

Quality Standards Update

Following the publication of the family tender (2011) process on 5th July 2011, the Commission have received a number of queries as to “whether or not the LSC will accept requests from providers seeking to change their Quality Standard that they hold throughout the life of the standard civil and crime 2010 contract?”

After consideration the LSC can confirm that the following approach should be taken in relation to this matter:

Maintaining a Quality Standard throughout the life of a contract (N.B this approach is also relevant for 2010 contract providers)

The LSC requires Providers to hold a quality standard (i.e. Lexcel/ SQM) throughout the life of the contract.

Requests made by the provider to change the quality standard that they hold throughout the life of the contract will be considered only under the following circumstances:

1. The provider must have successfully achieved the quality standard that they opted to hold at the point of contract signature prior to submitting a request to change quality standard.

<i>New Provider</i>	
SQM standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desktop Audit • Pre Quality Mark audit
Lexcel standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lexcel audit • Complete any required corrective action
<i>Existing Holders</i>	
SQM standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass Post Quality Mark audit
Lexcel standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass annual Lexcel audit

The provider must ensure that they continue to hold a quality standard throughout the life of the contract. Requests made to change a quality standard where a provider applies for one standard (e.g. in advance of a tender process) but has not successfully completed the former quality standard will not be accepted by the LSC.

2. The provider must successfully achieve the new quality standard prior to the expiry of the quality standard they opted to hold at the point of signing the contract.

NB. A provider can only request to switch quality standards once during the life of the contract.

Steps for a provider to take when submitting a request to change quality standard during the life of the contract

1. Requests should be made in writing by a provider to their contract manager.

2. The request should include evidence that the provider has successfully achieved the standard that they originally opted to hold at point of signature of their current contract.
3. The contract manager will then confirm whether or not they are satisfied with the evidence that they have seen and will confirm in writing to the provider the outcome of the request.
4. The Contract Manager will need to inform Provider Assurance of a change to the provider's quality standard, who will then update this information on the CWA database.

Service Development

August 2011