Delivery Unit with staff from BIS, DfE, and the Skills and Education Funding Agencies).

The reviews report to a local Area Review Steering Group comprising typically of College Principals and Governors, Local Economic Partnerships (LEPs), the Regional Schools Commissioner and the local authority. It is the responsibility of the Steering Group to agree and implement review recommendations.

So far 3 of 5 “Waves” of reviews have either been completed or are under way. Waves 4 and 5 are due to start in September and November 2016 and comprise of 15 reviews involving 118 colleges. We need additional resources to undertake some of the Wave 4 and 5 reviews.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the exercise is to secure sufficient high-quality personnel able to carry out four of the remaining area reviews to the required standard and within the strict timetable, as well as to provide additional resource as needed to support the wider work of the restructuring programme in terms of both intervention and assessing the financial implications for government of proposals. The first three Waves of reviews have been completed with the final two Waves due to start after the summer (from 9th September 2016). We need additional resources in order to carry out and complete the reviews within the tight timetable. All FE and Six Form Colleges in England are currently being reviewed through the area review process. The overarching objective is to use the process to produce a Further Education infrastructure which:

- Comprises of financially sustainable colleges;
- Delivers quality education and training provision; and
- Meets the needs of the local economy.

Requirement

General

The contract involves contributing to a total of 4 reviews involving 38 colleges, divided into four Lots plus a fifth Lot to provide the FE Commissioner’s team with additional capacity. The requirement could be delivered with one contractor managing the overall delivery, working with sub-contractors. Alternatively, delivery could be based on individual contract arrangements. Tenderers are therefore invited to bid for one or more Lots. We aim to appoint one successful supplier per Lot;

- Lot 1; North East Area Review
- Lot 2; Lancashire Area Review

- Lot 3; Norfolk and Suffolk Area Review
- Lot 4; Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scily
- Lot 5; Support for the FE Commissioner and the wider restructuring programme, in securing best vfm

Lot	Area Review	Number of colleges	Colleges within Area Review	Start date
1	North East	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bishop Auckland College (GFE) • Sunderland College (GFE) • Derwentside College (Tertiary) • East Durham College (GFE) • Gateshead College (Tertiary) • New College Durham (GFE) • NCG (GFE) • Northumberland College (GFE) • South Tyneside College (Tertiary) • Tyne Metropolitan College (GFE) 	Sept 2016
2	Lancashire	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accrington and Rossendale College (Tertiary) • Blackburn College (GFE) • Burnley College (GFE) • Nelson and Colne College (Tertiary) • St Mary's College (SFC) • Blackpool and The Fylde College (GFE) • Cardinal Newman College (Catholic SFC) • Lancaster and Morecambe College (GFE) • Myerscough College (land-based) • Preston College (Tertiary) • Runshaw College (Tertiary) • The Blackpool Sixth Form College (SFC) 	Sept 2016
3	Norfolk and Suffolk	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City College Norwich (GFE) • Easton and Otley College (land-based) • Suffolk New College (GFE) • The College of West Anglia (GFE) • West Suffolk College (GFE) • Paston Sixth Form College (SFC) 	Nov 2016
4	Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scily	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridgwater College (Tertiary) – recently merged with Somerset College of Arts and Technology • Richard Huish College (SFC) • Strode College (Tertiary) • Yeovil College (Tertiary) • City College Plymouth (GFE) • Exeter College (Tertiary) • Petroc (Tertiary) • South Devon College (GFE) • Cornwall College (GFE) • Truro and Penwith College (Tertiary) 	Nov 2016

5	Support for the FE Commissioner	N/A	N/A	Sept 2016
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Any potential conflicts of interest should be disclosed. If necessary, these would be addressed through contractual arrangements.

The first meetings of these reviews start in early September 2016, and the analysis work will commence from then. While there is some flexibility in the timing of individual college visits, the work will need to be complete in order to inform the development of options. For the first reviews this will be by late October. All reviews need to be completed by 31 March 2017. Bidders will be expected to confirm their earliest start date within the RFP questions.

Capacity required

The firm(s) appointed will provide advice on colleges covered by an area review and help develop strategic options for presentation to the relevant Area Review Steering Group which oversees the process. The individuals in the firm(s) appointed will need to apply their strategic judgement to the range of issues needed to be covered by the review including financial health and management as well as education and skills delivery.

In submitting a tender, the firms selected will need to demonstrate they have the capacity to test the information they are provided with, and to use face to face interviews with the college's leadership team to assess their capacity and forward plans. The firms will also need to demonstrate they will be credible at engaging with the college's senior leadership, and that they are able to provide feedback, while managing sensitivities – recognising that this is a voluntary process, in which college leaderships and governors will need to be convinced of the case for change. They will also need to be able to engage effectively and credibly with high level stakeholders as CE level in local authorities and LEPs.

