

Guide to Submitting a Tender

- 1** The purpose of the General Medical Council (GMC) is to protect, promote and maintain the health and safety of the public by ensuring proper standards in the practice of medicine.
- 2** The GMC is subject to the EU and UK Procurement Regulations and therefore has a public duty to ensure fair, transparent and open competition in its tendering processes.
- 3** This document is intended as a guide to give advice to suppliers when completing tender documentation. It is important to bear in mind that all tender opportunities are different and as such need to be treated completely separately. However, it is possible for suppliers to have a good idea about what to include in their tender documents to give the best possible chance of being considered for the award of a contract.

Notification of Tender Opportunities

Information on GMC tender opportunities can be found in the following places:

- i** <http://www.mytenders.co.uk> All tenders for GMC work are published here Suppliers are strongly advised to register with this site, which is free. GMC opportunities do appear on other sites; however, this is the original source for downloading documentation and submitting completed tenders.
- ii** Any tenders above the relevant EU threshold will be published in the Official Journal of the European Union. This is in addition to publication on [mytenders.co.uk](http://www.mytenders.co.uk).
- iii** GMC use government frameworks where appropriate. These are maintained by the Crown Commercial Service who have also published the following document which you may find useful.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/become-a-crown-commercial-service-supplier/becoming-a-supplier-through-the-crown-commercial-service-what-you-need-to-know>
- iv** The GMC also uses other public sector framework awarding organisations on occasion including Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO), NHS Shared Business Service (SBS) and ESPO.
- v** Contract opportunities from across the UK public sector can be found on the Contracts Finder website (<https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>).

How to Respond to a Tender

A tender itself can be compared to a CV or an exam where you clearly set out, with evidence, why you should be awarded the contract. It is an opportunity to be innovative and promote how you are different from other organisations.

It is important to include relevant experience. If you do not have experience, you can still demonstrate how you would run the contract and why you should be awarded the contract.

You need to give yourself sufficient time to prepare your tender response. Therefore, after registering with the site(s) above it is your responsibility to set up notifications or check on a regular basis for any suitable opportunities.

When an opportunity arises, you should download the tender. You should read the tender thoroughly prior to starting to plan and draft your response.

Deadlines

Tenders will state a response deadline and late responses are generally disqualified.

Similarly, most tenders allow a period for submitting clarification questions. This is your opportunity to ask questions about anything you do not understand or would like further information on.

Note that the clarification period will have a fixed end date. This is to allow GMC time to collate all clarification questions, produce and then publish the responses. The clarification responses are published to all bidders via mytenders.co.uk allowing bidders time to revise their bid if necessary, prior to the submission deadline.

Evaluation Criteria

Public sector organisations must publish their evaluation criteria. We do this within the tender documents, so take careful note of these.

As within an exam, this provides an indication of where you may best direct your efforts.

Tenders do vary, but it is common practice to split tender evaluation into 2 high level criteria, Quality and Commercial, and then to have sub-criteria, for example:

Criteria	Criteria Relative Weighting	Sub-Criteria	Sub-Criteria Relative Weighting	Actual Weighting
Quality	70%	Q1	50%	35%
		Q2	30%	21%
		Q3	20%	14%
Commercial	30%	Price	80%	24%
		T&Cs	20%	6%

In the above example, the first quality requirement is the most important and scoring low here would seriously impact your chances of winning the tender.

Commercially, price will usually be the most important criteria, so the majority of tender awards will be relatively price sensitive.

Structure

The tender will generally provide information on how the response should be structured

and formatted. Stick to this and note any size limits (pages, files sizes, etc) you must adhere to.

If you need to provide additional information that won't easily fit into the response structure then provide these in additional sections or as separate documents, but in both cases ensure that you provide a specific reference to them within your response.

Content

GMC tenders always ask for responses of the highest quality, based on the following criteria:

- clear answers, focusing on the specific requirement being addressed
- a sufficiently detailed level of information to demonstrate how requirements would be delivered
- honest answers
- a well-structured response that is easy for evaluators to navigate, with accurate references to additional information provided in further sections or included as annexes
- answers clearly tailored to meet the GMC's specific needs
- clear indication of experience
- responses that demonstrate the supplier will deliver above the organisation's requirements and expectations

Read and answer each requirement/question carefully. You must provide details of how your proposal will meet the specific requirement. Your response needs to be concise whilst also providing sufficient relevant detail. Generic responses that are no more than 'sales talk' are unlikely to score well. Similarly, if you find that you keep repeating the same information in answer to multiple requirements, it is worth reviewing your response as it is likely that you are not being specific enough.

As an example:

Criteria: Please describe how you will meet GMCs operational requirements.

Three bidders provide the following answers:

- a) "We confirm that we will meet your operational requirements".
- b) "We have x years experience of delivering a similar service to numerous clients, meeting the agreed service levels and performance indicators and have y staff who are fully qualified in this area – a case study is attached as annex z".
- c) "Delivery of x, your operational requirements, is our core service. We have won y

awards (references/case studies) for this over the last 3 years. We propose to deliver the service by and have identified the following personnel for this (CV's are attached as <file refs>). We would look to work with GMC to improve the service and have identified z as an area where we believe this is possible based upon our experience of

These responses would be scored with c) highest, b) in the middle, and a) with a very low score.

GMC tenders are scored using the following standard methodology:

0	Failure to respond or irrelevant information provided
1	Response is poor and fails to meet the requirement(s)
2	Response is unsatisfactory and partially meets the requirement(s)
3	Response is acceptable and meets the minimum requirement(s)
4	Response is good – better than merely acceptable
5	Response is excellent, exceeds the requirement and gives added value

Terms and Conditions

All tenders will include the GMC's intended terms and conditions, and as part of your tender submission you are asked to provide a mark-up of these highlighting any areas of suggested change.

Note that your response forms part of the tender evaluation, consequently no changes outside your submitted mark-up can be considered if you are awarded the contract.

IS Security Questionnaire

Information security is of critical importance to the GMC. Where appropriate, tender documentation will include an IS Security Questionnaire for you to complete. This questionnaire is your opportunity to demonstrate the data security measures that you have in place. Due to the sensitivity of much of the data that GMC works with, we are not able to contract with organisations that cannot give necessary assurance of their information security processes. When issued, the IS Security Questionnaire is part of the foundation of a successful bid.

Remember:

- Evaluation of tender submissions is done purely on what you write and submit. Evaluators cannot make assumptions, even if they know your company well, so if you do not state it, you will not get credit for it.

- If someone reads your response and they are left with questions of the How/Why/Who variety, then you have not provided a full answer.
- It is a good idea to get someone within your organisation who is unconnected with your bid to review it prior to submission to identify any areas of confusion or lack of clarity, errors, omissions, assumptions or inconsistencies.
- Spell check
- Ensure that any acronyms are explained