

Invitation to Quote



Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of UK Shared Business Services (UKSBS)

Subject: Health Assessments

Sourcing Reference Number: GSS25107

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Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UKSBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping our Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for the Contracting Authorities of shared business services in the UK public sector, continuously reducing cost and improving quality of business services for Government and the public sector.

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our Contracting Authorities. This allows Contracting Authorities the freedom to focus resources on core activities; innovating and transforming their own organisations.

Core services include Procurement, Finance, Grants Admissions, Human Resources, Payroll, ISS, and Property Asset Management all underpinned by our Service Delivery and Contact Centre teams.

UKSBS is a people rather than task focused business. It's what makes us different to the traditional transactional shared services centre. What is more, being a not-for-profit organisation owned by DSIT / DESNZ, UKSBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

UKSBS Ltd UKSBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Contracting Authorities. Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts.

Privacy Statement

At UK Shared Business Services (UKSBS) we recognise and understand that your privacy is extremely important, and we want you to know exactly what kind of information we collect about you and how we use it.

This privacy notice link below details what you can expect from UKSBS when we collect your personal information.

- We will keep your data safe and private.
- We will not sell your data to anyone.
- We will only share your data with those you give us permission to share with and only for legitimate service delivery reasons.

<https://www.uksbs.co.uk/use/pages/privacy.aspx>

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

UK Shared Business Services (UKSBS)

Established in 2007 by the UK Research Councils as part of the drive for greater efficiency, UK Shared Business Services Ltd provides HR & Payroll, Finance, Procurement and IT services to support the front line of UK research and innovation.

We've evolved over the last 10 years – both in terms of our service offering and client base – and our new direction under the joint ownership of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) positions UKSBS as a recognised Shared Services provider to Government.

Our journey continues as we work with our owners to harness the potential of our expertise and evolving technology to drive forward and realise the maximum benefit from shared services.

For more info, please visit our website: <http://www.ukpbs.co.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

The central digital platform: video guides and user manuals now available

Onboarding for Contracting Authorities to the Find a Tender Service started from 27 January 2025. This is being coordinated across the public sector through implementation leads and sectoral leads.

From 24 February 2025, suppliers will be able to register on the central digital platform - the new enhanced Find a Tender service.

To help prospective suppliers and other stakeholders prepare we have published video guides with accompanying PDF user manuals. These guides will give you an overview of the platform, the registration process, and the information you will be asked to provide so that when the time comes your registration will be straightforward.

You can access the videos through our dedicated TPP GOV.UK supplier page: **[Transforming Public Procurement - information and guidance for suppliers](#)**, where you will also find links to the associated user manuals.

You can also access each of the videos directly using the links below:

For suppliers: How to register your organisation and first administrator on Find a Tender in three easy steps

<https://youtu.be/lnjCa4swtjA>

For suppliers: detailed walkthrough - how an administrator completes and updates supplier information

<https://youtu.be/i4ZdbMGRqeQ>

For buyers and suppliers: How to use the central digital platform (enhanced Find a Tender service) a short guide for everyone

<https://youtu.be/TSfxoZoV3yI>

For Contracting Authorities: an overview of the new transparency commitments and illustration of notices on enhanced Find a Tender service
<https://youtu.be/AIKmv5Siltc>

Please note that if you want to bid for public procurement contracts then as from the 24 February there is one place - the new Find a Tender Service - to find all public sector tenders and other notices; and that prospective suppliers must register if they want to bid for any contracts.

Bidder guidance : Where a Bidder is unsure or requires any clarification, they should check with the Central Digital Platform Team via the help options provided.

Section 3 – Working with the Contracting Authority

In this section you will find details of your Procurement contact point and the timescales relating to this opportunity.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1.	Contracting Authority Name and address	UK Shared Business Service (UKSBS) Polaris House North Star Avenue Swindon SN2 1FF
3.2.	Buyer name	Mary Cheston
3.3.	Buyer contact details	Coreservices@uksbs.co.uk
3.4.	Maximum value of the Opportunity	<p>The total contract value shall not exceed £100,000.00 excluding VAT over the entire contract period. Should the option to extend be utilised.</p> <p>The initial fixed term will be 1 year. The value of the initial 1-year contract period is £30,000.00 excluding VAT.</p> <p>There will be an optional extension of 2 x 1 year valued at £30,000.00 excluding VAT each, however this spend is not committed unless the extension is utilised.</p> <p>There will be a contingency of £10,000.00 across the term of the Contract (including the optional 2 x 1-year extensions) totalling £100,000.00 excluding VAT across the 3-year contract, if the option to extend is required.</p> <p>This contract is for an initial 1-year term with a 2 x one-year extension (1 + 1 + 1).</p>
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	<p>All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the eSourcing Portal. Guidance on how to obtain support on using the eSourcing Portal can be found in Section 7.25.</p> <p>Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being excluded, unless formally advised to do so by UKSBS.</p>

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6.	Date of Issue of	Tuesday, 08 April 2025