This entails:

- Examining each college within that area review, assessing their financial resilience going forward, and the capacity of their leadership and governance
- Writing the assessments of individual colleges within the review, based on the information provided
- Making recommendations on future structural options for colleges within the review,
- Providing advice on the case for alternative business models and strategies
- Engaging with colleges and steering groups where required to put forward recommendations. This will require senior level engagement.
- Working with stakeholders to achieve an agreed set of recommendations

This includes:

- Provision of strategic advice on the full range of structural change options, robustly assess the options and make recommendations about which options will best meet the objectives for the area review. The colleges involved will be covered by the area reviews to be carried out between September 2016 and March 2017.
- Engagement with colleges and local stakeholders at a senior level.
- Helping the development of solutions for change to deliver financially sustainable quality provision;
- Engagement at senior level with the relevant Government Departments, the funding agencies, local providers and other relevant stakeholders

We anticipate this process will require visits to all the colleges in scope. Past experience suggests each college requires some 8 working days to visit, investigate and report back plus a further 5 days to complete the synoptic review. A 10 college Area Review would therefore entail in the region of 85 days work.

Experience to date shows the area review work requires a particular mix of skills and expertise. The service provider will need to demonstrate that individuals delivering the service have:

- Expertise in overseeing business strategy and delivery model changes including for example developing customer and stakeholder demand analysis; structural options analysis; competition analysis; and in acquisitions, administration and takeovers.
- Expertise in leading and influencing complex organisational change within and across an educational institution context at pace.
- Expertise in developing and implementing quality/ improvement strategies.
- Very strong financial capabilities, including experience of the development of strategies for the effective and efficient use of resources including medium/long term financial modelling and forecasting; procurement experience including potential for shared services and better use of estates and technology.
- Knowledge and understanding of the Government's FE reform strategy as well as the current strategic and funding issues facing the FE college sector.
- Strong influencing and partnership working skills.
- The ability to produce high quality analysis and reports to tight deadlines.

The Reviews are geographically based with the objective of helping deliver quality sustainable provision which meets the needs of the local economy. Understanding the local circumstances surrounding the FE sector is important.

For Lot 5.

This will require the same set of skills and experience as for the other Lots. However the purpose of this Lot is to provide the FE Commissioner/wider restructuring programme with educational and financial services to support the objectives of the programme, where needed, recognising the current constraints and demands on the team. The work could involve any college in England and would be on an as and when call-off basis to provide the Restructuring Programme with a flexible resource. We anticipate this would entail up to 65 days work in total.

Aims and Deliverables

There are 4 area reviews which need to be undertaken and completed between 9 September 2016 and 31 March 2017.

In scope for this work:

Conducting an assessment visit of each college within an area review. In doing this, the contractor will be able to draw on a range of written briefing, including the college's forward financial plan, and any structural proposals (including looking at the case for whether the college can continue to operate independently or whether it should look for a partner). The contractor will also have access to the LEP's and the local authorities' assessments of future education and skills needs to support the area's economic priorities, and demographic analysis of educational needs provided by the Joint Area Review Delivery Unit, and the local authority. The contractor will then conduct a visit of the college (this might typically be undertaken by two people over two days), and engage with its senior team to assess the

college's current position and forward strategy. Key areas to consider at a relatively high level will be:

- An overview of the college's current position, and key trends that are likely to affect it going forward, the critical issues that it will have to grasp to ensure it is financially secure and meets the economic and educational needs of its local area
- The college's approach to strategic planning
- Its approach to aligning its curriculum with demand, and local economic and demographic need
- The college's governance and leadership and management
- Trends on student numbers, and the impact on its financial position, your assessment of any underlying issues that need to be addressed
- The college's approach to delivering quality teaching and learning, and overseeing its retention and success rates
- Its approach to Human Resources, staff contracts, managing staff costs
- Managing its debt and borrowing levels
- Analysis of projected income and expenditure
- Managing its cash flow
- Approach to financial management and control
- Its approach to engaging employers
- Its current partner arrangements with other institutions, and proposals for future partnerships
- The college's area wide proposals for cost reductions / rationalisation proposals

The key output for each assessment will be a report on each college within the review to the Area Review Team, which can be shared with the college. Your principal points of contact will be the Deputy FE Commissioner assigned to the review, and the Joint Area Review Delivery Unit lead.

The contractor will need to provide high level oral feedback to colleges on their future strategic plans. This will need to be tactfully positioned as discussed in the requirement below.

The contractor will also need to produce a synoptic report across the area, drawing out key trends at a high level across all the institutions in the review, and identifying particular challenges that need to be tackled. This report will compare relative performance across the institutions on each of the areas being assessed. This should get essential messages across, but be tactfully positioned. It will also identify collective challenges which face all the institutions in the review. The contractor may be called up on to present this paper to the area review steering group, or it may feed into a presentation provided by the Deputy FE Commissioner.

The contractor will be called upon at a high level to give views on emerging structural options from the review to the Area Review team. This will not be a full evaluation, but rather setting out concerns that may be relevant identified as a result of your visit. The contractor will not usually be responsible for producing the full area review report, or the final analysis of structural options for the review.

Advice provided will be in principle, based on the information available. Colleges will be expected to develop detailed options for recommendations and implementation plans after the review is completed, which will then be subject to due diligence and other due and proper processes.

