



# Doing business with the University of the West of England, Bristol

A Guide for Suppliers and Contractors

Revised January 2017

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## About UWE Bristol

UWE Bristol is a thriving, modern university, offering a wide range of highly respected courses and employment-enhancing opportunities. We're a well-established university, with over 27,000 students, 250,000 alumni and 3,000 staff. Students come to study with us from all over the UK, as well as from 140 different countries around the world, making this a diverse and interesting place to come and study.

### Our teaching

With more than 600 courses on offer, at undergraduate, postgraduate, professional and short course level, we offer a broad range of subjects across the arts, creative industries, health, science, business, law, environment and technology disciplines. We are well known for the quality of our teaching, and for our student experience as a whole. We've built close links with leading employers such as CERN, Rolls Royce, the NHS, Aardman Animation and the BBC to help develop the right content for our courses and to give our students exposure to diverse professional opportunities.

In the words of Professor Steve West, Vice-Chancellor "We want our students to become ready and able graduates, who feel confident in their abilities and the part they have to play in the world."

### Our campuses

Our 14 different departments are spread across three campuses in and around Bristol – and we have campuses at Gloucester and Hartpury College, as well as offering courses through local study partners and global partner institutions. We have invested in the latest facilities and resources to give our students access to everything they need to succeed – with £200m being spent on new state-of-the-art learning spaces and accommodation between now and 2020 to enhance our offer even further.

The City Campus includes partnerships with the Watershed, Arnolfini, Aardman and Spike Island. The University has invested heavily in its infrastructure with developments at Bower Ashton as part of the City Campus, a new simulation suites at the Glenside Campus, new £50m Faculty of Business and Law, a £9m Student Union building, new accommodation and one of the first University Enterprise Zones sitting alongside the UK's largest Robotics lab at the Frenchay Campus.

### Our research and wider impact

Alongside our teaching, our academics are working on nationally and internationally-renowned research in many interesting areas – from robotics to appearance issues. As well as enriching our teaching, we ensure our research contributes to society and the economy through knowledge exchange, science communication, partnerships and supporting business innovation and growth.

We also play a very active role in our city and wider region, and are seen by many employers and organisations as the 'go to university' for graduate recruitment.

The University is made up of four Faculties spread between these campus sites. These are the Faculties of: Arts, Creative Industries and Education, Environment and Technology, Health and Applied Sciences and Business and Law.

In addition the University has support services comprising of:

- Human Resources
- Finance
- IT Services
- Student Services
- Academic Registry
- Admissions & International Recruitment
- Library Services
- Estates
- Facilities including Estates, Security, Catering, Transport Services, Timetabling, Centre for Sport, Cleaning and Student Accommodation
- Chaplaincy
- Marketing and Communications
- Centre of Performing Arts
- Research, Business & Innovation

Whether you call it procurement, purchasing, contracting, tendering or buying we spend over £100 million, excluding Capital, a year on obtaining a vast range of suppliers, works and services from the external market.

## About this Guide

Naturally many organisations will want to sell their services and supplies to the University, so we have put together this guide to assist suppliers and contractors who wish to supply UWE Bristol with goods and services, by:

- Outlining the rules that UWE Bristol must follow
- Explaining where to find details of opportunities to supply the University
- Explaining how to tender for the University's business
- Explaining what is expected of you when undertaking work for us

## How is procurement organised?

UWE Bristol has a Purchasing Team responsible for developing the University's procurement strategy, policy, good practice and procedures to secure best value-for-money procurement. It is also responsible for framework contracts for the majority of supplies<sup>1</sup>, which are commonly used across the University.

Contracts let by the University take a number of forms, including:

**Framework Agreements:** An agreement where terms and conditions are agreed with the provider for certain services, supplies or works which allows call-offs to be made without obligation to the supplier.

**One-off Contracts:** These contracts meet specific needs/individual requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> *Contracts for the purchase of goods, e.g. office stationery, furniture, laboratory supplies- often from SUPC or sector contracts.*

**Term Tenders:** These are tenders accepted from a contractor, to carry out repetitive tasks for a period of time. Work is then issued to these contractors as and when it is available. Any amount or value of work cannot be guaranteed. These are usually for planned and reactive maintenance works.

**Consortiums:** Different procurement authorities can join together to form a Consortium to create tenders as a group. This can provide better value for money as larger quantities can be purchased. UWE Bristol is a member of the Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium (SUPC) and also, as a public body, has access to contracts arranged by the Crown Commercial Services.