	Bidder guidance: All bidders must be registered on the Digital Platform to be considered for this procurement opportunity if the CDP is not interoperable with the E-sourcing provider please ensure that you provide your content in a PDF attachment with your bid submission	Find a Tender
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through the eSourcing Portal	Tuesday, 15 April 2025 11:00
3.8.	Latest date ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through the eSourcing Portal	Wednesday, 16 April 2025
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal (the Deadline)	Tuesday, 22 April 2025 11:00
3.10.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Thursday, 01 May 2025
3.11.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Friday, 02 May 2025
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Wednesday, 07 May 2025
3.13.	Anticipated Contract End date include any potential extensions	Wednesday, 06 May 2026 with the option to extend for a further 2 x 1-year periods.
3.14.	Anticipated publication on the Digital Platform of the Contract Details Notice	Within 30 days of award
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	90 Days

Section 4 – Specification

1. Introduction

UK Shared Business Services (UKSBS) is a public sector shared service centre owned by the Department of Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), the Department of Business and Trade (DBT) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

To enable UKSBS to fulfil their obligations to employees and to assist with each party's Employee Benefit and Wellbeing programmes, UKSBS are seeking a Health Assessment provider for all UKSBS staff across multiple locations. Services to be provided to a current headcount of approximately 791, with the potential for this to fluctuate with changes in the organisation in the next few years. We recognise that an increase to employees will mean we may need to review the situation in the subsequent years.

Current headcount per office base is:

- Swindon – 618
- Newport – 94
- Billingham – 75
- London - 4

It is UKSBS policy to provide and look after the wellbeing of their employees and to employ best practice to ensure the health, safety, and welfare for its employees. In addition, the successful supplier will be required to work with our People Team to help promote and raise awareness of a range of support mechanisms to ensure value for money in this Contract.

The Supplier must comply with all current, relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010.

Personal data that we anticipate to be kept will include name, date of birth, home address, employer name, telephone number, gender, details of current or former health conditions.

2. Background to the Requirement

Traditionally, UKSBS has a reputation of providing wellbeing initiatives to benefit the employee in regard to their own health and also the Company by reducing sickness levels, retention of staff and increased productivity.

UKSBS wants to continue to support our staff in looking after their wellbeing and to employ best practice to ensure their health, safety and welfare.

The current Health Assessment Contract is due to expire 9th May 2025 and we wish to ensure there is a continuation of this provision.

3. Aims & Objectives

UKSBS are committed to ensuring that our employees are healthy and happy, and we want a service to supply employees with a good level of care.

We will require a provider to complete healthcare screenings for all permanent employees, as and when requested by the employee in line with the scope provided.

We currently have a service uptake of 27 over the past Financial Year (April 2024 – January 2025) with a breakdown of both standard and advanced below:

- Standard Assessment: 6
- Advanced Assessment: 21

Healthcare Assessments are firmly embedded within UKSBS Benefits and workplace culture. The successful supplier should assist in focussing on preventative health, to allow employees to gain a better understanding of their health. Promotion should focus on this and encourage all employees to use the service for support on a routine basis to manage their overall wellbeing.

The successful Supplier should work collaboratively with the UKSBS People Team to promote the benefits of healthcare screenings e.g. providing leaflets, wording for our Communications team to send out in the internal news items and, subject to agreement and financial approval, onsite or virtual workshops, talks, etc regarding specific health topics as required.

Key Performance Indicators are listed in the Requirement section of this document and the Supplier will be required to work with UKSBS in finalising these the method of submitting Management Information (MI) data.

During the period of the Contract UKSBS may wish to consider the possibility of online booking but they are not obliged to take this forward, this will be discussed with the successful supplier.

4. Scope

The duration of the contract is to be 1 year plus option to extend 2 x 1 year (1+1+1). Budget is £30,000 per year, totalling £90,000 across the 3-year contract, if option to extend is required. There will be a contingency of £10,000.00 across the term of the Contract (including the optional 2 x 1-year extension) totalling £100,000.00 excluding VAT across the 3-year contract, if option to extend is required.

The healthcare screenings will cover an overall health check, blood tests covering a range of checks, cardiac checks and dietary and lifestyle. The same checks will be completed for each visit and these appointments are to be face to face.

Currently employees under 40 years old are entitled to a health screening every 2 years, and employees over 40 years old are entitled to a health screening every year.

For those over 40 years old, we would require a higher level of screening to allow females have access to mammograms and males to have access to testicular and prostate cancer tests.

A full report of the outcomes are to be sent directly to the employee only.

5. Requirement

Assessment requirements

Employees need to be able to access a website to understand what the checks entail, where they can go to attend the healthcare screenings and how to book the appointment.

To find a location, the employee should be able to enter their town/postcode to bring up locations. There should be the ability to change the radius of the search. Employees need

to be able to book appointments via telephone stating that they are a corporate client, so they do not incur a personal charge.

Access to the website will be needed from the first day of the start of the contract.

