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Planning

Provision of Design, Development and Maintenance of the Test of Competence

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2022/S 000-030010

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-037bdc

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL

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Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Nursing and Midwifery Council

UK

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/>

Buyer's address

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/>

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Other type

UK Health Regulator

I.5) Main activity

Health

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Provision of Design, Development and Maintenance of the Test of Competence

Reference number

C1097

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 80490000 - Operation of an educational centre

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

We are the independent regulator for nurses and midwives in the UK, and nursing associates in England.

Our vision is safe, effective and kind nursing and midwifery that improves everyone's health and wellbeing.

As the independent regulator of more than 758,000 nursing and midwifery professionals, we have an important role to play in making this a reality.

Our core role is to regulate. First, we promote high education and professional standards for nurses and midwives across the UK, and nursing associates in England. Second, we maintain the register of professionals eligible to practise. Third, we investigate concerns about nurses, midwives and nursing associates - something that affects less than one percent of professionals each year. We believe in giving professionals the chance to address concerns, but we'll always take action when needed.

To regulate well, we support our professions and the public. We create resources and guidance that are useful throughout people's careers, helping them to deliver our standards in practice and address new challenges. We also support people involved in our investigations, and we're increasing our visibility so people feel engaged and empowered to shape our work.

Regulating and supporting our professions allows us to influence health and social care. We share intelligence from our regulatory activities and work with our suppliers to support workforce planning and sector-wide decision making. We use our voice to speak up for a healthy and inclusive working environment for our professions.

The NMC are excited to announce our intention to go to market for our future test design and development supplier that can meet the existing and future needs for our test of competence. A crucial part of this contract will be for our newly appointed supplier to offer both educational and clinical services either through their organisation or through those that they contract with

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £1,000,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 80000000 - Education and training services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

The over-arching objective of the NMC in exercising its functions is the protection of the public. The principal functions of the NMC are to establish the standards of education, training, conduct and performance for nurses, midwives and nursing associates and to ensure the maintenance of those standards. This is to ensure that everyone we register can deliver high quality healthcare throughout their careers.

The test of competence is designed to assess a candidate's ability to meet the NMC's standards of proficiency and to practise safely, effectively and in accordance with the NMC's Code of Conduct (the 'Code').

The test currently comprises two elements. The first is a computer-based test (the 'CBT') which assesses a candidate's clinical and numerical knowledge through two multiple choice test papers. The second element is the objective structured clinical examination (the 'OSCE') which is a practical, simulated assessment of the candidate's practical clinical skills and knowledge.

Whilst there are two elements to the test of competence, the test itself should be seen as a single, holistic test. Both parts of the test of competence are designed and developed in conjunction with each other so that the full breadth and depth of a candidate's skills, knowledge, experience and training are tested efficiently and effectively.

The NMC regularly reviews and assesses the format and content of the test of competence to ensure that it remains relevant and appropriate. We are committed to working with the appointed specialist to maintain the test and its future development.

Who can sit the Test of competence

For applicants to the nursing or midwifery part of the register who were trained outside of the EU or the EEA, the NMC will ask candidates to demonstrate that they hold a qualification that has or could lead to registration in the candidate's home country, which is referred to as our eligibility criteria. As part of our registration process, the candidate is required to sit test of competence to demonstrate that they have the requisite standard of proficiency for admission to the nursing or midwifery part of the register.

Those who were trained in the UK but who did not register their qualification with the NMC within five years of award may also choose to complete the test of competence. In addition, the NMC also requires those wishing to return to the register after a period of absence, to complete a test of competence to demonstrate they are competent and safe to practise or alternatively complete a return to practise programme.

Satisfactory completion of the test of competence provides the NMC with objective evidence that an applicant has the standard of proficiency. Those who pass the test of competence will be deemed to have met one of the requirements for admission or readmission to the NMC's register. Consequently, it is imperative that the quality of the test and its consistent delivery and assessment are of the highest standard.

The Code contains the professional standards that NMC registered nurses, midwives and nursing associates must uphold. All registered nurses, midwives and nursing associates must act in line with the Code and while the values and principles set out in the Code may be interpreted in a range of different practice settings, they are not negotiable or discretionary.

More information covering the Code can be found here:

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/code/>

There are now seven platforms within the new standards of proficiency for registered nurses with two skills and procedure annexes (A and B). The standards of proficiency for registered nurses were launched in May 2018 and came into effect on 28 January 2019. These standards can be found here: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-nurses/standards-of-proficiency-for-registered-nurses/>

These standards of proficiency apply to all four fields of nursing practice. However, we recognise that there is an additional depth of knowledge and skills necessary for the applicant's intended field of practice.

The standards of proficiency for nursing associates were agreed in September 2018. These standards align to the new standards of proficiency for registered nurses and allow for smooth progression for those nursing associates who want to become nurses in the future. These will also make it easy to see the distinctions between the nursing and nursing associate roles.

The nursing associate standards of proficiency can be found on our website here: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/standards-for-nursing-associates/>

Our midwifery standards were updated in 2020, and you can find more details about our midwifery standards here: Standards of proficiency for midwives - The Nursing and Midwifery Council (<https://www.nmc.org.uk>)

The Supplier shall at all times ensure that the test of competence is designed and able to be delivered in such a way as to always comply with any applicable anti-discrimination legislation and with the NMC's Equality and Diversity "Valuing Diversity" Policy (which may be amended from time to time).

Important:

The anticipated contract value for the three-year term is estimated at £1,000,000.

II.2.14) Additional information

Please note no tender documents have been issued at this stage - the functional requirements and capability specification will be published in the future Invitation to Tender documents with the Find a Tender Contract Notice.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council has initiated a Market Engagement exercise and will be issuing the Market Engagement Questionnaire, an information gathering exercise by the NMC to inform the development of their approach prior to undertaking a potential new competitive procurement exercise for the Provision of Design, Development and Maintenance of the Test of Competence.

Responses to the Questionnaire are to be completed electronically using the NMC e-Sourcing portal ('e-Sourcing Portal')

For more information about this opportunity, please visit the Atamis e-Sourcing portal at <https://nmcprocurementportal.force.com/s/Welcome>

Please note the following project name and reference number allocated to this procurement process ('Procurement') within the e-Sourcing Portal.

Project Name: Market Engagement - Provision of Design, Development and Maintenance of the Test of Competence.

Project Reference: C1097

Before completing their Questionnaire, potential bidders should ensure that the email address that has been used to register will be checked regularly as the e-Sourcing Portal will generate automatic notifications to the registered email address wherever there are updates, changes or messages in relation to this Market Engagement exercise. Bidders should also check that their organisation details are correct and up to date.

For an opportunity to take part in this procurement exercise please register with our free tendering portal at <https://nmcprocurementportal.force.com/s/Welcome>. You will need to complete a short form to register, providing company details, categories you can provide services for, and user details including an email address that will be used as your login details.

If you choose to opt in, the Market Engagement Questionnaire will be available to you in week commencing 31 October 2022 via our Atamis tendering portal which needs to be completed and returned via portal by midday 15 November 2022. (Please make sure you check regularly our e-sourcing portal for Find opportunities using the abovementioned project reference).

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

10 January 2023

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: No

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

The NMC reserves the right to not progress to a full potential procurement exercise as a result of this PIN until they are fully ready to do so which will be communicated to the marketplace by the issuing of the formal Contract Notice which at this stage is estimated to be published in January 2023

The procurement will use the Atamis e-sourcing portal
<https://nmcprocurementportal.force.com/s/Welcome>