

Commissioning Letter

BMG Research Ltd
Beech House,
Greenfield Crescent,
Edgbatson,
Birmingham,
United Kingdom,
B15 3BE

Friday, 8th November 2019

Dear [REDACTED],

**BIS Research and Evaluation Framework Agreement – Lot 3
CR19080
Workplace Training Impact Survey**

Thank you for your response to the Specification for the above commission by Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) (the Customer) through the BIS Research and Evaluation Framework dated 2 January 2016 between (1) Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills; and (2) BMG Research Ltd (the Framework Agreement).

Appendix: A. Tender dated Friday, 4th October 2019
Appendix B. Specification for Workplace Training Impact Survey

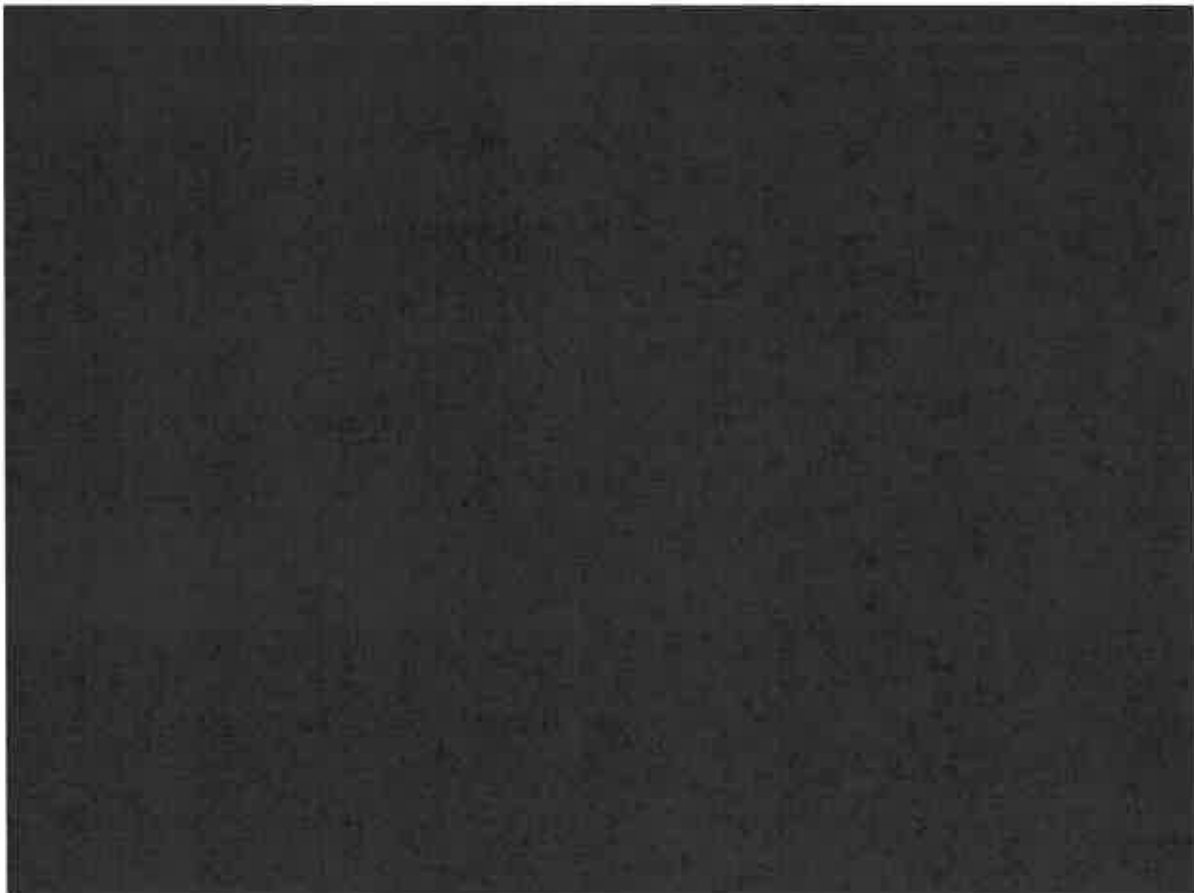
Annex: A. GDPR

Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) accepts your Tender (Appendix B), submitted in response to our Specification (Appendix A).

The Call-Off Terms and Conditions for this Contract are those set out in Schedule 5 to the Framework.

