**Procurement Journey**

**C&SS Award Criteria Guidance**

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While not required, award criteria can enable an organisation to assess a service provider’s bid to deliver the service in question. They must be relevant and proportionate to the particular requirement and should therefore be determined on a case-by-case basis. Award criteria may, for example, include:

* + understanding service requirements and implementation proposals;
	+ achieving outcomes for people who use services;
	+ staffing structures and how these have been calculated to meet the needs of the people that use services group;
	+ proposals for service improvement/development;
	+ proposals for monitoring and evaluating service delivery outcomes and user satisfaction; and
	+ whole life costs.

 **Taking account of resources which service providers are able to bring to bear in delivering the service**

Where the availability of resources, for example a building, has a bearing on a service provider’s ability to perform the contract, it may be assessed as part of the evaluation of the quality of the service being offered.

An organisation should award a contract or framework agreement on the basis of the tender which represents best price quality ratio. In doing so, an organisation should determine how it intends to evaluate quality and cost or price and whether, for example, it intends to apply a minimum pass mark to an individual technical question. An organisation should consider inviting people who use services to contribute questions which can be put to potential service providers at interview. Any questions must be relevant to the contract outputs and outcomes and the contract award criteria established for the procurement process. These must also be objective and agreed and disclosed to service providers in advance. These should be evaluated, scored and be objective.

An organisation should also determine the appropriate best price quality ratio for the particular procurement. For example, it may be appropriate for a tender for equipment to be conducted on the basis of 30% quality, 70% cost if the equipment meets manufacturing quality standards. **However,** **when procuring care and support services, greater emphasis should be placed on quality rather than cost or price.** In this instance, it might beappropriate, for example, to use a ratio of 70% quality, 30% cost.

Where an organisation applies award criteria, an organisation must make this available to potential service providers in advance as part of the requirement to publish in the contract notice the conditions for participation. It cannot score with reference to other factors or change the award criteria without communicating this to the tenderers and this may require a fresh tendering period. An organisation should ensure that it clearly specifies the information it requires to allow a valid comparison of unit costs and to ensure that, for example, there is clarity about whether bids include the cost of potential staff transfers under the TUPE Regulations