Appointments are to be held face to face, in nationwide locations to support employees living in different parts of the UK. Employees should be able to book an appointment time within 2 weeks of the point in which they enquire. Appointments should aim to last no longer than 2 hours.

We would expect employees' to have received all reports and results within 21 days of the appointment date.

Minimum checks expected to be supplied for the **standard assessment** are;

- Medical and lifestyle questionnaire
- Lifestyle consultation with a nurse and consultation with a doctor
- Personalised Medical Report
- Blood Pressure Checks
- Resting Heart Rate
- BMI Check
- Waist Measurement
- Body Fat %
- Urine analysis for kidney function, infection and diabetes
- Resting ECG
- Blood Tests – Cholesterol, Glucose, Diabetes
- Assessments – Nutritional and dietary, muscle and joints, emotional health, cardiovascular risk score

In addition to the above, the **advanced assessment** for over 40-year-olds should also include, as a minimum:

- Female Specific tests – Breast cancer examination (Mammogram) and awareness, Cervical cancer screening
- Male Specific tests – Testicular examination and awareness
- Additional blood tests (to be advised by Supplier)
- In the event that Supplier's offer additional tests as standard i.e. at no additional charge, then they are to ensure this is noted in the tender response.

Supplier Staff

- All staff carrying out these assessments must have the appropriate medical qualifications in accordance with UK regulations/guidance.
- All staff must ensure the confidentiality of the UKSBS Staff member during and after the appointment unless there is a danger to life or a regulatory requirement that states otherwise. In the event this confidentiality must be broken then Supplier must make the UKSBS staff member aware of this and of any possible consequences were reasonably practicable.
- In the event there is a whistleblowing event or concern over a Supplier's staff members actions regarding the output of this contract then the Supplier is to advise the UKSBS Contract lead of this to whatever level of detail can be given.

GDPR/Security

- Provide all reasonable assistance to the UKSBS in the preparation of any Data Protection Impact Assessment

- Ensure those processing personal data are under a confidentiality obligation (contractual or statutory);
- Appoint a suitably qualified data protection representative to manage the data.
- Keep records of their data processing activities performed under this Contract in order to be able to provide information included in those records to the Data Protection Authorities, upon request. Records should include: (1) details of the data controller and data processor and their representatives; (2) the categories of processing activities that are performed; (3) information regarding cross-border data transfers; and (4) a general description of the security measures that are implemented.
- Take all measures required under the security provisions which includes pseudonymisation and encrypting personal data as appropriate.
- Only use a sub-processor with UKSBS formal written consent (specific or general, although where general consent is obtained processors must notify all and any changes to the Contracting Authority, giving them an opportunity to object).
- Flow down the same contractual obligations to sub-processors as is imposed upon the Supplier by the Contracting Authority.
- Notify UKSBS without undue delay data breaches.
- Assist UKSBS in responding to requests from individuals (data subjects) exercising their rights; assist UKSBS in complying with the obligations relating to a security breach notification, Data Protection Impact Assessment and consulting with supervisory authorities.
- Securely destroy (providing evidence that this has occurred e.g. A secure waste disposal certificate from a third party) or return as instructed by the UKSBS all personal data at the end of the Contract (unless storage is required by EU/member state law).
- Make available to the UKSBS all information necessary to demonstrate compliance; allow/contribute to audits (including inspections by the Contracting Authority or a third party); and inform the UKSBS if its instructions infringe data protection law or other EU or member state data protection provisions.
- Where the supplier is required to collect any Personal Data on behalf of UKSBS, it shall ensure that it provides the data subjects form who the Personal Data are collected, with a privacy notice in a form to be agreed with UKSBS.

UKSBS may require further assurances during the Contract through a series of questions as to Suppliers GDPR compliance.

Notwithstanding any other remedies available to the UKSBS, the Supplier shall fully indemnify UKSBS as a result of any such breach of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), by the Supplier or any other party used by the Supplier in its performance of the Contract, that results in the Contracting Authority suffering fines, loss or damages.

All supplier systems must have a form of Multi Factor Authentication to access.

Access to data, transit and hosting region(s) must, at all times, comply with at least one of the following:

- Protection of UK data on access, in transit or hosting, which meets all specified security requirements.

- Other global locations where GDPR applies directly (EU) or an adequacy decision has been awarded (https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/law-topic/data-protection/international-dimension-data-protection/adequacy-decisions_en), must protect UK data in transit and at rest meeting all specified security requirements

If one of the above is not achievable, then:

- Other global locations, where the above does not apply, will be acceptable on completion of a security and data protection risk assessment, implementation of required reasonable security measures and compliance to specified security requirements.
- If there is a change to accreditation, UKSBS must be informed.
- Must provide evidence of compliance with GDPR and Data Protection 2018
- Confirmation of what countries our data will be held.
- If there is a change to the country our data is held, UKSBS need to be informed.
- All supplier employees accessing health information for UKSBS employees must have received BPSS screening and Data Handling/GDPR training as a minimum.
- Adhere to the requirements of the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 (AMRA).
- The vendor will need to provide an attestation letter that their underlying infrastructure is secure, well managed & tested by a reputable 3rd party.
- UKSBS will need to be aware of any 3rd party suppliers prior to the contract start date.
- UKSBS will need to be informed where in the UK vendor support staff are based.
- UKSBS to be informed of the type of access supplier employees have to our data, how it is obtained and where they would be based.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

