

Invitation to Quote



Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of the Department for Education

**Subject UK SBS PS16240 Islamic Finance Advice to support
development of Alternative Student Finance**

Sourcing reference number PS16240

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

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
Registered Office Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 1FF
VAT registration GB618 3673 25
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UKSBS

Shared Business Services

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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, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) 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 Education

The Department for Education (DfE) is responsible for higher education (HE) and student funding, as part of its wider responsibilities for education, children's services, further education, apprenticeships and wider skills in England, and equalities. The Department is committed to achieving a highly educated society in which opportunity is equal for all, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

The Student Finance and Analysis Group in the DfE is responsible for the policy and oversight of issuing student loans and grants to students studying at English Higher Education Institutions (or to English domiciled students studying elsewhere in the United Kingdom.) Subject to the passage of a Bill currently before Parliament, the Group is also leading the development of Alternative Student Finance consistent with the principles of Islamic Finance.

Section 3 - Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.

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

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Customer Name and address	Department for Education, Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith St, Westminster, London SW1P 3BT
3.2	Buyer name	Ben Osborne
3.3	Buyer contact details	Professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	Maximum contract value shall not exceed £97,000.00 excluding VAT
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available here. 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.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of Issue of Contract Advert and location of original Advert	21/02/2017 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions should be received through Emptoris messaging system	27/02/2017 14:00pm
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	28/02/2017 14:00pm
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	07/03/2017 14:00pm
3.10	Date/time Bidders should be available if face to face clarifications are required	Not Required
3.11	Anticipated rejection of unsuccessful Bids date	07/04/2017
3.12	Anticipated Award date	07/04/2017
3.13	Anticipated Contract Start date	10/04/2017
3.14	Anticipated Contract End date	09/04/2019

3.15	Bid Validity Period	60 Days
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Section 4 – Specification

Background to the Requirement

DfE is running an open tender for experts in Islamic Finance to support the design and delivery of Alternative Student Finance (ASF).

DfE are responsible for ASF policy development and the legislation required to enable its provision.

DfE will delegate the functions required to deliver ASF, as it does for the current student loans system.

The Student Funding System

Eligible students in the English system are currently eligible for loans to support full and part-time undergraduate tuition fees and full-time undergraduate living costs. A new master's loan was introduced in 2016 and there are plans to introduce loans for part-time students for living costs. Loans are also available for some further education students to help with the cost of some courses at a college or training provider. The Devolved Administrations have their own student finance arrangements.

The student loans issued under the current system are repaid on an income contingent basis, i.e. repayments are only taken when a student earns above a threshold (currently £21,000 for new loans) and paused when income falls below this level. Repayments start on 6 April after a student completes or leaves their course. Most repayments are made through the tax system (via HMRC). If a borrower dies or is permanently disabled the debt is written off, and all outstanding balances are written off after 30 years.

The fairness and sustainability of the student finance system relies on charging interest at variable rates. In accordance with standard market practice, interest is also compounded.

In the undergraduate system, an interest rate of RPI + 3% is applied to the loan balance from the point at which a student is provided with loan funding (while studying) until the statutory repayment date of 6th April after finishing or leaving the course. After that date, the interest rate is then based on income - with those earning up to £21,000 accruing interest of RPI, those earning between £21,000 and £41,000 interest accruing on a sliding scale between RPI and RPI+3% depending on income, and those earning over £41,000 accruing interest of RPI + 3%. From the time the student loan is provided the interest accrued is compounded daily on the balance of the loan.

Alternative Student Finance

There is a concern that the system outlined above could deter some prospective students who feel unable to use interest-bearing loans for religious reasons, particularly some Muslim students, from participation in higher and some further education.

To ensure participation and choice are open to all the Government is currently legislating, subject to Parliament, in order to be able to offer an alternative model of student finance.

The concept of alternative student finance was widely supported during public consultation in 2014 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/sharia-compliant-student-finance>). In May 2016 the Higher Education and Research Bill was introduced, and it is currently before Parliament. It seeks to amend the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998 to provide the Secretary of State with the power, for the first time, to offer “alternative payments” alongside her existing powers to offer grants and loans.

There is significant work to be done on the design and implementation of the alternative student finance model in order to be able to launch it for students.