To conduct this work, the companies appointed will draw on:

- Financial plans prepared by the Colleges. These will also be tested by the Joint Area Review Delivery Unit as part of the process.
- The LEP assessment of future business and educational demand for further education in the area
- Demographic data supplied through the Joint Area Review Delivery Unit
- College propositions for structural change, or statements of intent to remain as stand-alone institutions, supported by relevant evidence which will vary in depth
- Additional data provided by the colleges, including demonstrating their current position against financial plans and forecasts, including the area review benchmarks.

The following activities are out of scope:

- The writing of final area review reports
- Management of the Area Review steering group
- The development of final recommendations (although you may be called to comment on emerging options).
- Review implementation – including the development of implementation plans
- Engagement with commercial lenders or other wider stakeholders

Timetable

9th September 2016 – start of Wave 4 reviews. The analysis work on the first reviews will commence during September. There is some flexibility on the timing of assessment visits, but the reports on the first reviews will need to be available to inform the development of options from mid October

1st November 2016 – start of Wave 5 reviews

All Wave 4 Reviews should be completed by February 2017

All Wave 5 Reviews should be completed by March 2017

31st March 2017 – completion of Area Review programme. All reviews completed and adviser reports submitted

The Contract duration shall be for a period of 7 months from commencement of the Contract.

Section 5 – Evaluation model

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The evaluation process will be conducted to ensure that Bids are evaluated fairly to ascertain the bidders who can demonstrate the required skills qualities, technical ability and capacity, commercial stability and experience to ensure successful performance of the Contract.
- 5.1.2 The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS, the Customer and any specific external stakeholders UK SBS deem required

5.2 Evaluation of Bids

- 5.2.1 Evaluation of Bids shall be based on a Selection questionnaire defined in the e-sourcing tool.

5.3. SELECTION questionnaire

- 5.3.1 The Selection questionnaire shall be marked against the following Selection pass / fail and scoring criteria.
- 5.3.2 The selection questionnaire shall be marked against the following Mandatory or discretionary pass / fail criteria.

Selection Pass/fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Selection Part B	SEL2.2	Conviction for conspiracy
Selection Part B	SEL2.3	Conviction for corruption
Selection Part B	SEL2.4	Conviction for bribery
Selection Part B	SEL2.5	Conviction for fraud
Selection Part B	SEL2.6	Conviction for Terrorism/ Serious Crime
Selection Part B	SEL2.7	Conviction for Money Laundering
Selection Part B	SEL 2.8	Conviction for proceeds of crime
Selection Part B	SEL 2.9	Conviction for other offences
Selection Part B	SEL 2.10	Tax and social security breaches
Selection Part B	SEL 2.12	Cyber Essentials
Selection Part C	SEL3.2	Compliance with applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social and labour law.
Selection Part C	SEL3.3	Bankruptcy, Insolvency or Winding up
Selection Part C	SEL3.4	Grave Professional misconduct
Selection Part C	SEL3.5	Agreements with other economic operators that create a Distortion of Competition
Selection Part C	SEL3.6	Conflict of interest within meaning of regulation 24

Selection Part C	SEL3.7	Distortion of competition within the meaning of regulation 41
Selection Part C	SEL3.8	Deficiencies in performance of prior public contract
Selection Part C	SEL3.9	Serious Misrepresentation
Selection Part C	SEL3.10	Tax Returns
Selection Part C	SEL3.11	Compliance to Modern Slavery Act 2015
Selection Part D	SEL4.1	Economic and Financial standing assessment
Selection Part D	SEL4.3	Guarantee
Selection Part D	SEL4.4	Insurance
Selection Part E	SEL5.1	References
Selection Part E	SEL5.2	Health and Safety Policy
Selection Part E	SEL5.3	Remedial Orders relating to Health and Safety Executive (or equivalent)
Selection Part E	SEL5.4	Conviction of breaching environmental Legislation
Selection Part E	SEL5.5	Sub-contractors infringement of environmental Legislation
Selection Part E	SEL5.6	Unlawful Discrimination
Selection Part E	SEL5.7	Sub-contractor checks for unlawful discrimination
Selection Part E	FOI1.1	Freedom of information
		In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, UK SBS reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.

5.3.3 Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful response to the question.

5.3.4 Not used

5.3.5 Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.

5.3.5 During the evaluation stage, the intention is that only Bidders who pass all the Mandatory and Discretionary requirements of the RFP will be considered for award stage evaluation.

5.4. AWARD questionnaire

5.4.1 The award questionnaire shall be marked against the following Mandatory or discretionary pass / fail criteria. Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful response to the question.

Award Pass/fail criteria

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.2	Bid validity period
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of bona fide Bid
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
LOT1 Quality	LOT1.1	Confirmation to meet start date
LOT2 Quality	LOT2.1	Confirmation to meet start date
LOT3 Quality	LOT3.1	Confirmation to meet start date
LOT4 Quality	LOT4.1	Confirmation to meet start date
LOT5 Quality	LOT5.1	Confirmation to meet start date
-	-	Request for Quotation response – received on time within the e-sourcing tool
<p>In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, UK SBS reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.</p>		

5.4.2 The Award questionnaire shall be marked against the following Award scoring criteria.

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

5.4.4 Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.

Award Scoring criteria

Evaluation Justification Statement

In consideration of this particular requirement UK SBS has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this RFP. UK SBS considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.