KPI	Performance Rate
The Supplier must respond to any enquiry within 48 hours of receipt of that enquiry	98%
Appointments to be available within 2 weeks of initial enquiry.	98%
The supplier will need to ensure consolidated invoicing is correct and submitted to UKSBS within 5 working days after the end of each month.	98%
The supplier will need to ensure consolidated invoicing is correct and submitted to UKSBS within 5 working days after the end of each month.	98%
UKSBS will pay the invoice via a PO, and this will be paid within 30 days from the invoice date.	98%
Management Information (MI) data reports to be issued monthly and to be received no later than the 2nd Friday of the following month. These reports must include as a minimum: A. Number of enquiries received,	98%

B. The breakdown between basic and enhanced health screening appointments requested, C. Number of enquiries where appointment not available within 2 weeks D. Number of appointments missed i.e. non-attendance. E. Number of reports issued in excess of 21 days of attended appointment.	
All complaints must be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and fully resolved within 10 working days.	98%

Project Plan

- The successful supplier shall set out a detailed implementation plan and timetable for the onboarding stage.
- The successful supplier should provide UKSBS with a project plan to highlight key milestones and deliverables ahead of launching services to employees. In addition, we will require the supplier to engage with People team, and Data Protection Office Manager in the kick-off meeting following the award of the Contract but preceding contract start date as form of introduction to services and to help prepare for the launch.

Contract Management

- A named Account Manager is required to be dedicated to the management of the account for UKSBS.
- Attendance is required in person or via MS Teams for an annual review meeting with the Key contacts for UKSBS based in Head Office Swindon – full information on the operation of the Contract against KPI's, including the Management Information data, is required and should be received 5 working days in advance of the meeting.
- Attendance is required in person or via MS Teams for initial monthly meetings for the first 3 months then quarterly meetings thereafter.
- The Account Manager should visit Contracting Authority to meet with the People Team once a year either in person or via MS Teams to provide specific support to help raise awareness of services and build a productive relationship UKSBS. This is required to ensure consistency of service across all geographical locations. Three locations would need to be engaged with either in person or via MS Teams, with details of each location can be found at the start of this specification.
- Account Manager to respond to email or voicemail messages within 2 working days, received from either the lead contact within UKSBS, or by named People Team associates.

Account manager availability

- Effective account manager attendance at meetings, on a monthly basis for the first three months and then quarterly, in person or via MS Teams
- The Account Manager should act as escalation route and support in complaint resolution.
- The successful supplier will be required to categorise usage of services and key themes against UKSBS individual sites in a quarterly report including management information data (individual sites have been noted at the start of this specification) in order that UKSBS can use this information to help direct support by location.

- The successful supplier should conduct customer satisfaction surveys for all interactions between UKSBS and the successful supplier and should provide quarterly feedback on the results of the surveys to the UKSBS.
- The successful supplier will be required to provide proposals for validating an employee's eligibility to gain access to services before commencement of services.
- The successful supplier to work with UKSBS regarding establishing an effective process for this.
- The successful supplier shall provide details of how eligibility checks are made.

Invoicing

- Invoices to be sent to the People Team via their shared inbox in the first five days of the beginning of the next month, with payment of non-disputed invoices being made within 30 days.
- No personal identifiable data should be shown on the invoices, but a separate statement is to be sent with a copy of the invoice to the People Team shared inbox.
- All invoices must include the Purchase Order Number that will be supplied at the start of the Contract. Any invoices that do not show this number will be rejected and returned to the Supplier for re-issue.

6. Timetable

Following Contract award, there will be a Kick-Off meeting arranged to include, as a minimum, UKSBS Contract Lead, UKSBS Corporate Commercial Lead, and Supplier Account Manager. Others may be invited where appropriate.

The Kick-Off meeting will include the review and agreement of the project plan and the setting of future meeting dates. Ad hoc meetings may be arranged as required.

The Contract start date should be 9th May 2025 and services must be fully available from the date specified.

7. Terms and Conditions

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

Reserved rights by the Contracting Authority under this procurement

Bidders are to note that the Contracting Authority Reserves the following matters as part of any award of Contract, at its sole discretion modify the contract in the following way during any such term or such extension, that has been duly and transparently provisioned and advertised. Nothing in these reserved rights remove any discretion available and afforded to the Contracting Authority under the Regulations associated with this procurement opportunity.

Section 5 – Evaluation of Bids

The Contracting Authority will consult the Debarment list for any bidder that submits a bid as part of this procurement. The Contracting Authority reserve the right to not enter into any Contract with any Bidder that has an organisation in its bid submission, that is on the Government Debarment list. Please ensure that your organisation and any other organisation you are bidding with are not on the Debarment list before submitting a bid for this procurement opportunity, by completing the information required on the CDP.