The agreed total charges for this assignment are **£30,000.00** exclusive of VAT which should be added at the prevailing rate. The agreed invoice schedule is as follows:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]



All invoices should be sent to finance@services.uksbs.co.uk or Billingham (UKSBS, Queensway House, West Precinct, Billingham, TS23 2NF).

You are reminded that any Customer Intellectual Property Rights provided in order to perform the Services will remain the property of the Customer. The following deliverables have been agreed:

The Services Commencement Date is Monday, 11th November 2019.

The Completion date is Tuesday, 31st March 2020.

The Contract may be terminated for convenience by giving 30 days' notice in accordance with clause 38 of the Call-off Terms and Conditions.

Your invoice(s) for this work must include the following information:
Commission number: FWRECR19080

The Authorised Representative for this Commission will be [REDACTED] who can be contacted at [REDACTED]

Until the date of publication, findings from all Project outputs shall be treated as confidential. Findings shall not be released to the press or disseminated in any way or at any time prior to publication without approval of the Department.

This clause applies at all times prior to publication of the final report. Where the Contractor wishes to issue a Press Notice or other publicity material containing findings from the

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE (COMMERCIAL)

Project, notification of plans, including timing and drafts of planned releases shall be submitted by the Contractor to the Project Manager at least one week before the intended date of release and before any agreement is made with press or other external audiences, to allow the Department time to comment on factual accuracy. All Press Notices released by the Department or the Contractor shall state the full title of the research report, and include a hyperlink to the Department's research web pages, and any other web pages as relevant, to access the publication/s.

This clause applies at all times prior to publication of the final report and within one month from the date of publication. Where the Contractor wishes to present findings from the Project in the public domain, for example at conferences, seminars, or in journal articles, the Contractor shall notify the Project Manager before any agreement is made with external audiences, to allow the Department time to consider the request. The Contractor shall only present findings that will already be in the public domain at the time of presentation, unless otherwise agreed with the Department.

Congratulations on your success in being selected to undertake this Commission.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

UK Shared Business Services Ltd

BY SIGNING AND RETURNING THIS COMMISSIONING LETTER THE SERVICE PROVIDER AGREES to enter a legally binding contract with the Customer to provide to the Customer the Services specified in this Commissioning Letter and Annexes incorporating the rights and obligations in the Call-off Terms and Conditions set out in the Framework Agreement.

Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

Name and Title	[Redacted]
Signature	[Redacted]
Date	08/11/2019

Signed on behalf of BMG Research Ltd

Name and Title	[Redacted]
Signature	[Redacted]
Date	08/11/2019

Appendix A – Specification for Workplace Training Impact Survey

1. Background

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 900 people with a devolved structure with offices in 11 regions, in addition to Acas National in London. This houses a wide range of corporate support functions and policy makers including its Research, Analysis and Insight (RAI) team, which is staffed with Government Analysts. For more information see www.acas.org.uk/research

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 role in dispute resolution, to one that also emphasises *preventing* workplace problems. Acas training forms a major part of this.

Acas takes two main approaches to training both managers and employees and their representatives: standardised 'Open Access Training' which is publicly-advertised, open to anyone and delivered on Acas premises, and; more bespoke, in-company 'Workplace Training' tailored interventions aimed at facilitating better working. **This proposal concerns only the latter, namely Workplace Training.**

Specifically, Acas wish to commission an independent contractor to undertake an 'impact survey', looking at the medium to long-term impacts of its Workplace Training programme. Unlike our more generic 'Open Access' training offer, 'Workplace Training' is a paid-for programme of events, tailored to organisations' specific training needs, and generally held at the commissioning organisation's premises. Here, Acas adapts its existing course content to meet the requirements of the organisation and aims to involve both management and employees wherever possible.

In addition to undertaking an 'impact survey' of Workplace Training customers (HR commissioners rather than the training delegate themselves), the successful contractor will be required to deliver a straightforward written report and presentation summarising all the data that is collected. We seek detailed proposals from contractors interested in working closely with Acas' Research, Analysis and Insight (RAI) team on this important area of Acas business.

The Workplace Training service was previously evaluated for impact in 2008 and 2013. The forthcoming survey will thus be the third in a series and, as such, it is important that it is conducted in a manner that preserves time-series data to enable benchmarking and historical comparisons. The 2013 report is available at <https://www.acas.org.uk/media/3994/Acas-Workplace-Training-Evaluation-2013/pdf/0514-Acas-Workplace-Training-Evaluation-2013.pdf> and contractors are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with this document before tendering.