Lot 1 – North East Area Review

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2 Lot 1	Price	30%

Quality	LOT1.2	Understanding the Requirement	20%
Quality	LOT1.3	Proposed methodology to achieve the deliverables	30%
Quality	LOT1.4	Project Team	20%

Lot 2 – Lancashire Area Review

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2 Lot 2	Price	30%
Quality	LOT2.2	Understanding the Requirement	20%
Quality	LOT2.3	Proposed methodology to achieve the deliverables	30%
Quality	LOT2.4	Project Team	20%

Lot 3 – Norfolk and Suffolk Area Review

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2 Lot 3	Price	30%
Quality	LOT3.2	Understanding the Requirement	20%
Quality	LOT3.3	Proposed methodology to achieve the deliverables	30%
Quality	LOT3.4	Project Team	20%

Lot 4 – Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scily

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2 Lot 4	Price	30%
Quality	LOT4.2	Understanding the Requirement	20%
Quality	LOT4.3	Proposed methodology to achieve the deliverables	30%
Quality	LOT4.4	Project Team	20%

Lot 5 – Support for the FE Commissioner

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2 Lot 5	Price	30%
Quality	LOT5.2	Understanding the Requirement	20%
Quality	LOT5.3	Proposed methodology to achieve the deliverables	30%
Quality	LOT5.4	Project Team	20%

Award Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60
 Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 40
 Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 80
 Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 60
 Your final score will $(60+40+80+60) \div 4 = 60$

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

5.5. Evaluation process

5.5.1 The evaluation process will feature some, if not all, the following phases

Stage	Summary of activity
Receipt and Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFP logged upon opening in alignment with UK SBS's procurement procedures. Any RFP Bid received after the closing date will be rejected unless circumstances attributed to UK SBS or the e-sourcing tool beyond the bidder control are responsible for late submission.
Compliance check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check all Mandatory requirements are acceptable to UK SBS. Unacceptable Bids maybe subject to clarification by UK SBS or rejection of the Bid.
Scoring of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation team will independently score the Bid and provide a commentary of their scoring justification against the Selection

	criteria.
Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Evaluation team may require written clarification to Bids
Re - scoring of the Bid and Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following Clarification responses, the Evaluation team reserve the right to independently re-score the Bid and Clarifications and provide a commentary of their re-scoring justification against the Selection criteria.
Shortlisting of Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UK SBS will shortlist the Bidders based on the Responses received and the Evaluation Model detailed in Section 5 of the RFP.
Validation of unsuccessful Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To confirm contents of the letters to provide details of scoring and relative feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders Bid in comparison with the successful Bidders Bid.

Section 6 – Selection and award questionnaires

Section 6 – Selection questionnaire

6.1 Introduction

The Selection questionnaires are located in the within the e-sourcing tool.

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

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 6 – Award questionnaire

6.2 The Award questionnaires are located within the e-sourcing tool.

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

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General information

7.1. Introduction

- 7.1.1 UK SBS wishes to establish a Contract for the provision of PS16149-Reviewing Post-16 Education and Training Establishments in England Support for the Area Review process UK SBS is managing this procurement process in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as may be amended from time to time) (the “Regulations”). This is a servicesContract being procured under the OJEU Open Procedure
- 7.1.2 UK SBS is procuring the Contract for add for its exclusive use or cross reference the list of customers provided in the [OJEU Notice](#) or [Contracts Finder](#) Notice supported if relevant by the statement on the UK SBS website currently located [here](#). (OPB)
- 7.1.3 UK SBS logo, trademarks and other identifying marks are proprietary and may not be incorporated in the Companies response without UK SBS’s written permission.
- 7.1.4 The Bidder shall indemnify and keep indemnified UK SBS against all actions, claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs, losses, charges and expenses whatsoever in respect of any breach by the Bidder of this document.
- 7.1.5 If there is any doubt with regard to the ambiguity of any question or content contained in this questionnaire then PLEASE ASK a clarification question, but please ensure that your question is via the formal clarification process in writing to the UK SBS representative nominated. No approach of any kind in connection with this opportunity should be made to any other person within, or associated with UK SBS. All information secured outside of this named contact shall have no legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.1.6 It remains the responsibility of the Bidder to keep UK SBS informed of any matter that may affect continued qualification
- 7.1.7 Prior to commencing formal evaluation, Submitted Responses will be checked to ensure they are fully compliant with the Pass / Fail criteria within the Evaluation model. Non-compliant Submitted Responses may be rejected by UK SBS. Submitted Responses which are deemed by UK SBS to be fully compliant will proceed to evaluation. These will be evaluated using the criteria and scores detailed in the matrix set out in [Section 5](#).
- 7.1.8 Following evaluation of the submitted Responses and approval of the outcome UK SBS intends to select a short list of Bidders to proceed to Award stage of this Procurement.
- 7.1.9 Whilst it is UK SBS’s and any relevant Other Public Bodies intention to purchase the majority of its services under this Contract Arrangement from the Supplier(s) appointed this does not confer any exclusivity on the appointed Suppliers. UK SBS and any relevant Other Public Bodies reserve the right to purchase any services and services (including those similar to the services covered by this procurement) from any Supplier outside of this Contract.