The consultants we are seeking will be required to provide advice, recommendations and validation of output to ensure that ASF, based on the Takaful model, meets the criteria set out in this document and can be delivered in good time.

The consultant(s) will need to be able to:

- work with policy makers in DfE and operational delivery experts in partner organisations to find solutions to the challenges of delivering ASF
- provide oral and written advice and recommendations on design and delivery
- be available to troubleshoot when problems materialise and provide options for resolution where applicable
- travel to, attend and partake in workshops and meetings in London, Glasgow, Darlington and elsewhere, and participate in telephone conferences
- build support in the Muslim community and lead work to secure appropriate acceptance and approval
- provide verbal and written comments having reviewed proposed documentation (such as text on GOV.UK, letters regarding ASF, contract etc.)

Payment will cover: Time incurred to provide the required advice/review/validation of the Government’s approach to ensure consistency with the principles of Islamic finance and in the production of agreed deliverables, pre-agreed travel costs (upon receipt of original receipts), pre-agreed subsistence for any overnight accommodation if required.

Aims and Objectives

The introduction of ASF is intended to support participation in education, particularly among those who feel unable, due to their religious beliefs, to access the interest bearing student loans currently offered. This should help ensure opportunity and choice in higher education are open to all and that everyone with the potential to benefit from higher study can do so.

ASF must of course be designed to be consistent with the principles of Islamic finance. It must also result in no financial advantage or disadvantage for those who use it, relative to the equivalent student loan.

Different models from Islamic Finance have been considered for ASF and the Takaful model was identified as the one most likely to allow Government to meet its aims. It was considered acceptable by 81% of respondents in the 2014 public consultation.

The aim of this tender exercise is to identify experts in Islamic finance who can help take the Takaful model of alternative student finance from concept through design and implementation into a fully operational financial product which is acceptable to and accessed by students, particularly Muslim students. This tender exercise is to procure such advice,

guidance, review and validation of the design and delivery of ASF as are necessary to meet this overall aim and the objectives set out in the section below.

Securing expert Islamic Finance advice, guidance and the review and ratification of the detailed policy design and operational delivery is essential to provide an ASF product which :

- A. meets the needs of those who may be deterred from taking out student loans due to their religious beliefs; and
- B. is open to students irrespective of their religious beliefs; and
- C. results in no financial advantage or disadvantage for those who use it, relative to those who use the student loan (i.e. there will be two systems based on different concepts that give equivalent outcomes).

More specifically, the following criteria apply. ASF must

- Be transparent in its workings, easy for potential students to understand, and demonstrably consistent with the principles of Islamic finance. It must be acceptable to potential students, so they feel able to access the product and pursue their education.
- Be available to those of all faiths and none, on the same eligibility basis as an equivalent student loan;
- Applied for in a similar way to the equivalent student loan, so there is no excessive burden on the applicant.
- Produce the same financial outcome for ASF users as the equivalent student loan, with the same level of funding provided and equivalent payments made in return.
- Allow contributions to be made through all the routes available to those repaying an equivalent student loan, including through the tax system.
- Enforced in a similar way to the equivalent student loan, ensuring commensurate outcomes.
- Be delivered through a model which represents the best value for money for the taxpayer - maximising consistency with the principles of Islamic finance and meeting demand, while eliminating any unnecessary spend.

The Requirement

Provide verbal and written advice and make recommendations, working with policy officials and operational delivery experts in partner organisations to find solutions to challenges.

Bidders need to demonstrate their ability to meet the following requirements.

	Requirement Summary	Knowledge and Expertise required or desired
Requirement 1: Provide advice, guidance and continual review and validation for the Takaful Fund model to meet the principles of Islamic Finance		
a.	The current student loan system Undertake preparatory work to understand the current student finance system in order to advise on, review and ratify the development and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the student finance system in England.

