

**QUALIFICATIONS WALES**

**RESEARCH: STAKEHOLDER CONFIDENCE**

 **REFERENCE QWL252610**

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**SECTION 1: PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

1. This document forms the invitation to tender to award a contract for delivering a Stakeholder Confidence Survey. It provides information to an organisation (the ‘Bidder’) wishing to submit an offer to supply the goods or services for the contract.
2. You are advised to read this document, the instructions on Sell2Wales and all other documents uploaded to Sell2Wales before completing your response.

**SECTION 2: CONDITIONS OF TENDER**

* 1. Bidders are invited to submit bids which must be based on the Contract Specification (Section 6) and meet all of our requirements.
	2. We may clarify elements of any Bidders’ submissions, provided this does not involve changes to the basic features of the tender. We will not enter into any negotiation with individual Bidders of any material feature or key contract term post-submission as this may result in a distortion of competition.
	3. Following the submission of the bids, we will undertake an evaluation process to identify the Bidder (the ‘Successful Bidder’) that provides the most economically advantageous tender to which we intend to award the contract. The evaluation process includes a presentation stage where Bidders will be invited to present information and respond to questions on specific points. The presentation will be scored and form part of the final evaluation. Full details of the evaluation process are contained within Section 5 of this document
	4. We will inform the Successful Bidder and other Bidders of the outcome.
	5. Following notification of the selection of the Successful Bidder, we may clarify aspects of the tender submission provided by the Successful Bidder provided that there are no substantial changes to the bid and that this does not risk distorting competition or causing discrimination. We will also request evidence from the Successful Bidder relating to Cyber Essentials Plus certification. We will also run a Credit Reference report using Creditsafe , the credit score needs to be above 30 to be awarded the Contract.
	6. Once we have reached a decision in respect of contract award, we will notify all Bidders of that decision and provide a voluntary standstill period of ten calendar days before entering into a contract with the Successful Bidder.
	7. We plan to complete the procurement process in line with the timetable set out in Section 4. This timetable has been carefully considered to ensure an appropriate balance between a) ensuring that the planned contract commencement date is achieved b) allowing sufficient time for Bidders to develop their response to the invitation to tender and c) ensuring the process is subject to appropriate internal governance. However, we reserve the right to amend the timings as necessary. We will notify Bidders of any amendments to the timetable via the message facility on
	8. Proposals put forward by one Bidder will not be disclosed to others and all submissions will be treated confidentially.
	9. We shall retain unsuccessful tender submissions including any personal information for the period stated in our  [Privacy Policy](https://qualifications.wales/privacy-policy/#service-specific-privacy-information-). Should you be successful in your tender, we will retain your submission including any personal information for the length of our contract with you and thereafter according to our retention schedule.
	10. It is imperative that Bidders are clear in every response given the extent to which it is commercially sensitive and / or confidential using the Freedom of Information Pro Forma provided (Section 9).
	11. Subject to the exceptions referred to in paragraphs 2.12 to 2.16 any information relating to this invitation to tender is being made available on the condition that:
* Bidders shall at all times treat the information as confidential;
* Bidders shall not (or allow anyone else to) disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass the information to any other person at any time. This includes not using the information to train AI or Large Language Models to create future tender responses;
* Bidders shall not use the information for any purpose other than for the purpose of responding to (or deciding to respond to) this Invitation to Tender; and
* Bidders shall comply with the provisions of paragraph 2.17 and 2.18 regarding publicity activity.
	1. Bidders may disclose, distribute, or pass information relating to this invitation to tender to another party (including but not limited to, for example, legal advisers, the Bidder’s insurers, consortium members / sub-contractors) if either:
* this is done for the sole purpose of enabling a bid to be submitted and the person receiving the information undertakes in writing to keep the information confidential on the same terms; or
* the Bidder obtains the prior written consent of Qualifications Wales in relation to such disclosure, distribution or passing of information related to this invitation to tender.
	1. We may disclose detailed information relating to the tender to our board members, executive team, employees, agents, advisers and auditors. We may make key contract documents available for private inspection by our board members, executive team, employees, agents, advisers or auditors.
	2. In accordance with the obligations placed on public bodies by the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and / or Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), all information submitted to Qualifications Wales may be disclosed by us in response to a request made pursuant to the FOIA or EIR.
	3. Bidders must carefully consider the use of phrases such as ‘in confidence’ or commercially sensitive’ when submitting their tender since they will not necessarily protect the tender or parts of the tender from disclosure. In respect of any information submitted by Bidders which they consider to be commercially sensitive, Bidders should:
* Clearly identify such information as commercially sensitive and the consequences of disclosure; and
* Detail the envisaged timeframe during which such information will remain commercially sensitive