7.1.10 UK SBS reserves the right not to conclude a Contract as a result of the current procurement process. Bidders should review the contents of Section 7 paragraph 7.8.1 when considering submitting their Response.

7.1.11 The services covered by this procurement exercise have been sub-divided into Lots. Details of the lots below;

Lot	Description	Number of successful suppliers required for this lot
Lot 1	North East	1
Lot 2	Lancashire	1
Lot 3	Norfolk and Suffolk	1
Lot 4	Somerset, Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scily	1
Lot 5	Support for FE Commissioner	1

7.1.12 UK SBS shall utilise the Crown Commercial Service (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) Emptoris e-sourcing tool url <https://gpsesourcing.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sso/jsp/login.jsp> to conduct this procurement. There will be no electronic auction following the conclusion of the evaluation of the Request for Proposal (RFP) responses. Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool may be submitted to Crown Commercial Service, Telephone 0345 010 3503.

7.1.13 Please utilise the messaging system within the e-sourcing tool located at <https://gpsesourcing.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sso/jsp/login.jsp> within the timescales detailed in [Section 3](#). if you have any doubt as to what is required or will have difficulty in providing the information requested. Bidders should note that any requests for clarifications may not be considered by UK SBS if they are not articulated by the Bidder within the discussion forum within the e-sourcing tool.

7.1.14 Bidders should read this document, RFx attachments, messages and the evaluation questionnaires carefully before completing the Response submission. Failure to comply with any of these instructions for completion and submission of the Submitted Response may result in the rejection of the Response. Bidders are advised therefore to acquaint themselves fully with the extent and nature of the goods/services/goods and services and contractual obligations. These instructions constitute the Conditions of Response. Participation in the RFP process automatically signals that the Bidder accepts these Conditions.

7.1.15 All material issued in connection with this RFP shall remain the property of UK SBS and/or as applicable relevant OPB and shall be used only for the purpose of this procurement. All Due Diligence Information shall be either returned to UK SBS or securely destroyed by the Bidder (at UK SBS's option) at the conclusion of the procurement

- 7.1.16 The Bidder shall ensure that each and every sub-contractor, consortium member and adviser abides by the terms of these instructions and the Conditions of Response.
- 7.1.17 The Bidder shall not make contact with any other employee, agent or consultant of UK SBS or any relevant OPB or Customer who are in any way connected with this procurement during the period of this procurement, unless instructed otherwise by UK SBS.
- 7.1.18 UK SBS shall not be committed to any course of action as a result of:
- 7.1.18.1 issuing this RFP or any invitation to participate in this procurement ;
 - 7.1.18.2 an invitation to submit any Response in respect of this procurement;
 - 7.1.18.3 communicating with a Bidder or a Bidder's representatives or agents in respect of this procurement; or
 - 7.1.18.4 any other communication between UK SBS and/or any relevant OPB (whether directly or by its agents or representatives) and any other party.
- 7.1.19 Bidders shall accept and acknowledge that by issuing this RFP UK SBS shall not be bound to accept any Response and reserves the right not to conclude a Contract for some or all of the services for which Responses are invited.
- 7.1.20 UK SBS reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of this RFP at any time during the procurement.
- 7.1.21 Bidders should not include in the Response any extraneous information which has not been specifically requested in the RFP including, for example, any sales literature, standard terms of trading etc. Any such information not requested but provided by the Bidder shall not be considered by UK SBS.
- 7.1.22 If the Bidder is a consortium, the following information must be provided: full details of the consortium; and the information sought in this RFP in respect of each of the consortium's constituent members as part of a single composite response. Potential Providers should provide details of the actual or proposed percentage shareholding of the constituent members within the consortium as indicated in the relevant section of the selection questionnaire SEL1.9 specifically refers. If a consortium is not proposing to form a corporate entity, full details of alternative proposed arrangements should be provided as indicated in the relevant section of the RFP. However, please note UK SBS reserves the right to require a successful consortium to form a single legal entity in accordance with regulation 19(6) of the Regulations. UK SBS recognises that arrangements in relation to consortia may (within limits) be subject to future change. Potential Providers should therefore respond in the light of the arrangements as currently envisaged. Potential Providers are reminded that any future proposed change in relation to consortia must be notified to UK SBS so that it can make a further assessment by applying the selection criteria to the new information provided and consider rejection of the Response if UK SBS reasonably consider the change to have a material impact of the delivery of the viability of the Response.

7.2. Bidder conference

- 7.2.1 A Bidders' Conference will not be held in conjunction with this procurement.