**Concessions:** An arrangement whereby the University grants the contractor the right to operate a contract, within stipulated parameters and to benefit from the profit made from the operation, for example laundry equipment.

These tenders will be advertised via the following means as appropriate:

- In-Tend (<https://in-tendhost.co.uk/he.aspx/Home> )
- Contracts Finder (<https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder> )
- Tenders Electronic Daily (<http://ted.europa.eu/TED/main/HomePage.do> - for supply of goods and services expected to exceed the EU thresholds)

## What Rules & Regulations must be followed?

As a public body, there are regulations which the University has to follow when procuring supplies, works and services. It is vital that if you wish to contract with UWE Bristol you are fully aware of the rules and regulations, which govern the way we operate.

The following table summarises the rules that must be followed, depending on the value of the purchase:

Value of supply	Process	Advertising
£10,000 - £30,000	A minimum of 3 quotations/tenders will be invited	
£30,000 - £164,176	A minimum of 4 tenders will usually be invited.	Adverts are published on, In-Tend and Contracts Finder. They may also be placed in other appropriate media, which may include local and national newspapers and relevant trade journals.
Above £164,176	EU Procurement Directives apply (See the following section: 'What are EU Procurement Directives?')	Adverts will be placed in Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU), and any other appropriate media to ensure competition and sufficient coverage, including Contracts Finder and In-Tend.
Above £589,148 "Light Touch" regime	EU Procurement Directives apply (See the following section: 'What are EU Procurement Directives?')	The new light-touch regime (LTR) is a specific set of rules for certain service contracts that tend to be of lower interest to cross-border competition. Those service contracts include certain social, health and education services, defined by Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) codes. The list of services to which the Light-Touch Regime applies is set out in Schedule 3 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (Annex A).  Procurements for LTR services exceeding £589,148 should be advertised on OJEU.

## What are EU Procurement Directives?

We have a legal requirement to comply with the EU Procurement Directives, which govern the way in which public sector procurement is conducted for contracts over certain specified thresholds. The directives and regulations require the University to follow detailed procedures for all procurements above these financial thresholds.

The thresholds that apply to UWE for 2016 / 2017 are:

Services	Supplies	Works	Light Touch Regime
£164,176	£164,176	£4,104,394	£589,148
€209,000	€209,000	€5,225,000	€750,000

Note: the thresholds are reviewed every 2 years. The next review is due in January 2018.

A new version of the EU Public Procurement Directive was enacted into UK law in February 2015. Under the new Directive, UWE Bristol can conduct its procurement using one of five processes: Open, Restricted, Competitive Procedure with Negotiation, Competitive Dialogue and Innovation Partnership. The two most commonly used are:

**Open** – any organisation can express an interest and submit a tender response.

**Restricted** – a two-stage process. Organisations expressing an interest undergo an initial pre-qualification assessment. Only the most suitable applicants are invited to tender.

Where procurements exceed the above thresholds and therefore come within the scope of EU Procurement directives, we must follow these basic requirements:

- Publish a Prior Information Notice (PIN)<sup>2</sup>: this stage is optional;
- Decide which of the processes needs to be used;
- Publish a Tender Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) to give all EU suppliers an equal opportunity to tender; a contract notice will also be published on Contracts Finder.
- Invite tenders according to the procedure being used (open, restricted, etc.), taking account of the minimum timescales imposed, to ensure that reasonable time is given to respond to adverts and prepare submissions;
- Select a suitable contractor using the criteria published in the Tender Notice;
- Place a Contract Award Notice in OJEU and on Contracts Finder.

<sup>2</sup> Advises potential contractors of any forthcoming contracts so that they have the opportunity to prepare resources and tenders. This may be optional depending on the value of the contract.



## Procurement Process: Shortlist Stage

### How do I find out about opportunities?

Details of forthcoming contracts will appear on In-Tend (<https://intendhost.co.uk/he.aspx/Home>). Contact can be made with the Purchasing team to obtain more specific details of the contract. We also use Contracts Finder: [Contracts Finder - GOV.UK](#).

Contracts over EU thresholds are advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). Potential contractors/suppliers should review the official EU website, <http://ted.europa.eu/TED/misc/chooseLanguage.do> regularly to obtain details of potential forthcoming opportunities.

