

### Service Specification – On-Demand Student Transport

Weston College Group are inviting tenders for the following services:

Contractor Name: **Weston College Group On-Demand Student Transport**

Service Description	Term of SLA
Weston College is currently seeking rate cards from suppliers for on-demand student transport services. This service is essential for accommodating ad-hoc requests as trips and excursions are planned. We are interested in establishing reliable partnerships to ensure timely and safe transportation solutions that meet our students' needs.  <b>Contract value circa. £30,000</b>	<b>2 years + 1 year</b>

### Timeframe for tender process:

Process stage:	Proposed dates:
Specification Published	16/07/2025
Expression of Interest and Clarification period	16/07/2025 – 12/08/2025
Tender submission deadline	19/08/2025
Evaluation period	20/08/2025 – 26/08/2025
Formal feedback issued and successful supplier notified.	27/08/2025
10-Day stand still period	28/08/2025-10/09/2025
SLA Award Notification	11/09/2025
SLA commencement date	29/09/2025

**\*Note:** These dates are subject to change.

## **Specification**

### **1. Organisation Overview**

Weston College Group is a college of further and higher education providing education and vocational training to nearly 30,000 learners across the country. The college puts the learner first and is entrepreneurial in its approach and innovative in its thinking. The college is ambitious and aspirational and is responsive to the needs of students, staff, businesses, and the community.

The SLA will commence on **29/09/2025** for a term of **2 years + 1 year**.

The successful Contractor will be required to provide safe transport services for our learners and colleagues.

We invite bidders to submit proposals that outline their services based on a rate card pricing model basis that provides transparent, itemised rates, allowing the college to effectively plan and manage transport expenditure while ensuring flexibility in service provision.

The tender seeks to appoint a Contractor whose expertise, initiative, and innovative approach will be integral to the delivery of high-quality transport services. The appointed provider will be expected to demonstrate a strong track record in service delivery within the education sector. The successful Contractor should also bring forward proposals that reflect a commitment to innovation, continuous improvement, and the adoption of environmentally responsible practices.

In line with Weston College's sustainability objectives, bidders are encouraged to outline how their service delivery model and organisational operations will contribute to reducing carbon emissions and supporting the College's environmental policies throughout the SLA term.

The successful Contractor(s) must hold all relevant professional qualifications, regulatory approvals, and statutory certifications required to provide transport services within the UK education sector at the time of tender submission, ensuring they are fully authorised and compliant to operate on behalf of the Weston College Group.

Full details in relation to Weston College may be obtained by visiting:  
<https://www.weston.ac.uk/>

## **2. Scope**

Weston College is seeking suppliers to provide flexible, on-demand student transport services to support a wide range of local, regional and national educational trips, enrichment activities, and curriculum-linked excursions. There is no fixed transport schedule or annual plan; instead, requirements will arise on an ad-hoc basis, often with little advance notice. These transport needs will be driven by the demands of the curriculum and may not be confirmed weeks or even months in advance.

The service must therefore be highly responsive and adaptable, with the capacity to accommodate varying journey lengths, group sizes, and destination types. This includes local and regional travel, and occasionally, longer-distance trips. Reliability, safety, and the ability to respond quickly to booking requests are crucial.

At the same time, the College is committed to securing services that represent good value for money. Suppliers must be able to provide competitive pricing while maintaining high standards of service, ensuring that trips are delivered smoothly, efficiently, and in line with Weston College's commitment to quality education and student experience.

## **3. Service Standards**

### **3.1 Fleet**

The Supplier(s) will be required to have access to a fleet of vehicles capable of servicing the area the college requirements. This can range between a 16-seater minibus to a 75/100-seater double decker coach. The vehicles used on this Contract must always comply fully with transport regulations. The College(s) wish to see evidence that the Supplier is conforming to current requirements for public transport providers.

The Supplier must have sufficient capacity within their fleet to ensure that any unplanned instances i.e., vehicle breakdowns can be covered with replacement vehicles to minimise disruption to the service delivery. The College have an expectation that the Suppliers will be able to evidence procedures which are in place to detail the steps undertaken should an unplanned incident occur whilst on duty.

Supplier(s) should ensure that all users of the service have access to a forward-facing seat on all buses whilst travelling and no passengers are standing. All vehicles must conform to the transport regulations in relation to the provision of seat belts where it is deemed necessary for the type of vehicle used on the Contract. All seats are required to have seat belts on all vehicles across all routes.