7.3. Confidentiality

- 7.3.1 Subject to the exceptions referred to in paragraph 7.3.2, the contents of this RFP are being made available by UK SBS on condition that:
- 7.3.1.1 Bidders shall at all times treat the contents of the RFP and any related documents (together called the 'Information') as confidential, save in so far as they are already in the public domain;
 - 7.3.1.2 Bidders shall not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time or allow any of these things to happen;
 - 7.3.1.3 Bidders shall not use any of the Information for any purpose other than for the purposes of submitting (or deciding whether to submit) a Response; and
 - 7.3.1.4 Bidders shall not undertake any publicity activity within any section of the media in relation to this procurement
- 7.3.2 Bidders may disclose, distribute or pass any of the Information to the Bidder's advisers, sub-contractors or to another person provided that either:
- 7.3.2.1 This is done for the sole purpose of enabling a Response to be submitted and the person receiving the Information undertakes in writing to keep the Information confidential on the same terms as if that person were the Bidder; or
 - 7.3.2.2 The disclosure is made for the sole purpose of obtaining legal advice from external lawyers in relation to the procurement or to any Contract arising from it; or
 - 7.3.2.3 The Bidder is legally required to make such a disclosure
- 7.3.3 In paragraphs 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 above the term 'person' includes but is not limited to any person, firm, body or association, corporate or incorporate.
- 7.3.4 UK SBS may disclose detailed information relating to Responses to its employees, agents or advisers and UK SBS may make any of the Contract documents available for private inspection by its officers, employees, agents or advisers. UK SBS also reserves the right to disseminate information that is materially relevant to the procurement to all Bidders, even if the information has only been requested by one Bidder, subject to the duty to protect each Bidder's commercial confidentiality in relation to its Response (unless there is a requirement for disclosure as explained in paragraphs 7.4.1 to 7.4.3 below).
- 7.3.5 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, UK SBS may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to UK SBS during this Procurement. Subject to section 7.4 below, the information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this RFP consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.3.6 From 2nd April 2014 the Government is introducing its new Government Security Classifications (“GSC”) classification scheme to replace the current Government Protective Marking System (“GPMS”). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC from 2nd April 2014. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>
- 7.3.7 UK SBS reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this RFP to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this RFP is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

7.4 Freedom of information

- 7.4.1 In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the ‘FoIA’) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the ‘EIR’) (each as amended from time to time), UK SBS may be required to disclose information submitted by the Bidder to the to UK SBS.
- 7.4.2 In respect of any information submitted by a Bidder that it considers to be commercially sensitive the Bidder should complete the Freedom of Information declaration question defined in the Question FOI1.2.
- 7.4.3 Where a Bidder identifies information as commercially sensitive, UK SBS will endeavour to maintain confidentiality. Bidders should note, however, that, even where information is identified as commercially sensitive, UK SBS may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FoIA or the Environmental Information Regulations. In particular, UK SBS is required to form an independent judgment concerning whether the information is exempt from disclosure under the FoIA or the EIR and whether the public interest favours disclosure or not. Accordingly, UK SBS cannot guarantee that any information marked ‘confidential’ or “commercially sensitive” will not be disclosed.
- 7.4.4 Where a Bidder receives a request for information under the FoIA or the EIR during the procurement, this should be immediately passed on to UK SBS and the Bidder should not attempt to answer the request without first consulting with UK SBS.
- 7.4.5 Bidders are reminded that the Government’s transparency agenda requires that sourcing documents, including RFP templates such as this, are published on a designated, publicly searchable web site, and, that the same applies to other sourcing documents issued by UK SBS, and any contract entered into by UK SBS with its preferred supplier once the procurement is complete. By submitting a

response to this RFP Bidders are agreeing that their participation and contents of their Response may be made public.

7.5. Response Validity

7.5.1 Your Response should remain open for consideration for a period of 90 days. A Response valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

7.6. Timescales

7.6.1 [Section 3](#) of the RFP sets out the proposed procurement timetable. UK SBS reserves the right to extend the dates and will advise potential Bidders of any change to the dates.

7.7. UK SBS's Contact Details

7.7.1 Unless stated otherwise in these Instructions or in writing from UK SBS, all communications from Bidders (including their sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants and advisers) during the period of this procurement must be directed through the e-sourcing tool to the designated UK SBS contact.

7.7.2 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool may be submitted to Crown Commercial Service, Telephone 0345 010 3503.

7.7.3 Bidders should be mindful that the designated Contact should not under any circumstances be sent a copy of their Response outside of the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow this requirement will result in disqualification of the Response.

7.8. Preparation of a Response

7.8.1 Bidders must obtain for themselves at their own responsibility and expense all information necessary for the preparation of Responses. Bidders are solely responsible for all costs, expenses and other liabilities arising in connection with the preparation and submission of their Response and all other stages of the selection and evaluation process. Under no circumstances will UK SBS, or any of their advisers, be liable for any such costs, expenses or liabilities borne by Bidders or their sub-contractors, suppliers or advisers in this process.

7.8.2 Bidders are required to complete and provide all information required by UK SBS in accordance with the Conditions of Response and the Request for Proposal. Failure to comply with the Conditions and the Request for Proposal may lead UK SBS to reject a Response.

7.8.3 UK SBS relies on Bidders' own analysis and review of information provided. Consequently, Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining the information which they consider is necessary in order to make decisions regarding the content of their Responses and to undertake any investigations they consider necessary in order to verify any information provided to them during the procurement.

7.8.4 Bidders must form their own opinions, making such investigations and taking such advice (including professional advice) as is appropriate, regarding their Responses, without reliance upon any opinion or other information provided by UK SBS or their advisers and representatives. Bidders should notify UK SBS promptly of any perceived ambiguity, inconsistency or omission in this RFP, any of its associated documents and/or any other information issued to them during the procurement.

