

Commissioning Letter

SQW Limited
2nd Floor
14-15 Mandela Street
London
NM1 0DU

Wednesday, 15 July 2020

Dear Sirs

BEIS Research and Evaluation Framework Agreement – Lot 5

Research into the Recognition of Professional Qualifications (RPQ) in developed economies globally and the benefits that accrue from recognition in those countries.

CR20074

Thank you for your response to the Specification for the above commission by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) (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) SQW Limited (the Framework Agreement).

Appendix A: Specification

Appendix B: Bid Response

This contract shall commence on 15th July 2020 and shall end on 30th September 2020.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy accepts your Tender (Appendix B), submitted in response to our Specification (Appendix A). SQW Limited shall undertake the services in alignment with the specification in Appendix A and their bid submitted in Appendix B.

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 £83,460.00 exclusive of VAT which should be added at the prevailing rate. This contract shall not exceed £83,460.00 exclusive of VAT.

The invoice schedule will be set at relevant milestones and agreed at the inception meeting with the right to give notice to instruct the other tasks at 2 weeks notice.

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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 15th July 2020.

The Completion date is 30th September 2020.

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

Commission number: CR20074

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 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


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.

Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

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Name and Title	
Signature	
Date	15 July 2020

Signed on behalf of SQW Limited

Name and Title	
Signature	
Date	15 July 2020

- Appendix A Specification

At the end of the Transition Period, the UK will be no longer subject to EU regulations in relation to regulation of professions and RPQ. TINS is reviewing the domestic regulatory landscape, to determine the optimal UK approach to legislation in this area. There is a possibility that legislation will be introduced in September to begin to establish a domestic legal framework. To support this work and timeline, TINS requires large volumes of desk research (using publicly available information, impact assessments and academic studies), plus some engagement with stakeholder groups (alongside members of the Team), on the following topics:

- Desk research to identify and critically assess the approaches to professional regulation in different countries and how these compare with the UK's approach. For example, to determine the extent to which various professions are regulated in different EEA states and other developed economies;
- Economic analysis and analysis of other public policy outcomes in the UK and other countries to determine the effectiveness of professional regulation in various priority sectors. For example, a comparison of the economic benefits and public policy benefits for a given set of professions between countries in which those professions are regulated and countries in which they are not;
- Develop a detailed typology of the UK's regulatory landscape for regulated professions to give a more sophisticated view of the type, risk and scale of professions regulated, types of regulatory intervention and characteristics of regulators ;
- Develop a set of case studies about the UK's current approach to regulated professions. This would include the extent to which access to the profession is exclusionary, and whether entry is proportional to public safety objectives.
- Horizon scanning to identify potential trade barriers arising in the UK internal market due to differences in professional regulation between the UK nations;
- Cross-sectoral analysis of workforce supply issues, and identification of priority inbound/outbound professional qualification routes;
- Analysing data and gathering analysis to support the preparation of impact assessments and other documentation.

The professional regulation landscape is broad, covering around 100 professions in the UK. We need to sift lots of information and data quickly to identify trends to support the development of principles for professional regulation, and to identify specific opportunities for reform. Professions and economies to prioritise for research will be agreed between the supplier and the MRPQ team through regular MRPQ oversight.

The output analysis and recommendations would include but not be limited to:

- A detailed typology and analysis of the UK's regulatory landscape for professional qualifications, including mapping international recognition routes (week 3)
- A review of international approaches to professional regulation and recognition of overseas qualifications (week 3)

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- A set of case studies of the effectiveness of professional regulation in the UK, and comparison with international approaches (end project)
- Prioritisation of international recognition routes (by professions), based on a range of factors including workforce supply (end project)
- Ad hoc support to the team to provide analysis to support documentation

- **Appendix B – Tender Response**

Introduction

SQW is pleased to submit this short proposal to BEIS to undertake *'research into the Recognition of Professional Qualifications on developed economies globally and the benefits that accrue from recognition in those countries'*. This research is expected to support the ongoing work of the Trade and Investment Negotiations Services (TINS) Team in this area. Following the Brexit Transition Period, the UK will not be subject to EU commitments relating to the regulation of professions and Recognition of Professional Qualifications (RPQ). The TINS Team is reviewing the UK regulatory landscape for professional qualifications, to determine the "optimal" UK approach and potentially inform forthcoming legislation.

We summarise below our work plan, our proposed study team for delivering the work, and the resource required to complete the study on time in September 2020. We wish to be flexible in our approach, so we will be happy to discuss and agree any changes to our proposal.

Work plan

Our proposed work plan is split into three phases and the tasks set out below.

