

Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of **Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)**

Subject: **Training Conjoint Project**

Sourcing Reference Number: **CR18152**



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

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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Version 3.3

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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 Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for the Contracting Authorities 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 Contracting Authorities. This allows Contracting Authorities 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 the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), 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 Contracting Authorities.

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

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

An independent body, largely funded by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), ACAS was established formally by statute in 1976. Today it employs around 750 people with a devolved structure with offices in 12 areas grouped into four ACAS regions across England, Scotland and Wales. The Head Office for ACAS is based in London and houses a wide range of corporate support functions and policy makers including the Strategy Directorate who are commissioning this work. Within the Strategy Directorate are the Strategy Unit, Information and Guidance team, Equality and Diversity team, Communication teams and Research and Evaluation Section (RES). RES will manage the project.

ACAS aims to improve organisations and working life through better employment relationships and through a range of services which are delivered with independence, impartiality and are confidential.

ACAS is well known for its role in providing a dispute resolution service both in collective and individual disputes. ACAS offers a collective conciliation service for dealing with disputes between groups of workers and their employers. ACAS also deals with disputes where individuals claim their employer has breached their legal rights and ACAS has a statutory duty to promote the resolution of claims which might result in an Employment Tribunal.

ACAS also provides authoritative advice and guidance on employment and work matters to organisations and their employees, through online and telephone channels. ACAS' national and regional advisers help organisations improve their employment practice, as well as solve problems when things go wrong, ACAS training and tailored projects help organisations develop employee engagement and productive working environments.

ACAS uses its insight and knowledge of workplace relations to inform policy development working with Government and wider stakeholders.

ACAS' main services can be grouped as follows (all of which would benefit from inclusion in this economic impact assessment):

Resolution of collective industrial disputes:

- Collective Conciliation
- Collective Arbitration
- Workplace Projects to prevent disputes through improved workplace relations

Resolution of individual rights disputes:

- Individual Conciliation in Employment Tribunal claims (IC)
- Early Conciliation in potential Employment Tribunal claims (EC)

Provision of information and advice on employment rights and obligations:

- Helpline - interactive service delivered by phone
- 'Helpline on-line' tool (a question and answer service on the ACAS website)
- Helpline 'webchat' (another form of helpline advice, using real-time online communication between an ACAS advisor and ACAS users)

Services to provide direct assistance to improve workplace practices:

- Open access training services
- Workplace (bespoke) training services
- Charged Workplace Projects (ACAS advice and facilitation to jointly address workplace problems with management and employee representatives)
- In-depth advice (face-to-face visits or telephone advisory work to address workplace problems)
- Mediation in disputes or relationship breakdowns among individuals or groups in the workplace
- Certificate in Internal Workplace Mediation (CIWM): an accredited five day training course in mediation for delegates to use in their own workplace

Guidance to set standards and support self-help in adopting them:

- Statutory Codes of Practice
- Online non-statutory guidance (found on the ACAS Website)
- On-line tools for self-assessment and education accessed via ACAS website, for example ACAS' e-learning modules and the ACAS Model Workplace (AMWP) tool
- Website and other online communication content (employment relations research and discussion papers and advice and signposting to advice on social media etc) which improve employment relations and are not covered in the above

Waived fee and charged services

The majority of ACAS services are free at the point of use, however since around the year 2000 ACAS has offered charged-for services which recover their costs (they break even

rather than make a profit). These services are Open Access Training and Workplace Training services; those Workplace Projects which are not related to preventing an imminent or existing collective dispute; Certificate in Internal Workplace Mediation (CIWM) Training; and Mediation to help individuals and groups resolve workplace issues or differences (which are outside the Employment Tribunal and collective conciliation systems).

www.ACAS.org.uk

Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority.

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	Contracting Authority Name and address	Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) Euston Tower, 286 Euston Rd, Kings Cross, London NW1 3DP
3.2	Buyer name	Amelia Stroud
3.3	Buyer contact details	Research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Indicative value of the Opportunity	£40,000.00
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	Monday 22 nd October 2018 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Emptoris messaging system	Monday 5 th November 2018 14.00PM
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	Tuesday 6 th November 2018
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	Monday 12 th November 2018 14.00PM
3.10	Date/time Bidders should be available if clarifications are required	Thursday 15 th November 2018 – Friday 16 th November 2018
3.11	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Tuesday 20 th November 2018
3.12	Anticipated Award date	Friday 23 rd November 2018
3.13	Anticipated Contract Start date	Monday 26 ^t November 2018
3.14	Anticipated Contract End date	Thursday 28 th February 2019
3.15	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

1. Introduction

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) wishes to commission one or more independent contractors to conduct a research project supporting a product development work stream. This document details our requirements and invites tenders.