7.8.5 Bidders must ensure that each response to a question is within any specified word count. Any responses with words in excess of the word count will only be considered up to the point where they meet the word count, any additional words beyond the volume defined in the word count will not be considered by the evaluation panel.

7.8.6 Bidders must ensure that each response to a question is not cross referenced to a response to another question. In the event of a Bidder adding a cross reference it will not be considered in evaluation.

7.9. Submission of Responses

7.9.1 The Response must be submitted as instructed in this document through the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow the instruction within each Section of this document, to omit responses to any of the questions or to present your response in alignment with any guidance notes provided may render the Response non-compliant and it may be rejected.

7.9.2 UK SBS may at its own absolute discretion extend the closing date and the time for receipt of Responses specified [Section 3](#).

7.9.3 Any extension to the RFP response period will apply to all Bidders.

7.9.4 Any financial data provided must be submitted in or converted into pounds sterling. Where official documents include financial data in a foreign currency, a sterling equivalent must be provided. Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in the Response not being considered.

7.9.5 UK SBS does not accept responsibility for the premature opening or mishandling of Responses that are not submitted in accordance with the instructions of this document.

7.9.6 The Response and any documents accompanying it must be in the English language

7.9.7 Bidders must submit their response through the e-sourcing tool:

7.9.8 Responses will be submitted any time up to the date indicated in [Section 3](#). Responses received before this deadline will be retained in a secure environment, unopened until this deadline has passed.

7.9.9 Responses received after the date indicated in [Section 3](#) shall not be considered by UK SBS unless the Bidder can justify the reason for the delay.

7.9.9.1 The Bidder must demonstrate irrefutable evidence in writing they have made best endeavours to ensure the Response was received on time and that the issue was beyond their control.

7.9.9.2 Any request for a late Response to be considered must be emailed to bids@uksbs.co.uk in advance of 'the deadline' if a bidder believes their Response will be received late.

7.9.9.3 UK SBS reserves the right to accept or reject any late Response without justification to the affected Bidder and make no guarantee it will consider any request for a late Response to be considered.

7.10. Canvassing

7.10.1 Any Bidder who directly or indirectly canvasses any employee, or agent of UK SBS or its members or any relevant OPB or any of its employees concerning the

establishment of the Contract or who directly or indirectly obtains or attempts to obtain information from any such officer, member, employee or agent or concerning any other Bidder, Response or proposed Response will be disqualified.

7.11. Disclaimers

7.11.1 Whilst the information in this RFP, Due Diligence Information and supporting documents has been prepared in good faith, it does not purport to be comprehensive nor has it been independently verified.

7.11.2 Neither UK SBS, nor any relevant OPB's nor their advisors, nor their respective directors, officers, members, partners, employees, other staff or agents:

7.11.2.1 makes any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFP; or

7.11.2.2 accepts any responsibility for the information contained in the RFP or for their fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information nor shall any of them be liable for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

7.11.3 Any persons considering making a decision to enter into contractual relationships with UK SBS and/or, as applicable, relevant OPB following receipt of the RFP should make their own investigations and their own independent assessment of UK SBS and/or, as applicable, relevant OPB and its requirements for the goods/services/goods and services and should seek their own professional financial and legal advice. For the avoidance of doubt the provision of clarification or further information in relation to the RFP or any other associated documents (including the Schedules) is only authorised to be provided following a query made in accordance with Paragraph 7.15 of this RFP.

7.12. Collusive behaviour

7.12.1 Any Bidder who:

7.12.1.1 fixes or adjusts the amount of its Response by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other party; or

7.12.1.2 communicates to any party other than UK SBS or, as applicable, relevant OPB the amount or approximate amount of its proposed Response or information which would enable the amount or approximate amount to be calculated (except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the Response or insurance or any necessary security); or

7.12.1.3 enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party that such other party shall refrain from submitting a Response; or

7.12.1.4 enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party as to the amount of any Response submitted; or

7.12.1.5 offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum or sums of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any party for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be

done in relation to any other Response or proposed Response, any act or omission,

shall (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to UK SBS and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a Bidder may attract) be disqualified.

7.13. No inducement or incentive

7.13.1 The RFP is issued on the basis that nothing contained in it shall constitute an inducement or incentive nor shall have in any other way persuaded a Bidder to submit a Response or enter into the Contract or any other contractual agreement.

7.14. Acceptance of the Contract

7.14.1 The Bidder in submitting the Response undertakes that in the event of the Response being accepted by UK SBS and UK SBS confirming in writing such acceptance to the Bidder, the Bidder will within 3 working days of being called upon to do so by UK SBS execute the Contract in the form set out in the Contract Terms or in such amended form as may subsequently be agreed.

7.14.2 UK SBS shall be under no obligation to accept the lowest priced or any Response.

7.15. Queries relating to the Response

7.15.1 All requests for clarification about the requirements or the process of this procurement shall be made in through the e-sourcing tool unless where the e-sourcing tool is unavailable due to Emptoris or Crown Commercial Service system maintenance or failure when a clarification by email to the contact defined in [Section 3](#).