In summary, Acas requires a research agency to deliver:

- A telephone survey, utilising Computer-Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI), of approximately 650 of its workplace training customers (i.e. from a sample of all c.1,100 customers for a one-year period), in order to measure the impact and satisfaction of this service. It should seek to achieve a response rate that maintains or improves upon the 57% achieved in the 2013 survey (our target of 650 achieved interviews is predicated on this aim).

- Enhanced analysis of new questions concerning: the relationship between the commissioning process of training, staff involvement, and the bespoke nature of training, with impact and satisfaction, and; the rate at which customers are receiving scheduled follow-ups.
- A full written report, detailing:
 - The methodology of the survey
 - Survey tables and results
 - Analysis, including logistic regression analysis of the relationship between variables, as described in Appendix 1 of the 2013 report.
 - Relevant appendices
- A clean, labelled SPSS dataset of survey responses and syntax files
- A summary presentation and slide deck of the full results, appropriate for a non-technical audience.
- An Infographic detailing the main results.

Overview of the Workplace Training service

Acas utilises its extensive knowledge of employment legislation and employment good practice to provide a national programme of face-to-face Workplace Training. Workplace Training is a fee-paying service which offers bespoke in-house training to British employers.

Workplace Training fits broadly into three areas: 1) employment relations, 2) fair treatment at work and 3) HR and people management issues. Training events are run within individual organisations, to delegates selected by the organisation from among their own staff. Here, existing generic Acas training content is adapted and tailored towards the particular needs of the individual organisation. Delegates can consist of management, employees, or both, from a single organisation. Although the organisation will decide who attends the training from their organisation, Acas aims to involve both representatives of management and employees/their representatives where appropriate. Employers and recognised Trade Unions usually have some input into the development of the course, through a diagnostic meeting to tailor it to their specific needs; however, both the degree of tailoring and management and/or worker input can vary according to the commissioner and their needs.

Workplace Training courses are aimed at diverse audiences who have different levels of knowledge of employment issues but *tend* to take place in larger organisations - just under half of Workplace Training events took place in organisations with more than 250 employees in 2018-19, despite such organisations representing only a small minority of all employers. Often, organisations will require a series of events to be run over a period of time to several groups of delegates and/or on several different topics. This may be to launch new or revised policies within the organisation, to address a particular workplace issue, or to assist staff with the practical application of good employment practice.

In 2018/19, a total of 1,587 Workplace Training events were delivered to 1,131 unique customers. The breakdown by course topic was as follows:

Table 1: Workplace training events by topic 2018/19

Subject of training	2018/19
	Events

	Vol.	%
Absence and stress management	158	10.0%
Bullying and harassment	113	7.1%
Collective bargaining and trade union issues	14	0.9%
Conflict, mediation and change management	134	8.4%
Discipline and grievance	356	22.4%
Employment law	69	4.3%
Equality, diversity and discrimination	144	9.1%
Implementing flexible working arrangements	1	0.1%
Information and consultation	163	10.3%
Managing people	367	23.1%
Payment and grading arrangements	24	1.5%
Recruitment and employing people	1	0.1%
Redundancy	26	1.8%
Other	15	0.9%
Total	1587	

Source: Acas Annual Report and Accounts 2018/19

Workplace Training courses are based upon a national framework and, generally, nationally-produced training materials although, they are 'bespoke' in the sense that they are tailored to the needs of the particular businesses involved. Management Information (covering course specifics and organisation details) is locally entered into Acas' nationally-maintained Management Information database – the 'Events & Advisory System' (EARS). However, the day-to-day organisation and delivery of the training programme is organised through the network of Acas regional offices, allowing it to respond effectively to local needs.

A selection of case studies of our Workplace Training service is available to download from the Acas website – see <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1580>

Overview of existing training evaluation tools/ Information

Acas Workplace Training is evaluated on an ongoing basis through the 'Training Delegate Feedback Survey' (TDFS). Here, very short questionnaires are given out to 'delegates' (attendees) at the end of each course to gauge their immediate views of the event they attended. This includes core questions covering satisfaction, the degree to which the presence of both managers and workers contributed to outcomes, whether the course met its objectives and delegate learning needs, delegated views of the Acas trainers' abilities across several fields, and demographic information. The questionnaire also asks about the effect of having management and employee representatives at the event. Results are compiled and analysed by an external contractor, who produces reports on a quarterly basis, which are then distributed to training managers and other key stakeholders.