### How do I apply for contracts?

The contract notice or advertisement will advise contractors/suppliers of the procedure to be followed for that particular contract. In some cases a pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ), will be used to assess a supplier's suitability to supply the University and their ability to satisfy the contract. It is essential that you supply all of the information requested and respond by the due date.

### What information do I need to provide?

In a pre-qualification questionnaire you will be asked to provide basic details about your organisation to verify that it can be identified as a legitimate trading organisation, that it has acceptable levels of economic and financial standing, and that it promotes good practice in areas of equal opportunities, protecting the environment and health and safety.

**Financial Information** - suppliers will be asked for certain financial information as we need to be sure that you can meet the requirement for the life of the contract.

**Experience and Technical Ability** - We will ask for further information to assess whether a supplier has the relevant experience, resources and technical ability to carry out the categories of work and to provide the type and quality of service required. In most cases it is necessary to provide details of similar contracts held over recent years and to provide contact details of referees. Some further questions may be asked tailored to the needs of the individual contracts.

**Equal Opportunities** – UWE Bristol is committed to eliminating inequalities in all functions, including procurement. The University strives to ensure that its services are equally accessible and appropriate to the differing needs of all community sectors, regardless of race, gender, marital status, disability, age or sexuality. This section will ask how your company includes equality provisions in its employment and service provision. UWE participates in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index scheme.

**Organisation** - We will ask about your organisational structure to establish whether you have the appropriate resources to fulfil the contract.



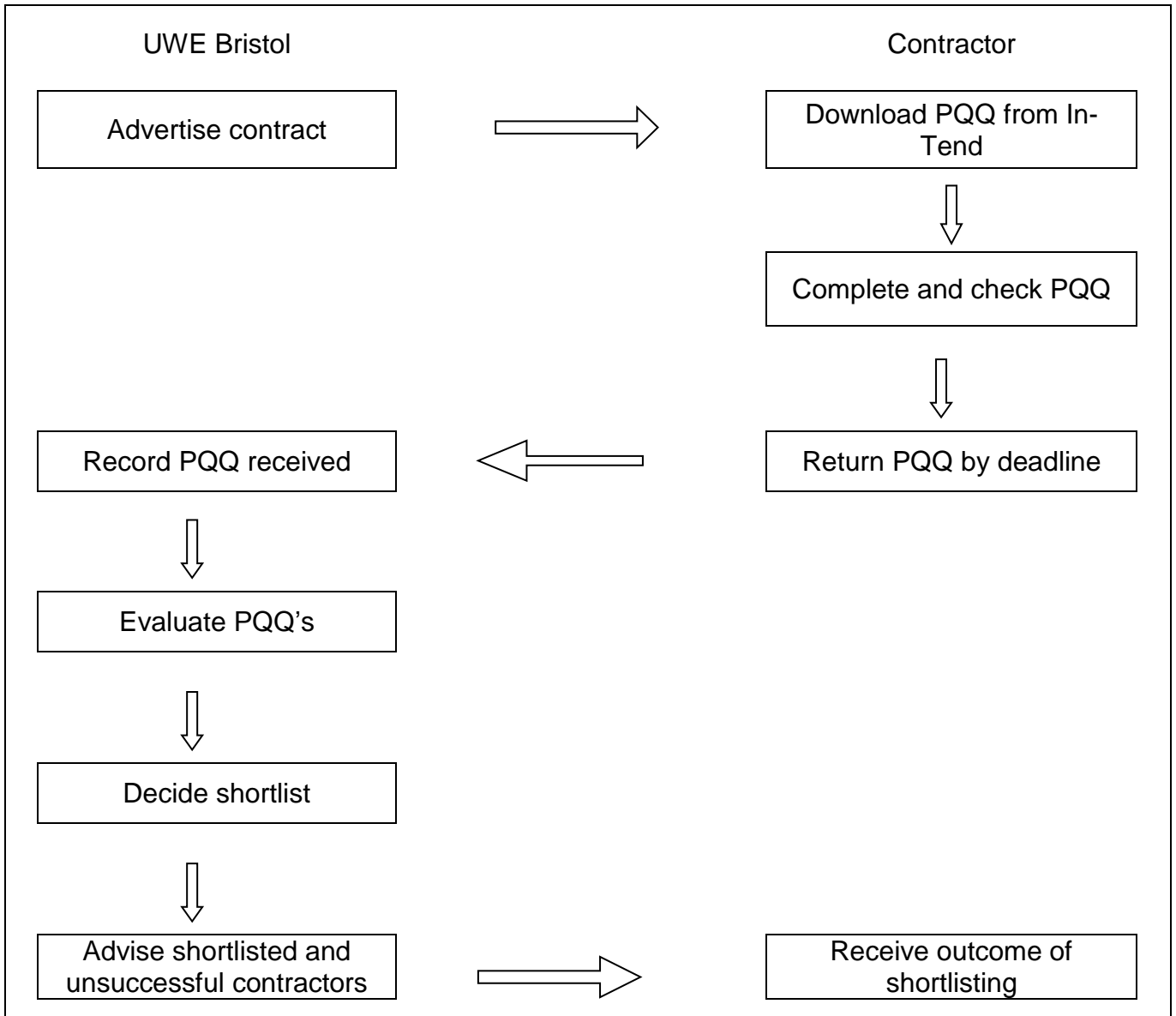
**Sustainability** – As a buyer of over £100 million worth of goods and services each year, our purchasing decisions may have a substantial impact on the environment and the local economy. UWE Bristol is committed to sustainability and has corporately adopted a number of action plans and policy to address the issues surrounding sustainable procurement, particularly in the areas of environmental and resource protection, ethical and fairly traded supply chains and SME and local economic development. The University expects its contractors and suppliers to meet a similar level of commitment where appropriate and will seek information to determine that commitment from potential suppliers.