 The Freedom of Information Pro Forma (Section 9) of the invitation to submit a tender should be used to identify any areas of the bid that you consider are confidential and / or commercially sensitive.

* 1. We are required to comply with the provisions of the FOIA and / or EIR and will normally seeks comments from any party whose information is subject to a request under the FOIA and / or EIR. Even where information is identified as confidential and / or commercially sensitive, we may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FOIA and EIR if a request is received. Receipt of bids marked in whole or in part as ‘confidential’ and / or ‘commercially sensitive’ should not be taken to mean that Qualifications Wales accepts any duty of confidence by virtue of the marking.
	2. Bidders shall not undertake (or permit to be undertaken) at any time, whether at this stage or after any contract award, any publicity activity with any section of the media in relation to this commissioning process other than with the prior written agreement of Qualification Wales.
	3. Such agreement shall extend to the content of any publicity. In this section Publicity, ‘media’ includes (but without limitation) radio, television, newspapers, trade and specialist press, the internet, social media and email accessible by the public at large and the representatives of such media.
	4. Any Bidder who, in connection with this process:
* offers any inducement, fee or reward to any board member or employee of Qualifications Wales or any person acting as an adviser for us in connection with this procurement process; or
* does anything which would constitute a breach of the Bribery Act 2010; or
* canvasses any of the persons referred to above in connection with this process; or
* contacts any employee of Qualifications Wales prior to the contract being awarded about any aspect of the procurement process in a manner not permitted by this Invitation to Tender,

 may be disqualified (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to Qualifications Wales and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a Bidder may attract).

* 1. Any Bidder which, in connection with this procurement process:
* fixes or adjusts the final bid by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other Bidder (other than when working within a consortium); or
* enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other Bidder that it shall refrain from submitting a bid or as to the amount of any bid to be submitted; or
* causes or induces any person to enter such agreement or to inform the Bidder of the amount or approximate amount of any rival final bid; or
* offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other final bid or proposed final bid for this procurement process any act or omission; or
* communicates to any person other than Qualifications Wales the amount or approximate amount of his proposed bid except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the bid,

 may be disqualified (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to Qualifications Wales and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a Bidder may attract).

* 1. The issue of this Invitation to Tender no way commits Qualifications Wales to award any contract pursuant to this procurement process.
	2. Qualifications Wales is not bound to accept the lowest or any bid and reserves the right to accept any bid either in whole or in part or parts.
	3. Nothing in this Invitation to Tender shall oblige Qualifications Wales to award a contract. In this event Qualifications Wales will be under no liability with regards to costs incurred by Bidders in the preparation of responses to this tender.
	4. We reserve the right, subject to relevant legislation, at any time to reject any bids and / or Bidders.
	5. We reserve the right to disqualify any Bidder who makes material changes to, or in our opinion, a material change takes place in respect of, any aspect of its bid (unless substantial justification can be provided to our satisfaction, or the material change has been requested by Qualifications Wales).
	6. You are not entitled to claim from us any costs or expenses which you may incur in the preparation of your submission.

**SECTION 3: INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS**

* 1. Bidders must register on the Central Digital Platform, Find a Tender:

 <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk> and add your unique ID and API key into your Sell2Wales profile (if not already done). The Procurement Act 2023 is now live: Bidders must register on the Central Digital Platform (CDP) in addition to Sell2Wales.