Due to the nature of its completion by delegates immediately after attending a Workplace Training event, the TDFS questionnaire cannot capture data on any medium to long-term effects or impacts of Workplace Training. Moreover, delegates actually attending the events have not usually paid for or made the decision to attend the course. In a sense, it follows that they are not the 'customer' of Workplace Training *per se*, and neither are they in the best position to comment broadly on the organisational impacts of the training that was delivered. For this reason, Acas commissioned two impact evaluations of Workplace Training: one in 2008, and a follow-up in 2013, to examine the longer-term impacts and value-for-money assessments of workplace training, by surveying the main commissioning manager who actually procured the training, (rather than the delegates who received the

training). The forthcoming survey will thus be the third in that series.

The 2013 Workplace Training Impact survey

The forthcoming project will largely replicate the methodology of the survey element of the 2013 study, albeit it with some questionnaire refinements. N.B. whereas the 2013 study included a qualitative element (case studies and teledepths), we do **not** seek to replicate this in the forthcoming study, which will comprise a survey only.

The 2013 project was a census of organisations that had completed Workplace Training over a 12-month period; with a few exceptions, interviews took place between three and 15 months after the training event. **We seek to replicate that same core approach in 2019/20 (In this case with a 12-month period, most likely spanning Sept 2018-Sept 2019).**

Telephone interviews were conducted with the main commissioning client or the person with the best overview of the training and its effect on the organisation. In total 404 interviews were conducted during June and July 2013, representing an achieved response rate of 57%. **We seek to maintain or improve upon this rate in 2019/20.**

The interviews asked clients about a range of topics around the training such as why they decided to conduct the training, why they chose Acas to provide the training, to what extent the training met its objectives, the organisational impacts of Workplace Training and their satisfaction with the service.

The report can be read in full, including full CATI script in its appendices, at <https://www.acas.org.uk/media/3994/Acas-Workplace-Training-Evaluation-2013/pdf/0514-Acas-Workplace-Training-Evaluation-2013.pdf>. **Contractors are strongly encouraged to familiarise themselves with this document.**

A full breakdown of response information for 2013 is included in the table below:

Table 2: 2013 evaluation sample disposition

Result	Reason	N	%
Completed		404	57%
Refusal	Company policy	6	1%
	Already interviewed by Acas	0	0%
	No time	0	2%
	No reason given	23	3%
	Repeatedly unavailable (up to 10 times in 2013)	159	23%
Ineligible	Duplicate organization	4	1%
	Thrd party organizing training for other organisations	9	1%
Not contacted	Dead telephone number, or fax number	11	2%
	Could not establish telephone contact (Live telephone line, but no answer or only an answer phone, or a reception who could offer no assistance)	22	3%
	No one able to discuss training (Target respondents had left the organisation, or had moved within the organisation, and were not	68	10%

	<i>contactable)</i>		
	Reason unclear	0	0%
	Total	706	100%

2. Aims and Objectives of the Project

Core measures of Impact

The 2013 evaluation focused on Improvements to organisational efficiencies as a result of Acas workplace training, alongside value for money of the training, and satisfaction metrics similar to those in the Training Delegate Feedback Survey. At the time the survey was commissioned, a major focus for Acas was evaluating the economic impact of its work on the wider national economy, and the cost-benefit ratio of its public funding. The focus of the evaluation reflected this, with organisational efficiencies resulting from Workplace Training identified in the survey and subsequently used as a basis for financial calculations regarding the sums saved or gained by the businesses which participated. This was then used as the basis for generalisation to all businesses who had participated in Acas Workplace training, providing an economic impact figure across the economy as a whole.

The issue of impact (including economic impact, both to the organisations included in the survey and the wider economy) remains relevant, and the principle component of the forthcoming survey should be to replicate the impact measures of the 2013 study, both in order to continue to demonstrate Workplace Training's impact on the businesses who undertake it, and to any demonstrate changes (whether positive or negative) in the impact of the service that has taken place since then.