Phase 1: Scoping and research design

- **Task 1:** Kick-off meeting with the client via video call to discuss study objectives, scope, key risks, timings etc. Key actions and decisions will be summarised in a follow-up meeting note
 - As indicated in the Specification, the professions and economies to prioritise for research will be agreed with the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications (MRPQ) team
- **Task 2:** Scoping discussions with three BEIS staff by telephone to explore the priorities for the study and issues to consider in undertaking the research
- **Task 3:** Design draft research templates for the desk review including a typology of the UK's regulatory landscape for professional qualifications

- The typology could cover, size and scale, sector, inflow and exits to the profession, EU versus non-EU.
- **Task 4:** Design and distribute short online survey of professional bodies – sent to around 100 professions in the UK
 - The survey will allow us to collect quantitative and qualitative data/information and help inform subsequent tasks in Phase 2 e.g. Horizon Scanning (see below)
 - The survey will also aim to identify priority professional qualification routes
 - We assume BEIS will be able to assist in providing relevant contact details within professional bodies and with distributing the survey
- **Task 5:** Client meeting to discuss and finalise research tools (video call).

Phase 2: Desk review and fieldwork

- **Task 6:** Desk review of approaches to professional regulations in the UK and selected developed economies
 - This will focus on professions agreed with the client at the inception/ scoping stage
 - We envisage this will cover c. 20 professions of interest to the client (based on e.g. size, demand for services, strategic importance) and will include both EU and non-EU countries
- **Task 7:** Collate evidence on economic and other benefits to determine the effectiveness of professional regulations in priority sectors
- **Task 8:** Analysis of emerging findings from Phase 1 and tasks undertaken in Phase 2
- **Task 9:** Draft emerging findings as a summary note or PowerPoint format for client review
- **Task 10:** Client meeting to discuss emerging findings via video call
- **Task 11:** Horizon scanning to identify potential trade barriers (incl. stakeholder engagement)
 - This will cover trade barriers in the UK internal market due to the differences in professional regulation between the UK nations (e.g. solicitors qualified in English and/or Scots law)
- **Task 12:** Stakeholder interviews help inform and test findings (e.g. relating to Tasks 6, 7, 11)

- We propose to undertake 10 stakeholder interviews by telephone
- The list of stakeholders will be agreed with the client
- **Task 13:** Case studies on the effectiveness of professional regulation in the UK and international comparators
 - We propose to undertake 10 case studies (allocated 3 days per case)
 - The selection of case studies will partly be informed by the typology developed in Phase 1 above and the emerging findings in Phase 2, and discussion with the client
 - Potential examples of cases include legislation backed versus no legislation backed professional regulations; 'portable' versus 'non-portable' qualifications
 - The write-ups will be to a consistent and agreed structure – covering the same core questions across all the cases (helping to easily draw out and compare key findings) – and specific aspects relating to the individual cases
 - The write-ups will be c. 2-3 pages in length.

Phase 3: Analysis and triangulation of evidence and reporting

- **Task 14:** Analysis and triangulation of all the research findings from the different research strands - the assessment will be made against the agreed study objectives and scope
- **Task 15:** Prepare draft final report to an agreed structure, addressing the study objectives
- **Task 16:** Final client meeting via video conference to discuss report findings
- **Task 17:** Prepare final report incorporating feedback from the client

In addition, we will be pleased to provide ad hoc support to the client team e.g. to provide analysis to support documentation. We will want to discuss and agree this with the client.

Timings

The study timescales identified in the Specification are challenging – around two months starting in mid-July. We will discuss and agree with the client the timings of deliverables. At this stage, we propose the key milestones below.

- **Inception meeting early in week commencing 13th July**
- **Client meeting to discuss and finalise research tools by end of July**
- **Draft emerging findings summary note/PowerPoint and meeting by mid-August**
- **Draft report on 11th September and final report by end of September.**

Study Team

We have put forward an experienced and skilled team to deliver this work. [REDACTED] will be **Project Director** and have overall responsibility for the study direction and all outputs, and [REDACTED] will be **Project Manager** with responsibility for day-to-day management and client liaison. They will be supported by [REDACTED], **Managing Director of SQW**. He will provide expert input and guidance including drawing on his current work for the Architects Registration Board (ARB) on the regulation of architects internationally and of other professions in the UK. Further research support will be from four SQW consultants and **External Expert [REDACTED]**, Honorary Professor at Aston University and the former CEO of international qualifying and accreditation body, the Institution of Chemical Engineers. Brief profiles of key team members are presented below - further details are available on request.