The evaluation model below shall be used for this ITQ, which will be determined to two decimal places.

Where a question is 'for information only' it will not be scored.

The evaluation team may comprise staff from the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required.

To maintain a high degree of rigour in the evaluation of your bid, a process of commercial moderation will be undertaken to ensure consistency by all evaluators.

Bidders are to note: The Contracting Authority reserve the right to assess any bidders suitability at the award stage and will use information from the Governments Central Digital Platform, to complement and assist in this area of evaluation. If any bidder considered for award after the evaluation stage fails the ability to satisfy the Contracting Authorities needs in regards to suitability, then the Contracting Authority shall move to the next highest scoring bidder until such time as an award decision can be reached.

After evaluation and if required moderation scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ($5+5+6=16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Do not exceed the page limits specified within each of the Non-Commercial criteria, any additional content provided beyond the specified page limit will not be considered or scored during the evaluation process. Where bidders include a cover page and/or annex, this will be taken into consideration within the page limit and therefore this is discouraged.

Where a Non-Commercial criterion requires an additional attachment such as an organogram or risk register bidders are to note the eSourcing Portal only permits 1 document upload per question therefore bidders must attach their response as a Zip folder.

Pass / Fail criteria		
Evaluation Envelope	Q No.	Question subject
Qualification	SEL1.0(a)	Digital Platform
Qualification	SEL 1.0 (b)	Unique identifier number
Qualification	1.0(c) & 1.0(c)(a)	PRU Debarment list your organisation
Qualification	SEL.1.0(d)	Bidding Status

Qualification	SEL1.1 1.0(f)(a) & 1.0(f)(b)	List of all intended Subcontractors
Qualification	SEL1.1 1.0(g)(a) & 1.0(g)(b)	Subcontractors on Debarment List
Qualification	SEL1.2	Employment breaches / Equality
Qualification	SEL1.3	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Qualification	SEL1.3.1	Supporting Documentation for MSA
Qualification	SEL1.4	Organisation classification
Qualification	SEL1.5	Organisation size
Qualification	SEL1.10	Information security requirements
Qualification	SEL1.10.1	Supporting IS documentation
Qualification	SEL2.12	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Act and Data Protection Act 2018
Qualification	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information / EIR
Qualification	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Qualification	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Qualification	AW3.1	Validation check
Qualification	AW3.2	Conflict of Interest Declaration
Qualification	AW3.2.1	Conflict of Interest Declaration Supporting Information
Qualification	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Qualification	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Qualification	AW4.3	PPN 007 – Contracts with suppliers from Russia or Belarus
Technical	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Commercial	AW6.3	Insurance
Technical	PROJ1.1	Medical Qualifications held
Commercial	AW5.2	Commercial Questionnaire (spreadsheet)
Commercial	AW5.3	Firm and Fixed Price
Section 7 (sub section 7-12)	-	General Information / Bidder guidance and assistance
Appendix A	-	Glossary of Terms
-	-	Invitation to Quote response received on time within the eSourcing Portal
	In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to excluded the Bidder and not consider evaluation of any of the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.	

Scoring criteria

Evaluation Justification Statement

In consideration of this particular requirement the Contracting Authority has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings / scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.

Evaluation Envelope	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks	
			Overall	Breakdown
Commercial	AW5.1	Price	30.00%	30.00%
Technical	PROJ1.2	Contract Management	70.00%	30.00%
Technical	PROJ1.3	Health Assessment		40.00%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Commercial Elements

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 100, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the percentage of the evaluation criteria allocated to that question.

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 20% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 20%.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 12% by using the following calculation:

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

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

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

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

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

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

Once the above evaluation process has been undertaken and the scores are apportioned by evaluator(s) this will then be subject to an independent commercial review and moderation meeting, if required by the commercial lead, any and all changes will be formally recorded relative to the regulatory obligations associated with this procurement, so as to ensure that the procurement has been undertaken in a robust and transparent way.

Commercial Elements will be evaluated on the following criteria.

Price will be evaluated using proportionate pricing (lowest bid / bid * mark). A bidder's score will be based on the lowest total score received divided by their total cost and then multiplied by the marks available.

For example, if the total basket price for three bid responses is received and Bidder A has quoted £50,000 as their total price, Bidder B has quoted £80,000 and Bidder C has quoted £100,000 then the calculation will be as follows:

(Maximum marks available in this example being 12.5)

Bidder A Score = $50000/50000 \times 12.5 = 12.5$

Bidder B Score = $50000/80000 \times 12.5 = 7.81$

Bidder C Score = $50000/100000 \times 12.5 = 6.25$

This evaluation criteria will therefore not be subject to any averaging, as this is a mathematical scoring criterion, but will still be subject to a commercial review.

The lowest score possible is 0.

The scores achieved for the Non-Commercial and Commercial Criteria will be combined to give a bidders total score and ranking.