As in 2013, the forthcoming study should also examine satisfaction with Workplace Training, including if commissioners thought it represented value for money, if they thought training outcomes were achieved, and if they would use it again. It should aim to identify any service limitations or relative weak points with regard to the impact of Workplace Training, to enable Acas to pinpoint areas where there is room for improvement and highlight how deficiencies (however slight) might best be addressed. To this end, the survey should explore among customers how Acas might further improve the Workplace Training service, perhaps building on existing questions in order to shape this evidence.

The survey should also continue to collect characteristics of organisations (and individuals) that commission Workplace Training e.g. sector, industry, organisation size and job role, in order to potentially undertake cross breaks on other factors.

Additional survey measures: New for 2019/20

In addition to the core impact measures carried over from 2013, summarised above and already accounted for by the existing CATI instrument, Acas wishes to examine a range of other issues new for 2019/20, some associated with the Workplace Training commissioning process, as well as decisions made by commissioners, managers, participants, Acas staff, and other agents, during and after the training process – in particular, how decisions (including the decision to choose Workplace Training rather than other interventions in the first place) during the course of Workplace Training are made. These are detailed below.

Contractors should outline how they intend to incorporate these new question areas

into the survey, bearing in mind issues of questionnaire structure and length.

Motivations for choosing Workplace Training

Acas is keen to explore the motivations for organisations choosing Workplace Training, as opposed to our more in-depth/bespoke/joint-working centred 'Workplace Project' offer (essentially, consultancy work to diagnose and address workplace problems), or other intervention offered by Acas or an alternative organisation. The organisation is concerned that existing and potential customers do not realise that it offers services other than Workplace Training, and thus choose training by default.

The 2013 evaluation examined commissioners' motivations for choosing Acas as service provider. For the 2019 evaluation, this should be expanded to include motivations for choosing Workplace Training specifically, as opposed to other Acas or alternative providers' services.

Commissioning Workplace Training

Particularly in the context of dispute resolution in non-unionised environments, Acas is particularly concerned that organisations default to Workplace Training due to the high-bar to co-working and the absence of internal mechanisms to address conflict or pursue other interventions. This raises the issue of who is commissioning the Workplace Training, which may be a single manager, without further group facilitation. Although Acas training representatives design courses through diagnostic sessions with the service commissioner at the workplace in question, anecdotal evidence suggests that this can sometimes be perfunctory. Moreover, it often does not include workers or their representatives – this is, again, particularly likely in non-unionised environments, but can also be the case in organisations with a recognised trade union or other form of employee representation. Acas is concerned that this may lead to the delivery of "off the shelf" training products, when, with worker engagement, the diagnostic process may have discovered different or broader issues, which could have led to a different diagnostic approach and, ultimately, to different impacts.

As such, the evaluation should explore who at the organisation is commissioning the service, alongside their motivations for doing so (see above). This should include how many people were involved in the commissioning and diagnostic process; whether they were management-only or included workers and/or their representatives; their expertise of the diagnostic process; how they arrived at the decision to commission Workplace Training from Acas; and whether they continue to believe that Workplace Training was the correct approach. This may also include analysis of responses to determine, with reference to Acas staff and guidelines, other Acas services that may have been more suited to the organisations' needs. The number and role of commissioners, the presence or absence of union recognition, and whether or not the commissioning process involved workers, or their representatives should form the basis of cross-breaks for analysis of impact, satisfaction, and value-for-money, of Workplace Training.

Bespoke nature of Workplace Training

All Acas Workplace Training events are "tailored" products, in the sense that they are designed and adapted specifically for the needs of the commissioning organisation. Nevertheless, as noted above, the degree of tailoring can depend on who is commissioning the training as well as the level of buy-in from both management and workers – all of which will likely affect the level of impact. As such, the survey should examine the level of tailoring, its relationship to how the project is commissioned (see above) as well as its relationship to impact, satisfaction, and value for money.

"Jointness" of Workplace Training

Related to the issue of worker involvement in the commissioning and diagnostic processes discussed above is joint working during the Workplace Training session. Many, though by no means all, Workplace Training sessions include both management and workers or their representatives in the form of trade union officials etc. Acas is interested in investigating the degree to which these exercises entail *genuinely* joint working, especially as some will have been commissioned by management (or even a single manager) alone without worker input or consultation, and covering issues identified only by the management side.

As in the context of commissioning and diagnostics – detailed above – we are interested in the degree to which the extent of joint working affects impacts, outcomes, satisfaction, and sense of value for money.