The College(s) are looking for vehicles to be clean and tidy in appearance and maintained to a high standard. Should the College become aware of vehicles being used that do not meet the College's required standard the College reserve the right to request a replacement vehicle. Should the College be required to take this action the Supplier(s) will be issued with a written warning. Failure to comply with the warning may result in the SLA being terminated.

Preference will be given to tenders that can guarantee that the whole fleet used to delivery this service meets Euro 6 emission standards. We would encourage all parties to detail how they prioritise sustainable and climate friendly travel as part of their tender submission.

The learners' perception of the condition of the vehicles and the service level of the Driver(s) is imperative to the College. The learners' opinion of the service will be gained throughout the year and feedback will be provided to the Contractor during SLA review meetings.

Please specify in your tender response whether CCTV is embedded/standard in your vehicles.

### **3.2 Drivers**

Drivers are required to be holders of the appropriate driving licence for the vehicle being driven, smartly presented, act in a professional manner and be fit to drive. The Supplier(s) will be required to undergo a full Enhanced DBS check which will be completed by the College for any Drivers used on any of the routes detailed within this invitation to tender, and that the nominated driver(s) have no history that would make them unsuitable for the requirements of transporting students or vulnerable adults to and from their place of study. The College expect Supplier(s) to perform Safer Recruiting and review DBS and Driving Licences of all drivers on a quarterly basis to ensure expiry dates have not passed.

The College requires all drivers to participate in mandatory Safeguarding Training which is delivered by the College. All drivers will also be subject to and must adhere by the College's Code of Professional Conduct. The College reserves the right to request that a driver is removed from a bus route should there be a report of inappropriate behaviour or a safeguarding concern.

Should the College become aware of Drivers acting inappropriately the College will request a full investigation be carried out by the Supplier(s). Findings of any investigation will need to be forwarded to a nominated member of college staff within the relevant college and timescales agreed upon commencement of such an investigation. Dependant on the nature of the complaint, the College reserve the right to request the withdrawal of the Driver in question from all College routes until a full investigation has been completed. If allegations are found to be true, the College reserve the right to have the driver removed from all of the routes provided.

### **3.3 Service Level Agreement**

The details of the service scope and specification will be formalised into a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Weston College and the selected supplier(s). This SLA will outline expectations around responsiveness, quality standards, pricing, and performance monitoring. The agreement will remain in place for an initial duration of two years, with the option to extend for a further one-year period, subject to satisfactory performance and mutual agreement by both parties.

### **3.4 PSVAR Regulations**

Suppliers should be aware that the College requires transport services that may, at times, be subject to PSVAR (Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations) compliance. It is expected that suppliers are able to provide vehicles that meet both PSVAR-compliant and non-compliant standards, depending on the nature of the journey and regulatory requirements. PSVAR applies to certain

public service vehicles, particularly those operating on local or scheduled services, and requires accessibility provisions for disabled passengers based on the age and use of the vehicle.

### **3.5 Flexible Service Provision**

The College requires the Supplier(s) to be flexible and in doing so over-ride all charges for short notice cancellation. In addition, the Supplier(s) must have the flexibility to allow for unplanned delays, for example breakdowns during service.

### **3.6 Communication**

There is a requirement that the Supplier(s) provide details of a telephone line that is covered from 07:00 am until 09:00 am and 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm. In addition to this, the College also need an emergency contact out of hours at least Monday to Friday. You are required to answer all calls promptly and in a professional manner.

We ask that if there is a delay that means a service is not going to arrive to any of campuses later than 09:00 that the main college contact line is called (01934 411411).

A staff placement at the College during our enrolment dates at the end of August and our Welcome Festival in early September (dates TBC). would be welcomed.

In the instance that an unplanned incident occurs i.e., a vehicle breakdown, the Supplier is required to contact the College as soon as possible to inform the College of the nature of the incident and the estimated time of arrival.

### **3.7 Policies & Procedures**

The College have an expectation that Suppliers will have in place Disaster Recovery Procedures. The College wish to see evidence of these procedures within the tender submission.

The College have an expectation that Suppliers will have in place up to date risk assessments. The College wish to see evidence of these procedures within the tender submission.

The Supplier/s is required to demonstrate and evidence that vehicles owned by the Supplier(s) are regularly maintained and maintenance schedules can be evidenced within the tender submission. At the College' request, the Supplier(s) is required to provide documentation that proves the required maintenance has been fulfilled on all vehicles used on this Contract.