	delivery of ASF to be equivalent to student loans (post 2012 student loans in England).	
b.	<p>The establishment of the structure and governance of the Takaful fund and its relationship with Government / partner organisations</p> <p>Legal, governance and financial/accounting considerations.</p> <p>The annual administration, review and audit from an Islamic Finance perspective.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamic Finance products and principles (Takaful). • Governance and accounting.
c.	<p>Product design</p> <p>Guidance and steers on the best means of designing ASF and review and ratification of the product from development to delivery, so it is widely acceptable to Muslim prospective students while ensuring financial equivalence with the student loan system which uses variable and compound interest.</p> <p>It will also be important to consider the cash flows and accounting through the system (including from Government to the Takaful fund to students, and the payment contributions back to Government).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamic finance products and principles.
d.	<p>Enforcement, penalties and debt collection to be equivalent to student loans</p> <p>Advice on the application and acceptance of penalties to ASF in order to ensure full equivalence with student loans.</p> <p>Where a borrower eligible to repay and is not paying through the UK tax system and fails to make direct payments enforcement and debt collection are applicable.</p> <p>The enforceability of ASF contributions within the law of England and Wales.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imposing penalties within the acceptable parameters of Islamic Finance principles. • Enforcing debt collection within the acceptable parameters of Islamic Finance principles. • Using standard debt collection agencies within the acceptable parameters of Islamic Finance principles. • Using specialist Islamic Finance compliant debt collection agencies. • The enforceability of Islamic Finance under the law of England and Wales.

e.	System Build Advice, review and ratification of building and delivering ASF so its operation is widely acceptable to prospective Muslim students (including separation from student loans etc.). This will involve working with delivery partners, and understanding business and technical architecture, and interactions with the tax system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering financial products / services. • Understanding of core digital architecture and operational principles, including banking platforms.
f.	Application/Customer Facing Promotion of the product to target group of Muslim prospective students who would have been deterred from undertaking higher education. Alternative student finance product information, advice and guidance to student finance advisors and those considering/using the fund (including paper products and website) Reviewing, advising and ratifying all forms of communication including but not exclusive to letters, annual statements and the use of call centres within delivery partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information, advice and guidance to the public. • Promotion/marketing of products and/or services. • Islamic Finance terminology.
g.	Any other wider Islamic Finance issues There may be general, wider Islamic Finance issues that may arise through the design, development and delivery of ASF that could/will impact on ASF, on which we would look to you for advice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to date knowledge on Islamic Finance within the UK and abroad.
Requirement 2: Process for Islamic Finance Compliance and acceptability – Sign off for approval of model and delivery and ongoing endorsement		
h.	Advice on and/or action to secure and manage approval of the product from Islamic Finance scholars /an Islamic Finance panel/committee. Advice on process for ongoing Islamic Finance oversight of the fund. Key stakeholder engagement and management of those from the Islamic finance and wider Muslim community to ensure consensus and support more specific engagement of Muslim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Previous work with Islamic Finance panels. • Governance of financial products / services and annual monitoring. • Stakeholder relationship engagement and management.

	prospective students.	
Requirement 3: Documentation		
i.	Legal documentation for ASF Advice, recommendations and ratification of Islamic finance aspects of the Contract entered into by the student when accessing ASF – content and wording. (See also enforcement above.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islamic Finance and its interaction with contracts under the law of England and Wales.
<p>Not required: Advice on Government student finance policy.</p> <p><u>Timetable</u> Timeframe: up to 2 years from March 2017 to March 2019. Expected start date: Anticipated March 2017 Expected completion: Anticipated March 2019</p> <p>The consultant would need to be flexible to meet the peaks and troughs in demand for the expert advice. On average this would equate to around 1 day per week for one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) providing consultancy work. This would include a mixture of full days eg attending workshops, regular 1 to 2 hour telephone meetings, being contactable when key technical processes are being worked through and time spend drafting and reviewing written documentation.</p>		

Section 5 – Evaluation model

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

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

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

Pass / fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool

Scoring criteria			
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 ITQ. UK SBS considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.			
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	30%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Proposed methodology to achieve the deliverables	20%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Policy and delivery for the Takaful Fund model	30%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Process for Islamic Finance Compliance and acceptability – Sign off for approval of model and delivery and ongoing endorsement	10%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Legal documentation for ASF	10%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

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

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

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

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

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

What makes a good bid – some simple do's 😊

DO:

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

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

DO NOT

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

Some additional guidance notes

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

the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks UK SBS may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.39 All timescales are set using a 24 hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.40 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

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

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

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

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

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

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