Appropriateness of Workplace Training

Due to the method by which many instances of Workplace Training are commissioned (as described in 4.2 and 4.3), and a perception that Workplace Training is the “default” option for some commissioners and trainers, Acas is concerned that some workplaces would have benefited more from an alternative service, such as a Workplace Project. As such we would like to know if, in retrospect, organisations feel they may have been better served by another service, and how this relates to the commissioning and joint-working processes.

Follow-ups to Workplace Training

All commissioners of Workplace Training services are supposed to receive a follow-up call from the trainer around six weeks after the training event. This is intended to ascertain whether training needs have been met, and if any follow-up services are required. Acas would like to know the rate at which this follow-up call is taking place, and, where they have not taken place, whether the customer would have welcomed one

Project commissioned	28 th October 2019
Instruments finalised	29 th November 2019
Fieldwork begins	6 th January 2020
Fieldwork ends	February 2020
Delivery of outputs	31 st March 2020

3. Suggested Methodology

METHODOLOGY

This specification has been written on the assumption that the project methodology will broadly mirror the method that was employed for the quantitative survey element of the 2013 Impact survey.

Acas would like as much backwards comparability of the results as possible in order to track change over time, although some elements around the relationship of commissioning/ diagnostic process to levels of joint (management and workers) involvement were not included in the 2013 survey and will therefore have to be designed from first principles, and without a view to backward compatibility.

Contractors are welcome to put forward methodological alternatives where they see a benefit, but we would not be amenable to an approach that would impact on the ability to meaningfully compare and contrast results to those from previous iterations. On the other hand, new ideas for making the existing basic method work better and, in particular, identification of the key project challenges and suggestions for dealing with these

are actively sought.

The 2013 study included a qualitative element, with case studies of five workplaces that had undertaken Workplace Training plus teledepths. This qualitative element is not required for the forthcoming evaluation and does not need to be costed for.

Sampling frame and strategy

It is important to emphasise that training course delegates themselves are not the subject of this research – firstly, because in many cases it would not be possible to identify or contact them, and secondly, they are not likely to be best placed to provide information on issues of impact and value for money. As such, previous iterations of the survey have sought to interview the commissioner i.e. the person at the organisation who commissioned the training, acting as the key point of contact with Acas. This group should be considered the population of the survey and are noted on the Acas management system as 'Lead Customer Managers'.

Unlike delegates, these commissioners are able to gauge the medium to long-term organisational impacts of Workplace Training on their own workplaces. A proportion of them are also likely to work in an HR function and as such, have expertise in evaluating the impact of training on the behaviour of individuals and changes to wider systems, processes and the organisational culture and employment relations climate. Furthermore, Acas has workable contact details for commissioners (unlike training delegates) and thus we can realistically expect a good or very good response rate (as was borne out in 2013), because they are named contacts who already have working relationships with Acas.

The data held by Acas on 'Lead Customer Managers' for Workplace Training in its management information system (EARS) is summarised in section below. It should be noted that the designated 'Lead Customer Manager' will not in every instance be the best-placed person with whom to discuss the impacts of Workplace Training at the organisation; they might simply be the primary or initial Acas point of contact recorded on Acas' system. We would therefore like contractors to consider how best to avoid/minimise the associated risks, and the remedial course of action to be taken if and when the contact listed on Acas' system is not the relevant one. For instance, a pre-screening contact procedure was used in 2013, to identify whether or not the commissioner was best placed to provide the requisite information on the training's impact, and whether anyone else was better able to provide it. Alternative means of dealing with issue can be considered, but cost implications should be outlined.

For the 2013 survey, the contractor sent all Workplace Training customers on the sample database a hard copy advanced communication letter. A copy of this letter can be seen in Appendix 3, section 2 of the 2013 report linked above. The purpose of this letter was for Acas to be able to introduce the research to respondents before they received a phone call and outline the benefits of their participation in the evaluation. The letter also served to provide contact details for the then research contractor and Acas should respondents have any questions about the evaluation, and to allow respondents to update their contact details, book a session to participate in the research, or suggest an alternative contact for interview if necessary.

These letters also enabled customers to opt out of participation in the survey, if they so desired.

The forthcoming survey should replicate this approach for the purposes of information, contact details, and opt-outs, but, for reasons of speed and efficiency,

using email rather than letter in the first instance (contractors are invited to comment on the appropriateness of this). The email must also link and draw attention to Acas' privacy policy to account for GDPR obligations.