We welcome partnerships between research organisations that ensure that our range of requirements in respect of each particular project are met. However, we will expect to contract with a single lead research organisation.

An independent body, funded by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Acas was established formally by statute in 1976. Today it employs around 850 people with a devolved structure, with offices nationwide, grouped into four Acas regions across Scotland, England and Wales. The Head Office for Acas is based in London and houses a wide range of corporate support functions and policy-makers. The Research, Analytics & Insight team consists of a team of Government Social Researchers and Government Statisticians and is based at the Head Office in London.

Acas aims to improve organisations and working life through better employment relations. Historically, this has centred on dispute resolution in collective disputes and cases of alleged infringement of individual rights. However, Acas has in recent years moved increasingly away from this traditional, celebrated role in dispute resolution, to one that also emphasises preventing workplace problems and encouraging practices that foster productive workplace relations. This includes offering a mix of free and charged-for training to businesses.

2. Aims

As part of a product development initiative, we're exploring the possibility of bundling up training content into larger courses.

We have already conducted research that suggests there is demand for a bundled training course in general terms. We now wish to refine the concept and assess demand. To support this, we are looking to commission a conjoint project.

There are two types of bundling under consideration:

- Bundling together modules on different topics to form a longer course
- Within a topic, bundling a number of training deliverables (eg a day's face-to-face training, a webinar, an elearning module).

Currently we offer simple courses (a single topic delivered through a single mode). Our main questions are whether people want a "larger" course (more topics, more deliverables), and how large is optimal?

Ideally, we would be able to explore both types of bundling within the same conjoint model:

- How many topics to bundle together
- Which topics

- What combination of training deliverables is best for each topic
- What's the reach-maximising course overall

We are keen to hear proposed approaches that will achieve this. However, if this is not feasible, we will need to reform the question, or simplify the problem. (For example: perhaps conducting two separate conjoint studies within a single survey, one looking at the bundling of topics, and one at the bundling of deliverables. Or perhaps you think it's best to have a single model based on the bundling of deliverables and have the same bundles of four topics within any single course. Overall, the bundling of deliverables is a higher priority for the conjoint than a bundling of topics.)

3. Background to the Requirement

Acas offers training to businesses. This is generally charged for, albeit at low price points. We offer training on a large number of topics across the broad space of employment relations, including courses on employment laws/regulations, and softer skills like “having difficult conversations with staff”. Our courses appeal to HR specialists as well as generalists/managers, and to both senior and relatively junior staff.

Currently, we deliver training through a variety of modes:

- Face-to-face training delivered to a group in a central location, taking half a day or a whole day) – this is our main charged-for training product. During the last year, over 13,606 people attended 1,427 open-access training events.
- 45-minute webinars delivered “live” by Acas experts – these are new and currently free
- Elearning (interactive training materials that delegates work through at their own pace online) – these are currently free to access

Further details are available on our website: our [annual report](#), our [training pages](#), our [elearning page](#), and our [webinar page](#).

As part of a product development initiative, we're exploring the possibility of bundling up training content into larger courses.

4. Objectives

OPTIMISATION

We are seeking the product that delivers the greatest reach in any given scenario, but we do need to recover our costs, so a constraint is that we optimise from amongst those courses that are priced to allow us to fully cover our development and delivery costs. For optimisation purposes, “reach” can be assessed using share of choice.

We would also like to explore finding the optimum “impact”. Impact is defined as outcomes, e.g. enabling a firm employing 100 people to increase productivity, reduce management time spent on workplace conflict etc. We invite potential suppliers to discuss

the feasibility of this, and if feasible, to propose a method for incorporating it into the conjoint and simulator design.

All optimisation should be built into the simulator, so we can find the optimum product for any scenario modelled in the simulator. Rather than simply show the single top product, the simulator should show a ranked list of possible products, including their definition in terms of attribute-levels, their revenue, reach and impact.

METHODOLOGY - CONJOINT

We are looking for a choice-based (CBC or ACBC) conjoint project. We haven't been strongly prescriptive beyond this, since we would like potential suppliers to apply their knowledge and recommend approaches.

At the start of the project, to finalise the conjoint's attributes and levels, we would like the supplier to run a workshop with our stakeholders, where we discuss and agree the design of the model. This workshop should be run by a conjoint expert from the supplier.