**Insurance** - You are also asked to provide assurances regarding insurance cover, as UWE Bristol has a responsibility to ensure that organisations with which it contracts carry any statutory insurance cover. The minimum requirement is normally £5,000,000 public / employers liability insurance although this may be reviewed for certain tenders.

**Health and Safety** – UWE Bristol is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for its employees, service users and those affected by its operations. Suppliers and contractors can play a key role in achieving this. Before carrying out work for the University information will be sought concerning tenderers' safety policies and operational safety procedures. You will be expected to know how to manage health and safety in your area of work and to accept responsibility for it.

**It is essential that pre-tender documentation is returned by the date and time stipulated. Documentation received after the deadline will remain unopened.**

## Shortlist Stage



## Procurement Process: Tender Stage

### What if I am invited to tender?

Suppliers who have been shortlisted after evaluation of the PQQ will receive correspondence advising that they are invited to tender and how to download the tender documents from In-Tend. The tender documents will include the following:

**Letter of invitation** – this advises when and where tenders should be submitted.

**Instructions to tenderers** – provides guidance for completing tender documentation.

**Form of Tender** – the form declares that the submitted tender has followed the legal guidelines.

**Instructions** – informs you how the tender should be completed and the rules which the University requires its suppliers to comply with.

**Specification** – sets out what needs to be achieved and includes policies, procedures and guidelines that need to be followed as well as the tender evaluation criteria, which advises how the tender submission will be evaluated and the contract awarded. Tenderers are expected to tender on the basis of this specification, which will include performance targets or criteria to be met in delivering the services, supplies or works.

**Pricing Schedule** – the document where you enter all your prices.

**Alternative Proposals** – this is where you can record any proposal you wish to make that differs from the specification.

**Certificate of Bona Fide Tendering** – the form states that the submission is a bona fide tender.

**Non-compliance/qualification statement** – a form to record any areas in which the tender is not compliant with the instructions, specification or terms and conditions.

**Supplier Appraisal questionnaire** – When a PQQ has not been completed a supplier appraisal form will be required. It requests details about the company to give Bristol UWE more background information.

**Equality and Diversity Questionnaire** – determines if suppliers meet the requirements of the University's Equality policies.

**Terms & Conditions** – defines how Bristol UWE will let the contract, the rules tenderers must comply with and the relationship between the University and the selected contractor.

**WEEE Regulations** – If it is applicable to the purchase, the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulations will be included.

**Tender return label** – states the time and date by which tenders must be received.

**Any additional supporting information** – such as Bristol UWE’s policies that tenderers are expected to follow.

**Tenders must be returned by the date given as any tenders received after the deadline will be remain unopened. This is because all tender documents must be opened at the same time in order to ensure a fair process.**

## **What are the University's expectations of suppliers and contractors?**

UWE Bristol needs to ensure that it offers value-for-money procurement. We therefore expect excellent performance from contractors/suppliers, demonstrated through:

**Value for money** - not only best price, but also best administration costs and best costs related to quality. Suppliers should consider the total, whole life costs of supply when putting together their tenders.