* 1. Bidders must provide their response to the Invitation to Tender in Sell2Wales and upload all requested documents by **10:00 Friday 12 September 2025**.
	2. You should ensure that you provide all of the information requested in the specified format. A response template is provided in Additional Documents.
	3. Your response to a particular question should be contained in that question’s answer box on the Response template provided as an attachment. We will only consider responses provided against each question and will not look for extra information in another question’s answer box when evaluating responses.
	4. If any information is supplied in response to individual questions that has not been requested, we will ignore it during the evaluation process.
	5. We reserve the right to modify, amend or provide further clarification regarding the Invitation to Tender at any time prior to the deadline for completion. We will notify you of this as a message via Sell2Wales Q&A.
	6. Any requests for clarification regarding the invitation to tender bid must be made via the Sell2Wales Q&A message facility. Requests for clarification must be sent no later than **10:00 Friday 29 August 2025** to allow for sufficient time for a response to be given prior to the closing date for submission of the Invitation to Tender.
	7. When submitting a question or request for clarification of further information, Bidders should clearly indicate which (if any) part of their question they view as commercially confidential to them and applicable only to the Bidder submitting the question.
	8. Where such a request has been made, the reply will be provided to all Bidders via Sell2Wales Q&A although anonymity will be preserved.
	9. If we consider that in the interests of open and fair competition, we are unable to respond to the question or request for clarification or further information on a confidential basis, we will inform the Bidder that has submitted it. The Bidder must thereafter respond within 24 hours via Sell2Wales Q&A to indicate that either the query will be withdrawn or that they are content for it to be treated as non-confidential. We will deem that the question or request for clarification to further information is withdrawn if we are not contacted within 3 working days.
	10. You should only contact us using the message facility on Sell2Wales Q&A. This is to ensure that we maintain the integrity and robustness of the procurement process and guarantee that answers given are consistent.
	11. You must not contact any member of Qualifications Wales’ staff to obtain any additional information about this tender. You may contact us to discuss ‘business as usual’ matters but you must not discuss this tender.
	12. We will make every effort to respond to any query within three working days of receipt on the online message facility. This timeline may be extended where more complex queries are submitted.
	13. Please refer to the message facility on Sell2Wales Q&A for any additional information we may post about this procurement or to view answers to any clarification questions that may have been submitted.
	14. We are unable to access any submission until after the closing time and date has passed. We cannot see anything that Bidders have partially or fully submitted until this time.
	15. We actively encourage you to respond to the Invitation to Tender as early as possible to ensure you meet the deadline.
	16. If at any time you experience technical difficulties or require technical assistance, you should contact the Sell2Wales helpdesk on 0800 222 9004 or use the ‘Contact us’ form.

**SECTION 4: TENDER TIMETABLE**

We reserve the right to amend the timings as necessary. We will notify Bidders of any amendments to the timetable via the message facility on Sell2wales

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| **Activity** | **Dates 2025** |
| Issue Invitation to Tender | Thursday 14 August |
| Closing date for clarification requests | 10am Friday 29 August |
| Closing date /time for tender submission | 10am Friday 12 September |
| Consensus Evaluation of bids | By 26 September  |
| Issue intention to award letters | By Tuesday 30 September |
| Standstill period ends midnight: | Friday 10 October |
| Issue contract confirmation letter | Wk Begin 13 October |
| Finalise contract documents with successful Bidder(s) | By End October |
| Contracts commence Inception Meeting | Wk Begin 3 November |

**SECTION 5: EVALUATION MODEL**

* 1. The value of this contract for Public Opinions Survey is below the threshold set by the Procurement Act 2023, however it is a ‘notifiable below-threshold contract’. We will follow the requirements of the Act and associated Welsh Regulations and operate a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory approach in our evaluation of Bidders
	2. This includes us stating up front the criteria we will use to evaluate tender submissions and presentation.The winning Bid will be selected after evaluation of the most advantageous offer considering quality of service in combination with price.
	3. Evaluation will be on a quality / price ratio of 85%/ 15%, considering the evaluation criteria and procedures listed below.
	4. If you plan to use artificial intelligence tools in the delivery of the project you must tell us how you plan to use them as well as how you will manage the risks under the relevant criterion. We do not yet have a published policy on use of AI for research, but we are inclined to say that we do not want research Bidders to solely rely on artificial intelligence tools for aspects of research projects without human involvement.