### **3.8 Invoicing Arrangements**

Invoices should be submitted at the end of each month in which the service has been provided.

### **3.9 Performance Monitoring**

While regular performance meetings will not be scheduled as part of this arrangement, Weston College reserves the right to request meetings if any issues arise that require discussion or resolution. The Supplier must ensure a designated point of contact is readily available and

responsive to address any matters promptly, helping to maintain the quality and reliability of the service.

### **3.10 Added Value**

The College is looking for Suppliers to be innovative in their offerings. In addition to the core service requirement the College(s) would welcome suggestions from the Suppliers on ways in which they can add value to the service being delivered.

### **3.11 Lost Property**

The management of lost property will be the responsibility of the Supplier. Due to the nature of the service requirements the College is looking for the Supplier to work in conjunction with the College and where lost property is left in vehicles the College would wish for the Supplier to make them aware of the item left and keep such item(s) in safe custody until they can be handed into the College or as arranged between the College and the Supplier.

## **4. Supplier's Responsibilities**

### **4.1. Safe and Reliable Service Delivery**

The Supplier shall ensure the provision of safe, reliable, and punctual transport services in response to the College's ad hoc requirements. All vehicles and drivers must meet the relevant legal, safety, and operational standards, with a consistent focus on student welfare and journey quality.

### **4.2. Regulatory Compliance and Accessibility**

The Supplier must comply with all relevant transport legislation, including licensing, safeguarding, insurance, and where applicable, PSVAR (Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations). Services should be inclusive and accessible, with appropriate provisions for students with additional needs.

### **4.3. Responsiveness and Availability**

Given the ad hoc nature of the service, the Supplier must maintain flexibility and responsiveness to short-notice requests. A designated point of contact must be available during working hours to respond promptly to new bookings, changes, or any service-related issues.

### **4.4. Communication and Coordination**

The Supplier must communicate clearly and regularly with the College regarding bookings, changes, delays, or incidents. They must coordinate effectively with college staff to ensure smooth pickup and drop-off logistics and provide service updates where necessary.

### **4.5. Incident Management and Continuous Improvement**

The Supplier is responsible for managing and reporting any incidents, complaints, or service disruptions. They must work proactively with the College to resolve issues and participate in periodic service reviews or meetings if required, demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement and service quality.

## **5. Weston College Group Responsibilities**

### **5.1. Clear and Timely Communication of Requirements**

The College shall provide the Supplier with clear details of transport requests as early as possible, including dates, times, pick-up/drop-off locations, group sizes, and any specific requirements such as accessibility needs. While short notice may sometimes be unavoidable, the College will aim to give as much advance notice as possible to support effective planning.

### **5.2. Designated Point of Contact**

The College will assign a designated member of staff to act as the main point of contact for all transport-related communications. This person will be responsible for liaising with the Supplier, confirming bookings, managing updates, and addressing any logistical queries or issues that arise.

### **5.3. Supporting Student Safety and Conduct**

The College is responsible for ensuring appropriate supervision of students during transport and for promoting safe, respectful behaviour throughout journeys. Any incidents or concerns raised by the Supplier will be investigated and addressed in a timely manner by the College.

### **5.4. Feedback and Performance Collaboration**

The College will provide constructive feedback to the Supplier regarding service delivery and support periodic service reviews when required. In the event of service concerns or disruptions, the College will engage with the Supplier to resolve issues collaboratively and support continuous improvement.

### **5.5. Payment and Administrative Support**

The College will ensure that completed journeys are accurately recorded and verified for administrative processing. It will process payments in line with agreed terms and timelines, and promptly respond to any queries regarding journey confirmations, documentation, or invoicing.

## **6. Financial Monitoring**

### **6.1 Open Book Policy - Access to Records**

The Supplier shall grant the Weston College Contract Manager, or their designated representative, full and unrestricted access to all records, documentation, and data relevant to the provision of transport services. This includes, but is not limited to, records maintained at the Supplier's principal place of business as well as any documentation held onsite or electronically. The Supplier shall fully cooperate with any audits or reviews conducted by or on behalf of Weston College Group.

### **6.2 Performance Monitoring and Reporting**

The Supplier shall undertake regular internal assessments relating to the quality of service delivery, market trends (including changes in transport service rates or commodity prices), compliance with applicable health and safety standards, and any other relevant operational metrics. The Supplier shall proactively communicate the outcomes of such assessments to Weston College Group in a timely and transparent manner.