**Quality** - contractors/suppliers are expected to provide services, supplies and works to an appropriate standard of quality, to meet the needs set out in the specification.

**Adherence to University policies and protocols** - we are committed to delivering our services, with consideration for a number of issues including sustainability, equalities, health and safety, and look for suppliers/contractors who are committed to helping us achieve our aims in these respects. Suppliers must also comply with the [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#).

**Integrity** - honesty is expected in all dealings between the University and its contractors in addition to other relevant parties. Under the [Bribery Act](#), in addition to being a criminal offence to give or offer any gift, inducement or reward to an employee of a public body there will also be a new corporate offence of failing to prevent bribery. To that end, it is UWE Bristol's policy not to accept inducements, gifts or hospitality. Tenderers should note that they risk being excluded from the procurement process for failing to observe this requirement.

**Innovation** - suppliers are encouraged to be innovative and suggest new ideas to add value, continuously striving to improve their performance.

**Communication** - suppliers are expected to maintain good communications with the University throughout the contract and will be expected to attend regular contract review meetings.

## **How else might I be evaluated?**

The tender documents may include Method Statements, Risk Assessments and/or Case Studies, which are used to determine how suppliers would manage the service or deal with particular issues. In responding to method statements, risk assessments and case studies suppliers are expected to show what methods and procedures they propose to use in undertaking the work, showing initiative and innovation in delivering the service.

At any time during the tender process you may be invited to give a presentation or attend an interview as part of your submission. The University will often conduct site visits to see first-hand how tenderers organise their work.

In many cases a pre-tender meeting will also be held to discuss the tender and clarify any issues raised from the tender documents.

## **How is the contract awarded?**

Tender evaluation is always carried out in a comprehensive, equitable, auditable and transparent manner. To ensure fairness the evaluation criteria and method will be clearly defined in the tender documents.

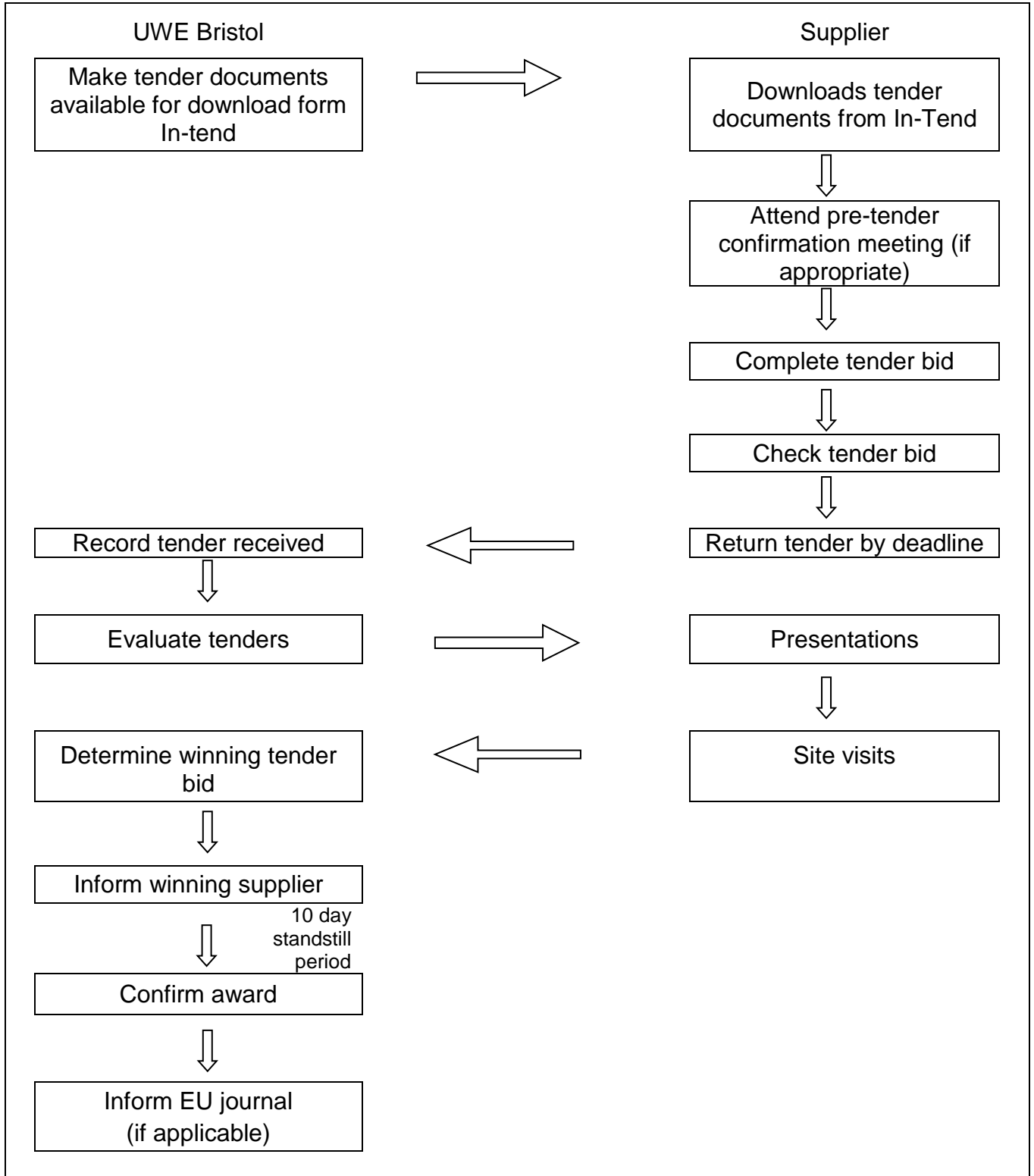
The University must be sure that in selecting a supplier/contractor it is getting value for money and the services will be delivered effectively. Evaluation is therefore based on two key criteria – how the tender proposes to deliver the contract (quality) and the cost of the contract (price). The University is looking for the best balance of quality and price, not just the lowest price. In most cases additional criteria will also be used in evaluating tenderers.

