

reasons, e.g. stating why we preferred one application over another on a particular criterion, even though both were broadly assessed as being 'good'.

We may choose to ask applicants supplementary questions if, for example, certain aspects of their application require clarification. (Note: this does not relieve applicants from complying with the Conditions of Tender).

Where Section 1's essential criteria are not met (i.e. 'poor' or 'unacceptable'), bids will go no further and unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing. The application will not be considered against the desirable criteria.

Phase 2 – Assessment against desirable criteria:

Applications assessed against Section 2 desirable criteria for applicants meeting Section 1 essential criteria.

We will assess the extent to which remaining applications have demonstrated compliance with each desirable criterion as 'unacceptable', 'poor', 'acceptable', 'good' or 'excellent'.

We will also assess the information provided in Section 3, if any, in accordance with the above ratings.

We will compare the applications against others received and identify the applications that best meet the desirable criteria, on the basis of the information submitted in the application.

Where applications are broadly comparable, we may distinguish between them with reasons, e.g. stating why we preferred one application over another on a particular criterion, even though both were broadly assessed as being 'good'.

We may choose to ask applicants supplementary questions if, for example, certain aspects of their application requires clarification. (Note: this does not relieve applicants from complying with the Conditions of Tender).

Phase 3: Assessment against value for money

Sealed envelopes containing the Price Bid Forms are opened for the short-listed applicants.

Applications assessed against the remaining Section 1 criterion – price and value for money – on the basis of 'unacceptable', 'poor', 'acceptable', 'good' or 'excellent'.

Short-listing of applications that best meet the price

	and value for money criteria, compared to other applicants.	
Stage 4: Possible interviews/site visits	<p>We will shortlist the best bids submitted at Stage 2. The shortlisted bidders may be invited to an interview to clarify their bids.</p> <p>Phase 4: Interviews If we consider it necessary or useful, we may invite some applicants to attend an interview/ give a short presentation to a panel from the Commission. We would ask those applicants to be represented by individuals who can demonstrate their commitment to the contract and their expertise.</p> <p>Alternatively, members of the Commission's assessment panel may wish to undertake a site visit at an applicant's premises, and also conduct an interview/ invite the applicant to give a short presentation.</p> <p>Where we do this, applicants will be given no less than 3 working days notice by telephone if they are required to attend an interview or hold a site visit. Where we invite applicants to give a presentation, we will circulate any questions we wish them to answer in advance.</p> <p>Phase 5 – Final Evaluation: After completion of all the interviews/ site visits (if held), we will re-evaluate the applications still be considered. We will take into account performance against the essential criteria, desirable criteria, additional information submitted by you (as far as is relevant to the criteria) and information gained through interview and site visits (if any).</p> <p>We will then carry out a final evaluation of the short-listed applications against all the criteria and, applying a weighting of quality 60% and value for money 40%, will select those applicants that best meet the essential and desirable criteria overall. Contracts will not automatically be awarded to bidders offering the lowest price.</p> <p>Phase 6 - Presentation to Tender Panel: Presentation to LSC Tender Panel of the outcome of the tendering exercise and who the proposed successful applicants are.</p>	<p>W/c 25 June – w/c 2 July 2007</p> <p>W/c 9 July 2007</p>
Stage 5: Award of bids	<p>We will award contracts to the bidders who best meet the criteria overall and who together can provide the capacity required by the service.</p> <p>Offers sent out to successful applicants "subject to contract".</p>	16 July 2007

	Unsuccessful applicants notified.	
Stage 6: Service Preparation	The selected bidders will make preparations for providing the service, including working with us on training staff, systems testing and assessing readiness of the service. Contracts drawn up for signature ¹	16 July – 31 October 2007
Stage 7: Service commences	Contract start date.	31 October 2007

¹ The contract will include terms based on the tender documents and the successful applicants' Application Forms and Price Bid Forms along with other standard terms.