

Specialist Courier Services Framework Agreement (RM3799)

Frequently Asked Questions





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1. How do I access the framework pricing schedules?

All public sector bodies who intend to view the framework prices are required to complete a Customer Access Agreement (CAA) that is specific to RM3799 Specialist Courier Services Agreement.

The CAA does not commit you to using RM3799 as a route to market but it requires you to acknowledge that any price schedules shared are treated as “commercial in confidence” and provide assurance that you will not share these outside of your organisation.

Once your CAA has been signed and completed, please return by email to:

info@crowcommercial.gov.uk, or to
postal.services@ypo.co.uk

Price schedules will be sent via email from the team at CCS or YPO.

2. What is the duration of RM3799 Specialist Courier Services Agreement?

The RM3799 Specialist Courier Services Agreement has been awarded for a term of 3 years with an option to extend for an additional 12 months.

3. What is the maximum term that I can award a call off contract for?

No call off agreement can extend beyond 2 years after the framework expiry date. For example, if the framework expires on 21/02/2020, all call off agreements would cease to be effective from 21/02/2022 at the very latest.

4. Can I award a call off agreement after the expiry date of the framework (even if I started the competition before the framework expired)?

No, it is not possible to award a call off agreement after the expiry date of the framework agreement. All call off agreements should be awarded prior to the framework expiry.

5. Can I extend my call off agreement after the expiry date of the framework agreement?

Yes you can but only if there is a provision to extend written into your call off agreement. For example, your call off agreement may provide the expiry date of 01/01/2018 with the option to extend for a further 12 months. Any provision to extend should be stated clearly in the call off contract at the point of award.

6. Can I directly award a call off agreement on this framework?

No, award on this framework is by further competition only. Contracting Bodies are only permitted to award a call off agreement to framework Suppliers following a further competition process.



7. How much time do I need to give Suppliers to provide a tender response?

There is no minimum competition duration on this framework. The length of time that Contracting Bodies allow framework Suppliers to provide responses to a tender is left to the discretion of the Contracting Body.

Contracting Bodies should be advised that Suppliers may need longer to respond to a more complicated requirement and therefore should reflect this accordingly.

CCS suggest Contracting Bodies competing a standard requirement to allow a competition time of 6 to 8 weeks from publication of the Invitation to Quote (ITQ) to award; and longer for a more complicated competition.

8. How were Supplier bids evaluated and does my call off competition need to follow the same criteria?

The evaluation criteria was 90 % Quality and 10 % Price at Framework level.

At further competition the evaluation criteria is 70 % Quality and 30 % Price with a variation tolerance of +/- 10 % if required.

9. Do I have to conduct my competition through the CCS eSourcing system?

No, Contracting Bodies are permitted to use any method of managing their competition that is most convenient to them. Some organisations prefer to use their own eSourcing systems. Use of the CCS eSourcing system is provided free-of-charge to all Contracting Bodies, however its use is not compulsory.

There is guidance on the CCS website to advise how to use the CCS eSourcing system. Please see the links below:

Customer Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esourcing-suite-guidance-for-customers>

Supplier Guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esourcing-tool-guidance-for-Suppliers>

10. Does CCS provide template tender documentation for this framework?

No, there are no template tender documents for this framework other than the template order form and standard terms and conditions.

CCS do provide template tender documents on the CCS eSourcing system for generic use but these are not specific to this framework. Links to guidance for the CCS eSourcing system are provided in the point above.

11. Can I amend or make additions to the standard call off terms?

Contracting Bodies may amend or add to the standard call off terms and conditions in order to make them more suitable to their own requirements.

Please note that there should be no material changes to the original standard terms.

All amendments or additions should originate from the Contracting Body only.

12. Do I have to complete the Call Off Order Form before I begin my competition?

It is best practice to complete as much of the Order Form as possible prior to beginning your competition and to include it amongst the suite of tender documents provided to bidding Suppliers. By allowing bidding Suppliers to view the Order Form up-front, there is no ambiguity about the terms of your requirement. Suppliers can also be asked to confirm their acceptance of the terms as part of their bid response as a pass / fail question. Those Suppliers that have concerns about your terms may then raise them during clarification period, allowing you to make any changes publicly whilst the competition is still live.

Completing the Order Form post award places the awarded Supplier in a greater position to negotiate terms that are more favourable to them. This process is also not transparent and arguably can result in a disparity between the terms that bidders assumed the contract would be based on and the contract that is actually awarded.

13. My requirement includes services from more than one lot of this framework agreement. Can I invite suppliers from more than one framework lot (conduct a multi-lot competition)?