Contracts are awarded to the provider who is considered to offer best value-for-money, having regard to price, quality and best value – sometimes referred to as “most economically advantageous tender” and to be best able to meet the University’s specification. Evaluation of the most economically advantageous tender can incorporate a number of factors including:

- Financial viability of the tender
- Quality issues
- Technical merit
- After sales service
- Delivery date
- Technical back-up
- Experience
- Competence
- Policy issues such as equality & sustainability

The criteria to be used in any particular instance will be listed in the tender documents. The weightings of the criteria may also be given. The tender stage is summarised in the flow chart on the following page.

## Tender Stage





## **Can I get some feedback?**

If your tender is unsuccessful you should ask for feedback from the Purchasing team. Within the limits of confidentiality, we can provide tenderers with feedback on which aspects of their bid were strongest and which were weakest, along with advice on improving and developing for the future.

Under the EU directives you are legally entitled to request this feedback from us. Being unsuccessful in one contract does not mean you will be unsuccessful in future. You should use the feedback to help you improve for upcoming opportunities.

## **How are contracts monitored?**

You will be expected to provide the service in accordance with the requirements set out in the contract documentation and your proposals to carry out the contract. In order to ensure that we are continually providing value for money services to our community, suppliers and contractors working for the University are regularly monitored to assess their compliance with predefined performance criteria. The contract conditions are strictly applied, and explanations sought if a contractor fails to perform to the levels required.

## **Is UWE Bristol using e-Procurement?**

The University uses Agresso Purchase to Pay (P2P) system through which purchase orders are generated and invoices paid. Purchase orders are emailed directly to suppliers. Suppliers can email invoices directly to Accounts Payable [accounts.payable@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:accounts.payable@uwe.ac.uk) for payment. The University also uses purchasing cards which are used like traditional credit cards to purchase low value, ad-hoc supplies.

## **Where can I get further information?**

If you are seeking information regarding a specific contract please use the contact details provided in the advert/contract notice and tendering details.

General information can be found on the [Purchasing section](#) of the University's website. Further information can be obtained by e-mailing the Purchasing Team at [purchasing@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:purchasing@uwe.ac.uk).

Should you have any comments or feedback on this guide we would be happy to hear from you, as we are always looking to develop the advice, guidance and support we offer to potential contractors. Please contact us by e-mailing [purchasing@uwe.ac.uk](mailto:purchasing@uwe.ac.uk)