Award criteria in the event of a tied place for an award decision

If as a result of the application of the aforementioned scored criteria applicable to Commercial and Non Commercial has been undertaken and suitable due diligence has occurred to ratify this position, this then results in a tied place re more than one bidder has attained a score that is equal to another bidder under this procurement procedures due process, then the Contracting Authority shall make an award decision on the basis of the bidder who provided a bid that attained the highest score under Commercial criteria.

For example:

Bidder A scores 12.50 for Commercial and 45.00 for Non-Commercial

Bidder B scores 15.10 for Commercial and 42.40 for Non-Commercial

The result is a tied place at score of 57.50

The Contracting Authority stated in its procurement documents that the bidder who scored the highest on under Non-Commercial criteria in a tied place, shall be awarded the contract therefore Bidder A wins the award.

This evaluation criteria will therefore not be subject to any averaging.

Evaluation process

The evaluation process will feature some, if not all, the following phases.

Stage	Summary of activity
Receipt and Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ITQ logged upon opening in alignment with UKSBS's procurement procedures. Any ITQ Bid received after the closing date will be excluded unless circumstances attributed to UKSBS, the Contracting Authority or the eSourcing Portal beyond the bidders control are responsible for late submission.
Compliance check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check debarment question and debarment list for all Bidders and parties relied upon e.g. subcontractors Check all Mandatory requirements are acceptable to the Contracting Authority. Unacceptable Bids maybe subject to clarification by the Contracting Authority or exclusion of the Bid.
Conflicts of Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Evaluation team members will have Col re visited by UKSBS prior to being given access to the bids received in the eSourcing Portal.
Scoring of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation team will independently score the Bid and provide a commentary of their scoring justification against the criteria.
Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Evaluation team may require written clarification to Bids.
Re - scoring of the Bid and Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following Clarification responses, the Evaluation team reserve the right to independently re-score the Bid and Clarifications and provide a commentary of their re-scoring justification against the Evaluation criteria.
Moderation meeting (if required to reach an award decision)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the outcomes of the Commercial review To confirm contents of the feedback letters to provide details of scoring and relative and proportionate feedback on the Bidders response
Due diligence of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Contracting Authority may *request the following requirements at the award decision stage of the Procurement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of insurance documents from the Bidder Request for evidence of documents / accreditations referenced in the / Invitation to Quote response / Bid and / or Clarifications from the Bidder Financial Credit check for the Bidder (*usually carried out by UKSBS, not usually requested from the bidder)

Validation of unsuccessful Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To confirm contents of the letters to provide details of scoring and meaningful feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders Bid in comparison with the successful Bidders Bid.
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Section 6 – Evaluation Response Questionnaire

Bidders should note that the evaluation response questionnaire is located within the **eSourcing Portal**.

Guidance on how to register and use the eSourcing Portal is available at

<https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

What makes a good bid – some simple do's 😊

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Any Failure to do so may lead to your bid being deemed as non-compliant and or being excluded. .
- 7.2 Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date / time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to exclude late submissions. Responses received after the date indicated in the Section 3 of the ITQ shall be excluded by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 7.3 Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise the eSourcing Portal prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be excluded.
- 7.4 Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission, we may exclude your Bid.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the eSourcing messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information, we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution. Ensure that you raise all clarifications before the closing date and time for receipt of clarifications, as we will be unable to respond after this time date and time.
- 7.6 Do answer the question in full, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.7 Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs. Do ensure that you allow a sufficiency of time to register on the Digital Platform and Contracting Authorities eSourcing Portal and allow a sufficiency of time to answer all the questions, don't leave this till the last moment and miss the date and time to submit, as the Contracting Authority wishes to generate as much competition that benefits the public purse.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question(s) they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear, concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in full, in the evaluation response questionnaire or we may exclude your Bid.
- 7.11 Do ensure that the Response and any documents accompanying it are in the English Language, the Contracting Authority reserve the right to exclude any full or part responses that are not in English.

- 7.12 Do check and recheck your Bid before uploading this to the eSourcing Portal and ensure that your bid has been uploaded complete and correctly including your completion of the information required on the Digital Platform.
- 7.13 Do ensure that you advise in your bid submission if you are either i) under investigation in regards to Debarment ii) appealing a decision of Debarment.
- 7.14 Do ensure that you allow a sufficiency of time to answer all the questions, don't leave this till the last moment and miss the date and time to submit, as the Contracting Authority wishes to generate as much competition that benefits the public purse

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

DO NOT

- 7.13 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.14 Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.15 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission especially if a non-disclosure contract condition is incorporated and imposed within the procedure.
- 7.16 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UKSBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.17 Do not contact any UKSBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may exclude your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will exclude your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not offer UKSBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will exclude your Bid.
- 7.20 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed. unless requested to do so under a formal clarification by the Contracting Authority via the eSourcing Portal.
- 7.21 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not exceed page and or word limits, the additional pages and or text will not be considered.
- 7.23 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be excluded.
- 7.24 Do not unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority send your response by any way other than via the eSourcing Portal. Responses received by any other method than requested will be excluded.
- 7.25 Do ensure that your organisation or any other party that you are intending to submit a joint or sub contractual basis / bid submission with, is not on the Government Debarment list that will not be acceptable to the Contracting Authority.