We have outlined the details of attributes below.

- How many topics (min 1, max 5)
- Which topics
- Which training deliverables (full day F2F training, half day F2F training, webinar, elearning, follow-up info email)
- Does the course award CPD points (maybe binary, maybe number of points)
- Brand of provider (Acas plus maybe three others)
- Price

Please give as much detail as you can on your proposed approach (especially how you propose to structure the conjoint model) and how it will answer our questions.

Please explain your recommended approach to price in your proposal. How we will price the final training product will be very formulaic: a sum of set values per course component.

METHODOLOGY - GENERAL

The conjoint exercise will need to be part of an online survey administered by the supplier. This is likely to contain some questions in addition to the trade-off exercise, including profiling by relevant attitudes, by job role, by industry etc etc.

We would like three sample groups: HR specialists, general line managers, existing Acas customers. We can provide email addresses to be used as a sample frame for the third group. Sample for the first and second groups will need to be provided by the supplier via (eg) online panels.

All groups need to be big enough to analyse alone and be confident about the results. We will want to be able to cross break the simulator using the groups discussed in this section. Please propose sample sizes on this basis.

Ideally, we would also be able to break these further into two age groups: 18-34 and 35+. This is because our objective is to develop a service to maximise reach, including

appealing to new audiences such as younger line managers and HR professionals.

5. Scope

This is a full-service project; the chosen supplier will be required to deliver all elements of delivering the project. This includes but is not necessarily limited to: project planning and management, questionnaire development, online survey scripting, design of conjoint exercise, data collection and provision of sample, data processing, analysis, simulator development, reporting writing, presentation.

Excluded – Acas will provide a sample frame of email addresses of its own customers for this component of the sample.

6. Requirement

DELIVERABLES

This is a full-service project, i.e. the supplier is to deliver all aspects.

In terms of outputs, we require:

- Set-up workshop (described above)
- A report in PowerPoint, presented in person at our London office
- A simulator (some requirements are detailed in the Objectives section above)
- Fully labelled SPSS data file

The report should be insight-led. That is, rather than merely setting out the data, it should focus on the broad meaning and the actions that you recommend on that basis.

The simulator is a market simulator that allows stakeholders to input product specifications in a market context, and output market shares, revenues etc. Please give details of your proposed simulator in your proposal.

The SPSS file is a clean data file in sav format, containing all relevant data from the project, including any metadata such as sample group membership, anonymised and ready to be analysed by a researcher.

7. Timetable

Please include a proposed project timeline in your tender. A suggestion is below, but please include a timeline you believe is efficient but achievable.

Commission	23 Nov
Set-up workshop	w/c 03 Dec
Questionnaire finalised	End Dec
Fieldwork finalised	End Jan

Outputs delivered	End Feb
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YOUR TENDER DOCUMENTATION

In your tender documentation, please complete all forms, including answers to all “ITQ Invitation to Quote Questions”.

Terms and Conditions

Bidders are to note that any requested modifications to the Contracting Authority Terms and Conditions on the grounds of statutory and legal matters only, shall be raised as a formal clarification during the permitted clarification period.

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 and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems 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	SEL3.11	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL3.13	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms Part 1
Commercial	AW4.2	Contract Terms Part 2
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 the Contracting Authority has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.			
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach/Methodology	60%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Staff to Deliver	10%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Project Plan and Timescales	10%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Capability of Staff	For Information Only

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:

$$\text{Score} = \{\text{weighting percentage}\} \times \{\text{bidder's score}\} = 20\% \times 60 = 12$$

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

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

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

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

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

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

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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. Responses received after the date indicated in the ITQ shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay, is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 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 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 the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority'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, concise and ideally generic 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 ensure that the Response and any documents accompanying it are in the English Language, the Contracting Authority reserve the right to disqualify any full or part responses that are not in English.
- 7.12 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

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

DO NOT

- 7.13 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.14 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.
- 7.15 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.16 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact, you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.17 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not offer UK SBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.20 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.21 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.23 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.24 Do not unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority send your response by any way other than via e-sourcing tool. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.25 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.26 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 as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.27 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.28 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.29 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.30 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority. / UKSBS.
- 7.31 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.32 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.33 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 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
- 7.35 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.36 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.37 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.
- 7.38 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.39 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.
- 7.40 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority 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

the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.41 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.
- 7.42 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, the Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority 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.

- 7.43 The Government introduced its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2nd April 2014 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. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

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

The Contracting Authority 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](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)