Yes you can conduct a call off competition across more than one framework lot, but there are some considerations and restrictions to doing this:

- All suppliers on the relevant lots MUST be invited to compete, e.g. if your competition spans services from Lots 1 and 2, then all suppliers from Lots 1 and 2 must be given the opportunity to compete but,
- Suppliers may only bid for the elements of work that they have a framework agreement to provide services for. For example, if your competition invites suppliers from Lots 1 and 2:
 - Lot 1 suppliers may only bid for the services within scope of Lot 1
 - Lot 2 suppliers may only bid for the services within scope of Lot 2
 - Suppliers on both lots may bid for the whole requirement



When evaluating bids for multi-lot competitions, the different areas of the requirement should be evaluated separately. All Lot 1 responses should be evaluated together and all Lot 2 responses should be evaluated together. Where suppliers have responded with a bid for the combined requirement, the response should be evaluated by addressing the services for each framework lot in isolation. Contracting Authorities are NOT permitted to disadvantage suppliers because of their inability to provide a combined solution.

Some evaluation questions may be applicable to both areas of the specification; where this is the case, all suppliers can be evaluated together for those questions to avoid duplication.

Contracting Authorities should be aware that multi-lot competitions may result in multi-supplier / dual supplier awards.

14. If I have a requirement to send documents (such as patient records) alongside items classed as dangerous / hazardous, may I include these in the scope of my call off agreement?

Yes, CCS acknowledge that in some cases packages delivered under the terms of RM3799 will need to be accompanied by non-hazardous packages, e.g. patient records may need to accompany pathology samples. There should, however, be no doubt that the competition is primarily for the delivery of items within the scope of the framework lot you are using.

Likewise, where the Contracting Authority requirement contains small elements of services from another framework lot it is permissible to include these services within the scope of the competition. This does not constitute a multi-lot competition as the majority of the requirement sits within one framework lot.

15. My incumbent provider is not on the framework agreement. Can they be added to the framework Supplier list?

No, all Suppliers awarded a place on RM3799 Specialist Courier Services will remain for the duration of the framework agreement.

16. Are framework Suppliers permitted to use sub-contractors?

Yes, framework Suppliers are permitted to use sub-contractors. There is a process in place for Suppliers to request permission from CCS to add any new sub-contractors.

17. What is the role of CCS on this framework agreement?

CCS conduct Supplier Management with all framework Suppliers. They also act as an escalation point in the event that Contracting Bodies are unable to resolve any concerns or disputes at a local level.



18. I need to make an amendment to my call off contract with my awarded Supplier. How do I do this?

There is a contract variation form within the standard terms of your call off agreement. This can be located in Schedule 12 of the call off agreement.

19. Can I include service credits in my call off agreement?

Yes, service credits are permissible within your call off agreement.

20. What is the service level threshold?

This is the point at which service credits come into effect.

21. What is the service credit cap?

This is the financial limit that the total value of service credits incurred may not exceed within any given year. If service failures have generated sufficient service credits to breach this maximum limit the Supplier should be viewed as having incurred a Critical Service Failure.

22. Who can call off this framework agreement?

Any public sector organisation in the UK. This includes, but is not limited to: Police Authorities, HM Prisons, HM Courts, Schools, Universities, Local Authorities, Devolved administrations (Scottish, Northern Irish and Welsh), Central Government Departments and their associated bodies, Charities and not for profit agencies, Housing Associations, NHS bodies, Fire Services, Ambulance Services.

If you are in any doubt over whether or not your organisation is included within the scope of this competition, please consult the customer list that accompanied the Contract Notice for this competition which may be downloaded [here](#).

This list may also be requested from the CCS Courier Services Category by contacting info@crowncommercial.gov.uk.

23. Is volumetric pricing permitted on this Framework Agreement?

Yes, volumetric pricing permitted on this Framework Agreement.



24. Suppliers will not share their framework prices with me directly? Why is this?

Suppliers are aware that customers are requested to complete, sign and return a customer access agreement (CAA) to CCS before any pricing is provided to a customer.

The CAA is available for download from the framework webpage.

Once received, CCS will provide pricing for the lot/s you have requested for this framework to you, via an email attachment.

The CAA provides assurance to CCS and its suppliers that your organisation acknowledges the commercial sensitivity of the framework prices and that they will not be used in such a way to compromise the commercial interests of the framework and its suppliers.

25. Do I need to notify CCS when making an award on RM3799?

CCS request that all customers do notify us when awarding a call off agreement to a Framework Supplier. Doing so, helps CCS to understand which Suppliers are more successful in gaining business and to identify Suppliers that are not actively participating in competitions. Customers are not obligated to notify CCS when making a Call Off Agreement award, but doing so helps CCS to improve the standard of the Framework provision.

26. Are suppliers on this framework agreement required to be compliant to the ISO 27001 standard?

Yes, all suppliers on RM3799 are required to hold certification proving compliance to both the ISO 27001 standard and the standards of Cyber Essentials Plus. A full list of which suppliers are currently compliant with these standards can be obtained from CCS by contacting info@crowncommercial.gov.uk.