[REDACTED] (**Project Director**) is an SQW Director and economist specialising in innovation, business growth, and enterprise development. [REDACTED] has extensive experience of economic and policy research, evaluation and impact assessment relating to: business formation and growth, skills development, trade and investment, and regulations. [REDACTED] has delivered assignments for a diverse set of clients, including: UKRI, Innovate UK, BEIS, DCMS, UKRI, British Business Bank, Be the Business, and the European Commission. [REDACTED] is currently directing our Sharing in Growth programme for BEIS and also managed our recent Aerospace Technology Institute grant funding evaluation for BEIS. He is currently directing two impact evaluations of mentoring programmes focussing on skills development to improve productivity for Be the Business. He has also managed our research to establish British Standards Institution as a policy delivery partner for UK Government departments, and also managed our work developing Skills Investment Plans for the chemicals and engineering sectors in Scotland. Through his consultancy work, [REDACTED] has had exposure to and worked with a range of professional bodies across a range of sectors.

██████████ (Project Manager) has over 18 years' experience working in social research, conducting programme evaluations, scoping studies and large-scale surveys. At SQW, ██████████ has managed various evaluation projects with a particular focus on quality of teaching, skills development and education policy areas. Some examples of her work include our current evaluation of the Ipswich Opportunity Area Workforce Development Programme (for Suffolk County Council), our previous evaluation of the London Schools Excellence fund (for the GLA) and our previous evaluations of the UK Futures Programme (for the UK Commission for Employment and Skills). ██████████ has extensive experience in research and evaluation projects working with mixed- methods, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, conducting in-depth interviews, observations and focus groups, as well as managing large scale surveys with general and professional populations, designing questionnaires, carrying out systematic literature reviews, and overseeing processes in different modes.

██████████ (Expert Advisor) has been SQW's Managing Director for seven years and has worked for the firm for over 20 years. He is an experienced consultant, with a long track record in strategy development and evaluation research projects covering education and skills development across a broad range of age groups and sectors. He has worked for a wide range of clients including national government and its agencies, and regional and local development organisations. ██████████ has led many projects on skills, qualifications and related issues including for Skills Development Scotland, BEIS, UKCES, SQA, the Scottish and Welsh Governments, the Government Equalities Office and several sector bodies. He is currently directing our study for the Architects Registration Board (ARB) on the regulation of architects. Through this work he brings a range of skills in research design, stakeholder engagement and facilitation, which will be required for this assignment.

██████████ (External Expert) is currently an Honorary Professor at Aston University and the former CEO of a major international qualifying and accreditation body, the Institution of Chemical Engineers. He has previously Chaired the committee representing heads of all the UK-based professional engineering institutions, been the joint General Secretary of two European professional federations and a Board member of Engineering UK. ██████████ has also led the Technology and Innovation Management practice at ██████████, where he specialised in innovation and regional economic development. Within this role he led

some 40+ assignments for a range of clients in the UK and internationally, including BEIS's precursors, all the RDAs and devolved administrations. He was deputy Chair of Advantage West Midlands up to its closure in 2012, and subsequently led on skills supply for the Innovation Alliance for the West Midlands. International professional mobility and skills supply, demand and access remain among his key fields of interest.

Further research support will be provided by SQW staff: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] We can also draw on further research resource as required to meet the study objectives within the required timescales.

Project management

SQW operates a well-established Quality Policy which aims to provide the highest standards of professional work, fully achieving the objectives agreed with the clients. Our Quality Management System has been assessed and certified, by SGS, as meeting the requirements of the ISO9001:2015 international standard, with certificate number GB14/92189. Our approach to project management, and ensuring effective communications throughout the study, involves a number of key steps: internal team briefings on roles/responsibilities, study requirements, deadlines etc.; regular internal monitoring of progress against milestones by the Project Manager; frequent informal and formal liaison with the client-side project manager, by email and phone, to provide updates on progress against specific tasks and milestones, key risks and any issues to be resolved.

Risk management

Our approach to risk management will involve a number of key steps: (1) setting up a 'live' risk register that will be monitored and reported as part of our regular update with the client; (2) we will regularly review and communicate progress on our work plan with the client - identifying any tasks which may be taking longer than expected and/or that pose specific challenges in terms of design and implementation; (3) we will try to mitigate any potential risks by drawing on the experience and expertise of our large and capable study team; (4) given the short-term nature of the study, we will ensure consistency of analysis by having all evidence being properly sourced, draft outputs checked and proofed; (5) the quality assurance of project outputs will be critical – the Project Director will input

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to and quality assure every formal output to the client, including all reports, research tools and presentations. Finally, part of our offer that will be important for this work includes resilience for remote working – our strong IT capabilities including use of Microsoft Teams for communication e.g. videoconferencing.

Study resourcing and tasks

Our fee for undertaking the work described in this proposal will be

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

This brings the total budget to £83,460 excluding VAT. Our invoices will include VAT at the prevailing rate, and the invoice schedule will be agreed with the client on commissioning.



Figure 1: Breakdown of resourcing