- 7.26 Do not bid on the basis of not providing all the information that has been requested by the Contracting Authority by the closing date and time. If you are unsure or require clarity, please use the formal clarification option available to all bidders via the eSourcing Portal.

Some additional bidder guidance

All enquiries with respect to access to the eSourcing Portal and problems with functionality within the portal must be submitted to eSourcing Helpdesk

Phone 08000 698 632

Email customersupport@jaggaer.com

Please note; the eSourcing Portal is a free self-registration portal. Bidders can complete the online registration at the following link:

<https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/>

All enquiries with respect to access to the Digital Platform portal and problems with functionality within the portal must be submitted to Digital Platform Team / Helpdesk . Please note; the Digital Platform is a free self-registration portal. Bidders can complete the online registration at the following link: <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/>

- 8.00 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the eSourcing Portal. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 8.01 Question numbering is not always sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the procurement documents in excess of the CDP.
- 8.02 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 8.03 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 8.04 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority / UKSBS.
- 8.05 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through the eSourcing Portal.
- 8.07 If you are a SPV, Consortium, Partnership you must provide details of the organisational structure and complete details, as required within the CDP.
- 8.08 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or your Bid will be excluded.
- 8.09 By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and any Contract may be made public via an FOI request suitably redacted by the Contracting Authority.
- 8.10 Your bid will be valid for 90days or your Bid will be excluded.

- 8.11 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified, we may exclude your Bid.
- 8.12 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 8.13 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria this may result in the exclusion of your bid dependent upon the specific question and or circumstances.
- 8.14 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the eSourcing Portal.
- 8.15 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks e.g. a Financial check on the winning bidder(s) bid(s), the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder and award it to the next highest scoring bidder.
- 8.16 All timescales are set using a 24-hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through the eSourcing Portal.
- 8.17 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Contracting Authority may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 8.18 The Government revised its Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 5th of August 2024 to replace the previous Government Protective Marking System (GPMS). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

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

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes

introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

9.0. The Contracting Authority's Contact Details

- 9.1 Unless stated otherwise in these Instructions or in writing from UKSBS or the Contracting Authority, all communications from Bidders (including their sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants, and advisers) during the period of this procurement must be directed through the eSourcing Portal to the designated UKSBS contact. Any and all communications and information attained outside of the eSourcing Portal shall have no legal standing nor worth and should not be relied upon in submitting your bid response.
- 9.2 Bidders should be mindful that the designated Contact or other persons associated with this opportunity, should not under any circumstances be sent a copy of their Bid response outside of the eSourcing Portal, unless the portal cannot receive your response due to an outage, should this happen then Contracting Authority will suitably formally instruct all bidders as to how to submit your Response. Failure to follow this requirement will result in exclusion of your Bid.

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

- <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/>
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)

10 Freedom of information

- 10.1 In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the 'FoIA') and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the 'EIR') (each as amended from time to time), UKSBS or the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose information submitted by the Bidder to the to the Contracting Authority.
- 10.2 In respect of any information submitted by a Bidder that it considers to be commercially sensitive the Bidder should complete the Freedom of Information declaration question.
- 10.3 Where a Bidder identifies information as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority will endeavour to maintain confidentiality. Bidders should note, however, that, even where information is identified as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FoIA or the Environmental Information Regulations. In particular, the Contracting Authority is required to form an independent judgment concerning whether the information is exempt from disclosure under the FoIA or the EIR and whether the public interest favours disclosure or not. Accordingly, the Contracting Authority cannot guarantee that any information marked 'confidential' or "commercially sensitive" will not be disclosed.
- 10.4 Where a Bidder receives a request for information under the FoIA or the EIR during the procurement, this should be immediately passed on to UKSBS or the Contracting Authority and the Bidder should not attempt to answer the request without first consulting with the Contracting Authority.
- 10.5 Bidders are reminded that the Government's transparency agenda requires that sourcing documents, including ITQ templates such as this, are published on a designated, publicly searchable web site, and, that the same applies to other sourcing documents issued by UKSBS or the Contracting Authority, and any contract entered into by the Contracting Authority with its preferred supplier once the procurement is complete. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their participation and contents of their Response may be made public.

11.0. Timescales

- 11.1 [Section 3](#) of the ITQ sets out the proposed procurement timetable. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to extend the dates and will advise potential Bidders of any change to the dates.

12.0 The Contracting Authority's Contact Details

- 12.1 Unless stated otherwise in these Instructions or in writing from UKSBS or the Contracting Authority, all communications from Bidders (including their sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants, and advisers) during the period of this procurement must be directed through the eSourcing Portal tool to the designated UKSBS contact.
- 10.2 Bidders should be mindful that the designated Contact or other persons associated with this opportunity, should not under any circumstances be sent a copy of their Response outside of the eSourcing Portal, unless the portal cannot receive your response due to an outage, should this happen then Contracting Authority will suitably formally instruct all bidders as to how to submit your Response. Failure to follow this requirement will result in the exclusion of your Bid.