In the 2013 survey, where one training commissioner in an organisation commissioned multiple Workplace Training courses on the same topic, this was deemed to be an overall training programme. Where this was the case, the most recent course was selected to be part of the sample to help maximise the chance of the training commissioner recalling the training. Where organisations had commissioned multiple courses via different training commissioners, or across multiple topics, one course per organisation was randomly selected to be part of the sample. This ensured that each organisation was only included in the sample once and minimised any potential burden to respondents or organisations. **This approach should also be replicated in the forthcoming survey.**

The sampling strategy adopted in the 2013 survey was an entire population sample with no stratification for all eligible organisations for whom data was held on Acas' management information systems that had completed Workplace Training within an agreed time frame (12 months). Organisations were selected to be included in the sample if they had completed a Workplace Training course three to 15 months before the time of interviewing. This strategy yielded a response rate of 57%, providing the study with 404 computer aided telephone interviews (CATI).

This strategy was designed to allow measurement of the development of training impact over time and our assumption is that an equivalent sampling strategy will be preferred in 2019, largely to ensure backwards comparability of the results in order to track change. Nonetheless contractors are welcome to propose alternatives that they believe would improve the quality of the study.

It is worth noting that Acas ran many more Workplace Training events (n=1587, albeit spread across 1,131 customers) in 2018-19 than during the same period in the run-up to the 2013 survey (955), and thus the number of events within the scope of this survey is larger than previously. Despite this, Acas wishes to maintain a similar response rate for this survey, in order to facilitate comparability with previous surveys. We therefore require that the contractor provides us with a detailed programme for how it intends to achieve a response rate that maintains or else improves on the 57% achieved in 2013, how it proposes to deal with any gaps in the sample frame, issues of organisations that have undertaken multiple Workplace Training Events (and the associated issue of ascertaining the relevant contact for each event), and its cost implications.

Please cost on the assumption of a 12-month sample extract (spanning Sept 2018-Sept 2019, most likely) comprising c.1,100 customers (working on the basis that 2018-19 volumes are maintained). If a 57% response rate was again achieved, then this would translate to c.650 interviews. Please comment on the suitability of this sample size and the possibility of taking fewer than 12 months' cases as our start point, in order to arrive at a reduced achieved sample size of, for instance, 500 interviews (e.g. by taking 10 months' worth of cases only – please comment on the efficiencies that this would bring about and also appropriateness of this idea methodologically, specifically whether it risks introducing unwanted seasonal effects).

Acas management information

Acas can provide a database extract listing the following information for each Workplace Training event. Based on service volumes for 2018-19, we expect the sample of records to comprise approximately 1,600 cases, featuring 1,100 unique customers for surveying, albeit these numbers may shift slightly according to the particular 12-month period that is selected for the survey (most likely October 2018 – September 2019, in the event that fieldwork starts January 2020 and we again seek to ensure at least a three-month lag for

the most recent cases included):

- *Organisation level*: Approximate size, business activity, sector, postal address.
- *'Lead customer manager' level*: Name, position, telephone number, email¹.
- *Workplace Training event level*: Date, topic, duration, whether training was jointly attended or attended by management only, Acas office and trainer name (and comprehensive contact info).

Ensuring a complete and accurate record of all the contact information needed to conduct the survey is critical to ensuring sufficiently-high response rates to enable statistically-significant and generalizable findings. Experience has shown that data downloaded from Acas management information systems will not be complete in all respects: for instance, it may be that contact telephone numbers and job titles were not recorded for a number of Workplace Training events. **We would therefore like bidders to consider and provide details on how best to avoid/minimise this risk.**

Research Instruments

As it is envisaged that the project will likely employ a very similar methodological approach to the previous Acas Workplace Training Impact survey; contractors are encouraged to use the CATI script from the 2013 Workplace Training impact survey (<https://www.acas.org.uk/media/3994/Acas-Workplace-Training-Evaluation-2013/pdf/0514-Acas-Workplace-Training-Evaluation-2013.pdf> Appendix 3 pp.172-188) as a template for their proposed research instruments. Contractors are invited to amend the script to address the project aims and objectives for 2019. Contractors are also invited to suggest areas of improvement appropriate to their proposed methodology and in line with the project aims and objectives. The final survey instrument will be produced on a collaborative basis through a design workshop, with members of both the contractors' and Acas' research teams, held at Acas' premises.