### **6.3 Ongoing Oversight**

Weston College Group reserves the right to implement performance monitoring mechanisms throughout the duration of the Contract. The Supplier shall provide all necessary trading and performance-related information on a monthly basis, or as otherwise agreed, to the College's appointed representative to facilitate effective oversight and SLA management.

## 7. Insurance

The Supplier shall hold all relevant insurances including Public Liability Insurance **not less than £5 million**, Employee Liability Insurance **not less than £10 million** and Professional Indemnity **not less than £2 million**.

## 8. Basis of the Service Level Agreement (SLA)

The SLA will be structured based on a rate card structure.

The initial period of the SLA will be **2 years + 1 year, to be reviewed annually**.

Weston College Group may from time to time, by giving notice in writing to the Supplier, amend the operational requirements. Any such variation shall be subject to a fair and reasonable price adjustment to be agreed between Weston College Group and the Supplier.

The bidder is required to confirm acceptance of the proposed Supplier with their return bid.

The Supplier acknowledges that, in entering into this Agreement, no form of exclusivity or volume guarantee has been granted by the Customer for the Services and that the College is at all times entitled to enter into contracts and arrangements with other suppliers for the provision of any or all services which are the same as or similar to the Services.



## SLA Monitoring

### Performance and KPIs:

KPI	Target	Measure
<b>KPI 1</b> Client Satisfaction	90% Customer satisfaction	To be assessed through periodic feedback surveys from College staff and trip organisers, capturing satisfaction levels with booking responsiveness, reliability, communication, and overall service quality.
<b>KPI 2</b> Service Delivery & Timeliness	100% Transport requests fulfilled on time	Measured through internal service records, tracking whether vehicles arrive on time and according to agreed booking details. Delays or missed pickups will be logged and reviewed monthly.
<b>KPI</b> Compliance and Safety Standards	100% Adherence to safety, safeguarding, and regulatory requirements	Evaluated through regular checks, spot audits, and incident reporting. The contractor must demonstrate compliance with licensing, insurance, driver vetting, and vehicle safety standards, including PSVAR compliance where applicable.

### Eligibility Criteria

Eligibility will be assessed through the SQ stage.

### SQ Scoring Matrix:

Met	<b>3</b>
Partially met	<b>2</b>
No met	<b>1</b>

Suppliers who score 1 on any of the SQ questions will not be progressed to presentation stage.

### Evaluation process

1. **Selection Questionnaire** will allow potential suppliers to self-declare their status against the eligibility criteria and exclusion grounds to provide preliminary evidence of their suitability to pursue a professional activity, economic and financial standing, and technical and professional ability.
2. **Invitation to Tender** will include service specific tender questions to enable potential suppliers to submit a full and detailed offer to supply services against the specification provided in the PIN.
3. **Evaluation of tenders**

### ITT Scoring Matrix: [This may vary by service]

<b>Compliance and Regulatory Standards</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Safeguarding and Student Welfare</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Responsiveness and Flexibility</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Communication and Issue Resolution</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Financial</b>	<b>30%</b>

4. **Formal notification** of scoring and contact award.

## **Appendix A Conditions of Tender**

1. Every tender received is deemed to have been made subject to these conditions.
2. The bidder must obtain for themselves at their own expense all information necessary for the preparation of their tenders.
  - a. Information supplied to the bidder by Weston College Group is only for guidance in the preparation of the tender. The bidder must satisfy themselves by their own investigations of the accuracy of such information.
  - b. The bidder is required to complete and provide all information required by Weston College Group in accordance with the SLA appendices and schedules. Failure to comply with these conditions will lead Weston College Group to reject the tender unless omissions have been expressly agreed by Weston College Group.
3. Any bidder who directly or indirectly canvasses any member or official of Weston College Group concerning the award of the SLA for the provision of the services, or who directly or indirectly obtains or attempts to obtain information from any such member or official concerning any offer tender or proposed tender for the services shall be disqualified.
4. All information supplied by Weston College Group in connection with this invitation to tender shall be regarded as confidential to Weston College Group. This invitation to tender and accompanying documents are and shall remain the property of Weston College Group and shall be returned and/or deleted on demand.
5. Any bidder who fixes and adjusts the amount of this tender by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person, or in any way acts in a collusive manner shall be disqualified.
6. Tenders must be for the supply of the whole of the services upon the terms and conditions as set out.
7. The bidder shall cost the SLA for 2 years + 1 year from the commencement date.