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

TERM	MEANING
“Bid”, “Response”, “Submitted Bid”, or “ITQ Response”	means the Bidders formal offer in response to this Invitation to Quote
“Bidder(s)”	means the organisation(s) being invited to respond to this Invitation to Quote
“Buyer”	means the person in UKSBS who is responsible for conducting the procurement for and on behalf of the Contracting Authority.
“Central Digital Platform or CDP”	means the Governments Central Digital platform where this procurement is being conducted all potential bidders must register on prior to registering an interest in a procurement opportunity and ultimately to provide a bid submission via to the Contracting Authorities e-sourcing platform. https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/
“Central Purchasing Body”	means a duly constituted public sector organisation which procures Goods and or Services / Works for and on behalf of Contracting Authorities
“Conditions of Bid”	means the terms and conditions set out in this ITQ relating to the submission of a Bid
“Contract”	means the agreement to be entered by the Contracting Authority and the Supplier following any award under the procurement
“Contracting Bodies”	means the Contracting Authority and any other Contracting Authorities if and as described in the Digital Platform
“Contracting Authority”	Means a public body regulated under the Public Procurement Regulations as applicable to this procurement, for and or on whose behalf the procurement is being run by UKSBS unless this is for UKSBS.
“Contracting Bodies”	means the Contracting Authority and any other contracting authorities described in the CDP. Procurement documents and Notice
“Customer”	means the legal entity (or entities) for which any Contract agreed will be made accessible to, in excess of the Contracting Authority.
“Debarment”	means the mechanism under which a Minister of the Crown can put any supplier on the centrally published debarment list. This must be following an investigation, whereby the minister is satisfied that a supplier is an excluded supplier or an excludable supplier and should be added to the debarment list.
“Due Diligence Information”	means the background and supporting documents and information provided by the Contracting Authority for the purpose of better informing the Bidders responses to this ITQ
“EIR”	mean the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 2004 (as amended from time to time) together with any guidance

	and / or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such regulations
“eSourcing Portal”	means the online system that all potential bidders must use to seek clarifications in this procurement opportunity and ultimately to provide a bid submission via. ##
“FoIA”	means the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any subordinate legislation made under such Act (as amended from time to time) together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such legislation
“Goods / Services / Works”	means any Goods and or Services or Works set out at within Section 4 Specification
“Invitation to Quote” or “ITQ”	means this Invitation to Quote documentation and all related procurement documents, published by the Contracting Authority and made available to Bidders and includes the Due Diligence Information. NOTE: This document is often referred to as an Invitation to Tender within other organisations
“Mandatory”	Means a pass / fail criteria which must be met in order for a Bid to be considered, unless otherwise specified.
“Named Procurement person ”	means the single point of contact for the Contracting Authority based in UKSBS that will be dealing with the procurement
“Order”	means an order served by any Contracting Body on the Supplier
“PA2023”	means the Procurement Act 2023 and its associated Statutory Instruments that apply to this procedure, e.g.the Procurement Regulations 2024.
“Reserved rights”	means as if stated within these procurement documents reserved rights of the Contracting Authority to reconfigure the service provision, purchase additional Supplier Goods and or Services, or Works.
“Procurement Documents”	Means the documentation and information that is provided to all bidders so as to provide a bid(s) against the procurement opportunity.
“PSC”	means Persons of Significant Control associated with your bid submission
“Reserved rights”	means as if stated within these procurement documents reserved rights of the Contracting Authority to reconfigure the service provision, purchase additional Supplier Goods and or Services.
“Supplier(s)”	means in non UKSBS terms Cabinet Office e.g. a Government PPN or a specific Departments terminology question to an organisation(s) / Bidder who is bidding for this opportunity or a supplier who is not bidding this opportunity but may be subcontracted in remoteness to this opportunity e.g. UK / Treaty suppliers. In UKSBS terms it means in all procurement opportunities after an award decision(s) have been reached, the Bidder(s) / organisation(s) who have been awarded the Contract(s) then become a Supplier.

“Tender exercise”	means the activities and implications surrounding the procurement, in the GDPR aspects section of the procurement documents.
“UKSBS”	means UK Shared Business Services Ltd herein after referred to as UKSBS.
“Unique Identifier”	means Unique identifiers defined in regulation 8 of the Procurement Regulations 2024. In the case of a bidder, it is the unique code which is submitted to the digital platform and is recognised by that platform or, where no such code is submitted and recognised, it is the unique code which is allocated by that platform when the Bidder registers on that digital platform.
“Voluntary Standstill”	Means were the PA2023 does not mandate this obligation the Contracting Authority under best practice, has decided to apply this period of a minimum of 8 working days, prior to entering into any contract(s)