



Business & Computing Examinations (BCE) LONDON (UK)

BCE Procurement Process

All of our business is procured through a competitive process - whether it be comparing quotes for low value purchases, right up to a formal tender process for high risk/high value contracts.

Those responsible must seek three quotes. Preferably these quotes need to be in writing, but this could mean a catalogue listing, written record of a verbal quote, or an email. Where possible, two must be from suitable local suppliers.

Those responsible will provide suppliers with a written specification (including the selection criteria), a copy of the model conditions; when proposals need to be received by and also who to contact for any enquiries.

Those responsible will determine the most satisfactory proposal using the criteria in the specification and cost. Once the decision has been made all suppliers who made proposals will be notified of the decision.

Supply and Inventory Management

Over a length of time, say 3 or 4 months; an average consumption of items can be determined. BCE will keep the following on hand at any given time, so as to replace none working:

- 2 loaded computers
- 2 sets of toner
- 2 boxes of bond paper
- 1 box markers
- 1 ream of manual covers
- a pack of courier bags
- 100 bags of examination paper containers

(These are minimum/lowest items which should always be available)

Placing Orders

For all purchases, a purchase order form has to be completed, checked and verified. Examples of office purchase:

- Office stationery (markers, pens, folders, bond paper, toilet paper) stationery is purchased in
 - bulk, not one item at a time i.e. buying 2 markers is not allowed.
- Leaflets
- Office furniture
- Office equipment (software, printer cartridge, computers etc.)
- Travel tickets (airline, bus, car hire etc)

All orders to be authorised by the Director or Programme Development Management.

Examples of information to include:

Printing Orders

Printing Orders i.e. Manuals/Leaflets	Stationary Orders
Specify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single/Double sided • Black & White • Colour (green, blue etc) • Quantity Size (A4/A5/A3) • Bind type 	Stationary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 x Files • 3 x Pens & Pencils Training/Seminar Stationary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 x Markers • 50 x Spiral binders • 20 x Name tags
Other information: plastic top, hard cover at the back etc.	Other: 10 x toilet tissues boxes, 1litre toilet cleaning liquid

Make sure for each order state: **quantity, colour, size etc**

Successful Procurement Process

1. *Spend plenty of time planning*
 - Consider at the outset the full extent of what needs to be done, by whom, and by when. Who needs to be involved? Are they being consulted?
 - Seek advice from others.
 - Establish a complete procedure timetable with consultation periods, approval dates, invitation, receipt and evaluation of quotes, interviews, contract award etc.
 - Ensure adequate time is allowed for the whole process.
2. *Establish roles and responsibilities*
 - Establish the roles and responsibilities of all involved. For example, who is to decide/approve the short list? Who will be responsible for the quality and price evaluations?
 - Get everyone to contribute to the planning process. Be clear what approvals are required from senior members and their role in the whole process.
3. *Ensure transparency of proceedings*
 - Be seen to be fair to all potential quote suppliers and that the process is conducted without favouritism.
 - Engage widely with stakeholders and existing contractors in advance of formal proceedings.
 - Get all internal players to contribute to the critical success factors and key evaluation criteria, and record these!
 - Allow sufficient time for quote suppliers to ‘put their case’ during evaluation, at interviews, presentations etc.
4. *Observe legalities*
 - Ensure compliance with procurement directives, domestic legislation, contract standing orders etc., particularly in respect of advertisements, invitations, and receipt/opening of quotes, evaluation procedure and approvals.
 - Seek legal advice and involvement in the process at the outset. You are initiating events that will result in a contract with an outside firm! You want it to be right.

5. *Accommodate innovation and secure best value*
 - Do not ‘handcuff’ quote suppliers. Do not be too prescriptive in how you want the work to be delivered. Describe the ‘outcomes’ you require.
 - Try to find ways in which specialist suppliers and contractors can contribute their expertise; allow quote suppliers to innovate and offer you their best solutions.
 - Make sure you secure best value by considering quality, design, and whole life costs, and not just lowest tender price.
6. *Prepare sound and complete quote documents*
 - Specify clearly what is needed and describe in detail how quote suppliers are to price their submissions.
 - Give sufficient thought to various pricing mechanisms such as lump-sum or schedules of rates, and how good these will be at accommodating changes.
 - Remember, the more information provided (in writing), particularly on the desired outcomes, the greater your chances of success.
7. *Consider monitoring and payment arrangements at the outset*
 - Be clear as to how payments to the successful supplier are to be calculated once they have been awarded the contract, and make payments on time.
 - Establish the monitoring procedures that are required to satisfy the organisation that the service is being delivered in accordance with that specified.
 - Consider ‘default’ procedures, performance incentives; i.e. of work is completed by a certain date.
 - Incorporate these processes within the order documents, as they will provide the basis of the subsequent contract document.
8. *Ensure procedures provide for probity and accountability*
 - Ensure that the whole process is adequately documented and recorded to demonstrate the decision-making processes to others.
 - Ensure all key documents are signed, dated etc. and retained to ensure that those responsible for making decisions can be held accountable.
 - Communicate all decisions to the whole team.
9. *Think before acting*
 - Review plans before commencing. Do not ‘rush’ things – unless it is a real emergency. Inadequate time in the planning stage will lead to problems.
 - Think what can go wrong? What if delays occur? What contingencies imaginable? (e.g. slack in the timetable)? What if a key person leaves or goes off sick?
 - Is the price/quality model practical robust and will it deliver best value? Ensure everything is tested/dry run thoroughly.
10. *Learn from the Process*
 - Learn, experiment, and don’t fear mistakes. Ask yourself and the rest of the team, how would you do it better next time? How can we repeat what went well, and not what went badly?
 - Develop your skills.