7.15.2 UK SBS will endeavour to answer all questions as quickly as possible, but cannot guarantee a minimum response time.

7.15.3 In the event of a Bidder requiring assistance uploading a clarification to the e-sourcing portal they should use the contact details defined in [Section 3](#).

7.15.4 No further requests for clarifications will be accepted after 5 days prior to the date for submission of Responses.

7.15.5 In order to ensure equality of treatment of Bidders, UK SBS intends to publish the questions and clarifications raised by Bidders together with UK SBS's responses (but not the source of the questions) to all participants on a regular basis.

7.15.6 Bidders should indicate if a query is of a commercially sensitive nature – where disclosure of such query and the answer would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests. However, if UK SBS at its sole discretion does not either; consider the query to be of a commercially confidential nature or one which all Bidders would potentially benefit from seeing both the query and UK SBS's response, UK SBS will:

7.15.6.1 invite the Bidder submitting the query to either declassify the query and allow the query along with UK SBS's response to be circulated to all Bidders; or

7.15.6.2 request the Bidder, if it still considers the query to be of a commercially confidential nature, to withdraw the query prior to the end of the closing date and time for Bidder clarifications.

7.15.7 UK SBS reserves the right not to respond to a request for clarification or to circulate such a request where it considers that the answer to that request would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests.

7.16. Amendments to Response Documents

7.16.1 At any time prior to the deadline for the receipt of Responses, UK SBS may modify the RFP by amendment. Any such amendment will be numbered and dated and issued by UK SBS to all prospective Bidders. In order to give prospective Bidders reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account in preparing their Responses, UK SBS may, at its discretion, extend the time and/or date for receipt of Responses.

7.17. Modification and withdrawal

7.17.1 Bidders may modify their Response where allowable within the e-sourcing tool. No Response may be modified after the deadline for submission of Responses.

7.17.2 Bidders may withdraw their Response at any time prior the deadline for submission of Responses [or any other time prior to accepting the offer of a Contract]. The notice to withdraw the Response must be in writing and sent to UK SBS by recorded delivery or equivalent service and delivered to UK SBS at UK Shared Business Services Ltd, Procurement Policy Manager, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 1ET

7.18. Right to disqualify or reject

7.18.1 UK SBS reserves the right to reject or disqualify a Bidder where

7.18.1.1 the Bidder fails to comply fully with the requirements of this Request for Proposal or presents the response in a format contrary to the requirements of this document; and/or

7.18.1.2 the Bidder is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its Response; expression of interest; or the Response process; and/or

7.18.1.3 there is a change in identity, control, financial standing or other factor impacting on the selection and/or evaluation process affecting the Bidder.

7.19. Right to cancel, clarify or vary the process

7.19.1 UK SBS reserves the right to:

7.19.1.1 cancel the evaluation process at any stage; and/or

7.19.1.2 require the Bidder to clarify its Response in writing and/or provide additional information. (Failure to respond adequately may result in the Bidder not being selected),

7.20.. Notification of award

7.20.1 UK SBS will notify the successful Bidder of the Contract award in writing and will publish an Award Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union in accordance with the Regulations within 30 days of the award of the contract.

7.20.2 As required by the Regulations all unsuccessful Bidders will be provided with an

email advising the outcome of the submission of their RFP response.

Appendix ‘A’ Glossary of Terms

TERM	MEANING
“UK SBS”	means UK Shared Business Services Ltd herein after referred to as UK SBS.
“Bid”, “Response”, “Submitted Bid”, or “RFP Response”	means the Bidders formal offer in response to this Request for Proposal
“Bidders”	means the organisations being invited to respond to this Request for Proposal
“Central Purchasing Body”	means a duly constituted public sector organisation which procures goods/services for and on behalf of contracting authorities
“Conditions of Bid”	means the terms and conditions set out in this RFP relating to the submission of a Bid
“Contract”	means the agreement to be entered by UK SBS and the Supplier following any award under the procurement
“Contracting Bodies”	means UK SBS and any other contracting authorities described in the OJEU Contract Notice
“Customer”	means the legal entity (or entities) for which any Contract agreed will be made accessible to.
“Due Diligence Information”	means the background and supporting documents and information provided by UK SBS for the purpose of better informing the Bidders responses to this Request for Proposal
"EIR"	mean the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such regulations
FoIA	means the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any subordinate legislation made under such Act from time to time together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such legislation
“Lot”	means a discrete sub-division of the requirements
“Mandatory”	Means a pass / fail criteria which must be met in order for a Bid to be considered, unless otherwise specified.
“OJEU Contract Notice”	means the advertisement issued in the Official Journal of the European Union
“Order”	means an order for served by any Contracting Body on the Supplier
“Other Public Bodies”	means all Contracting Bodies except UK SBS
“Request for Proposal” or “RFP”	means this Request for Proposal documentation and all related documents published by UK SBS and made available to Bidders and includes the Due Diligence Information. NOTE: This document is often referred to as an Invitation to Tender within other organisations
“Supplier”	means the organisation awarded the Contract
“Standard Goods /Services”	means any goods/services set out at within Section 4 Specification