



University of the
West of England

Guidelines on completing a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire

for Suppliers and Contractors

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The Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) is used as a means of short listing applicants, either to go on to the next stage of the tendering process, or for assessing an organisation's suitability for our standing lists. The questionnaire will seek information on a number of key areas, which will then be assessed.

Financial Information

In requesting financial information from tenderers we are looking to establish their latest trading performance, for evidence that the contractor is financially stable and that they have the necessary financial resources to complete the contract.

Tenderers are asked to submit financial accounts/information for the past 3 years of trading, or for the period available if trading for less than three years. Private limited companies and public limited companies must submit full accounts as registered with Companies House. Where these are not available, we require a statement of the organisation's turnover, Profit & Loss and cash flow position for the most recent full year of trading and an end period balance sheet.

Further information may be requested should it be needed to enable us to fully assess a tenderer's financial position and suitability for the contract.

Depending on the nature of the work, particularly where it is estates related, the University of the West of England (Bristol UWE) may require the selected contractor to hold a bond or a parent company guarantee, which guarantees the contractor's obligations under the contract. Should a bond be required, you will be asked at this stage to provide an assurance of the organisation's willingness to arrange this.

Experience and Technical Ability

You are asked to provide details of similar contracts you have worked on over recent years as well as providing contact details of referees with whom confidential references can be directly obtained by Bristol UWE.

Please ensure that the referees you nominate are able to verify that you have carried out the type of work you are applying for.

We may also ask further questions tailored to the needs of the individual contract. Your response to these questions will be used to assess whether you have the required level of resources, skills and abilities to tender.

Your technical ability and competence to deliver the contract will be assessed further should you be short listed and invited to tender. At this stage the University may visit your site and you may be invited to give a presentation to a panel.

Organisation

We will ask about your organisational structure to establish whether you have the appropriate resources to fulfil the contract. We may also ask for information on professional qualifications held by staff and professional or trade bodies to which your organisation belongs.

Insurance

You will be advised of the insurance requirements in the pre-qualification questionnaire and insurance cover must be in place before a supplier/contractor can commence work for Bristol UWE. If you do not have the required cover in place at the time of completing the PQQ you will be asked to provide an assurance that, should you be selected for standing lists or awarded the contract, you will ensure that your insurance cover is appropriate.

All contractors need to have Public Liability and Employer's Liability Insurances, to cover against negligence causing injury, loss or damage to third parties, third party property and employees. The minimum level required is £5 million.

Consultants are also required to have Professional Indemnity Insurance which covers them or their firm should a third party sustain injury, loss, or damage as a consequence of poor design or poor professional advice.

Health and Safety

Bristol UWE needs to ensure that only competent contractors are employed to undertake work on its behalf. We therefore look at a contractors' system for the control of health and safety.

All employers have a legal duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all employees whilst at work and to ensure that their business is conducted in such a way that risks to the health or safety of anyone who could be affected by their activities are minimised. You will be expected to know how to manage health and safety in your area of work and to accept responsibility for it.

You will be required to submit a Health and Safety Policy, which sets out how you manage health and safety in your organisation. The policy must be specific to your firm, setting out who does what, and when, and how they do it. By law, if you employ five or more people you must have a written health and safety policy. If you employ fewer than 5 people less formal documentation is usually acceptable, although we still need to be sure of your commitment to health and safety and your understanding of health and safety legislation as it applies to your business.

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Your Health and Safety Policy must consist of:

General Policy Statement/Statement of Intent - this is a statement in simple terms, of your general aims with regard to your employees' health and safety. A company director should sign and date the statement.

Organisation - the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 places responsibility for health and safety ultimately with the employer. Many of the duties arising from that responsibility may however be delegated to managers and supervisors and your statement should show clearly how these duties are allocated. In this section wherever possible key job titles should be named and their responsibilities defined. You may wish to draw a family tree to depict the organisation.

Arrangements - this section should describe the systems and procedures for ensuring employees' health and safety. All of the hazards within the workplace should be addressed, for example safe systems of work for using equipment and hazardous substances, procedures for conducting risk assessments and dealing with fire, and arrangements for providing training and first aid.

Communication - the policy should also make clear how the information within the policy will be communicated to your work force.

Note: The submission of a policy statement will not be sufficient to meet this requirement.

Equal Opportunities

In the procurement of works, supplies and services Bristol UWE must ensure that contractors do not discriminate in either their employment practices or in contract delivery.

There is a legal framework surrounding equalities, which all employers have a duty to follow, including:

- Race Relations Act 1976 and Amendment Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Bristol UWE remains responsible for meeting the duties and complying with legislation even where functions are carried out wholly, or in part, by external suppliers. We therefore expect everyone working on our behalf to practise equal opportunities and to be able to demonstrate that they take all reasonably practicable steps to allow access and equal treatment in employment and service delivery for all.

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We ask whether tenderers have had any finding of unlawful discrimination made against them by any court or industrial tribunal, or whether they have been the subject of formal investigation by the CRE, EOC or DRC. We emphasise however, that we will not exclude contractors just because they answer yes to these questions. Where you do have a finding or investigation to report, it is important to provide evidence that the issue has been rectified and that reoccurrence has been prevented.

We also ask potential contractors to supply a copy of their equal opportunities policy, which should clearly detail the procedures and practices in operation designed to secure equality of opportunity.

Your equal opportunities policy should consist of:

Policy Statement - a statement of intent whereby the company declares its intention to operate a policy that is in no way unlawfully or unfairly discriminatory.

Programme of Action - attracting applicants, selection, promotion, transfer, training, dismissal (including redundancy), positive action, monitoring, grievance, disciplinary and disputes procedures and victimisation.

The policy must also identify a senior member of management who is responsible for the policy's overall implementation.

The policy should be signed and dated by a senior member of the management team or by a Board Member and distributed throughout the workforce.

Environment

Sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone now and for generations to come. Procurement decisions have a direct influence on how well we can meet our sustainability aims, and we recognise that the organisations from whom we buy our services, supplies and works must share our commitment to sound environmental performance and improvement.

If relevant to the contract, contractors may be required to demonstrate their technical capacity in relation to the environment. This can be in the form of EMAS (Eco-Management & Audit Scheme), which is a voluntary management system which commits to following environmental legislation, to the prevention of pollution and to continuous environmental performance. Qualifications may also be required but again only where environmental issues are directly related to the contract.

Format and return of the PQQ

It is essential that pre-tender documentation is returned by the date and time stipulated; any documentation received after the deadline will be disregarded.

Please make the document as readable as possible, taking care to index any attachments/enclosures and ensure they are:

- a) in date
- b) in the correct order
- c) marked with the question number

Documents should be 'bound' in one form or another – preferably in a ring binder or spiral bound. Please do not staple, paperclip or heat-bind documents.

The total response should be limited to one A4 ring binder.