The 2013 evaluation included a pilot study of 20 interviews to examine the impact of revised questions on flow, intelligibility and length of the questionnaire. **Contractors should cost-in an equivalent pilot study of this kind, but also discuss the cost and practical implications of proceeding without one.**

DATA PROCESSING

We would like details of how contractors propose to ensure the confidentiality of customer information and how they intend to process responses (data entry, scanning, coding open questions, data cleaning etc.) and how this conforms to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018, which incorporated the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) into UK.

In particular, we will require the contractor to detail its policies on how it stores, transfers and analyses data; deals with the right of participants to access information held about them (including Subject Access Requests); guards against data breaches; and what will happen in the event of a data breach, including reporting policies. In each case, the

¹ Looking at the 1,131 customers across 2018/19 as a guide, email addresses and telephone numbers are provided in almost 100% of cases, albeit some manual logic checks will be required where utilising these details (to ensure emails are correctly formatted and telephone numbers are not missing leading digits etc.).

contractor should also demonstrate how these policies conform to GDPR. Additionally, the contractor should provide evidence of its procedures for documenting why the information is being held and processed, how long it is being kept, and technical security measures in place and should supply details of its data protection officer, if applicable.

The contractor should also demonstrate that its procedures and policies are congruent with Acas' Privacy and data protection statement, found at: <https://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1922>

Contractors should note and make any relevant observations in respect of the fact that collection and processing of the data for this survey will be done on two lawful bases:

- For 'ordinary' personal data – *'Task in the Public Interest' (Article 6(1)(e) GDPR) and 'the exercise of a function of the Crown...' (Section 8(d) DPA 2018)*
- For any 'special category' personal data – *'reasons of substantial public interest' (Article 9(2)(g) GDPR) and 'the exercise of a function of the Crown...' (Section 6(2)(b) DPA 2018)*

These two lawful bases are based on Acas' statutory duty to "promote the improvement of industrial relations" (TULRA).

4. Deliverables

OUTPUTS REQUIRED

For any survey conducted a full, clean and clearly labelled **dataset and syntax files** are essential to us. The project will not be seen as complete and the final payment will not be made until we have a dataset/dataset which meet these requirements. The dataset may need to be linked to Management Information data.

Technical Report This brief report (2-5 pages) should cover all stages of the process in detail. It should accurately demonstrate the method and reliability of the evaluation but also describe what went well and where any problems occurred.

Report Contractors will be required to provide a full detailed report outlining all relevant findings. For the 2013 survey, this ran to 157 pages (87 pages discounting qualitative content), plus appendices.

We envisage a report of approximately 30,000 words, excluding appendices. It should provide an executive summary, for a non-technical readership, highlighting the key points, each of which should be clearly referenced to the relevant paragraphs in the main text. Tables and charts should be included where they add to the text. Larger tables should be put in an appendix and be clearly labelled and referenced from the main text. Full details of the method used should be included in the appendix. We will agree the detailed structure for the report once methods have been agreed and the evaluation is underway, although it would be useful to have an indication of the kind of format that the contractor envisages (e.g. whether it will be based on themes or on perspectives of different types of respondents).

Analysis of the quantitative data from the telephone interviews in 2013 included two bivariate logistic regression models to help to explore the impact of other variables on overall satisfaction, and whether the main objective of the training was achieved. This should be undertaken for the forthcoming survey, and the results included in the report.

Presentation A summary PowerPoint presentation, to be presented at Acas premises to key internal stakeholders, outlining all the main findings and recommendations. This presentation should be understandable by a non-technical audience and should include appropriate visualisations to communicate data and findings.

Infographic Contractors should also cost for an infographic aimed at non-technical audiences, to show 'at a glance' the principle research findings in an attractive, intuitive visual format. An example of an Acas research infographic can be seen at <https://www.acas.org.uk/media/6101/Infographic---Acas-digital-advice-evaluation-2018/pdf/Infographic - Acas digital advice evaluation 20181.pdf> and something broadly equivalent is envisaged.

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A detailed and realistic timetable should also be included in the proposal. A draft timetable is set out below; please amend this in the way you feel will best deliver our requirements – however, contractors should confirm that they will be able to complete the project by the end of the financial year.