5.5

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Quality Evaluation Criteria** | **Weighting**  |
| 1. | *Methodological approach*  In your **tender response** please provide a description of the proposed method and explain how this is the most appropriate for the research purposes. You should include information regarding sampling, recruiting, desired sample and data collection method(s). You should include details on the proposed data analysis methods and how/if the researchers’ own biases/perspectives might influence the research.You should also consider adherence to ethical guidelines and provide details on such aspects as informed consent procedures, data anonymisation.You should provide details of how you will ensure that a high-quality service will be maintained throughout the contract period by indicating quality assurance measures during data collection, analysis, and reporting.      | 40%  |
| 2. | *Implementation*    Submit a detailed plan outlining how the requirements of this specification will be achieved. You should include information regarding the team members who would be completing the work describing their role and experience of similar research activities (e.g. interviews, educational research). You should include information on how data collection in Welsh and English will be ensured and how timescales will be met. You should also consider plans for managing risks and contingencies, data handling and storage procedures including GDPR Compliance as a data controller (e.g. details on data security measures, including encryption, secure storage locations, and data retention policies.)      | 25% |
| 3. | *Relevant experience*    Please provide specific evidence of your organisation relevant experience of conducting effective qualitative research activities in the education sector and analysing and reporting on the data collected.  Experience of qualitative research similar to the one being procured here (e.g. exploring stakeholder confidence in other sectors) may also be provided as evidence. You should explain how your experience is applicable to the requirements of this contract to provide assurance of your relevant experience. Please include a link to/ attach one report that has been authored by a member of the team proposed to work on our contract.    | 20%  |
| 4. | *Knowledge of the qualification system in Wales, knowledge of the secondary and further education sector in Wales*    Illustrate evidence of your understanding of the qualification system and/or the secondary and further education system in Wales (e.g. knowledge of current issues, challenges, and policy developments within the Welsh education system) and how this will support you to effectively complete this work.  | 15% |

**5.6 Scoring model**

The following model will be used to score the responses to the quality criteria listed above.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|    | **Evidence Provided**   | **Score**  | **Remark**  |
| Bidder is likely to be able to meet the needs of the Organisation.   | Evidence of relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services relative to the contract is consistent, comprehensive, compelling, directly relevant to the contract in all respects and highly credible (by being substantiated by independent sources where possible.)   | **5**  | **High Confidence**  |
| Evidence of relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services relative to the contract is sufficient (in qualitative terms), convincing, and credible.   | **4**  | **Confidence**  |
| Small risk that Bidder will not be able to meet the needs of the Organisation.   | Evidence of relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services relative to the contract has minor gaps, or to a small extent is unconvincing, lacks credibility or irrelevant to the contract.   | **3**  | **Minor Concerns**  |
| Moderate risk that the Bidder will not be able to meet the needs of the Organisation   | Evidence of relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services relative to the contract has moderate gaps, is unconvincing.   | **2**  | **Moderate Concerns**  |
| Significant risk that the Bidder will not be able to meet the needs of the Organisation.   | Evidence of relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services relative to the contract has major gaps, is unconvincing in many respects, lacks credibility, or largely irrelevant to the contract.   | **1**  | **Major Concerns**  |
| Bidder will not be able to meet the needs of the Organisation.   | No evidence or misleading evidence.   | **0**  | **Not acceptable**  |

Bidders must achieve a minimum score of 3 for each criterion.

**5.7 Price criteria**

Price is worth 15% of the total score.

Price is calculated as the total cost to deliver one annual survey including all design, data collection, analysis & reporting.

Price will be fixed for the first year/wave and may be revised prior to subsequent years

which reflect the 12-month percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) based on 12 months preceding September. No proposed increase of the rates shall exceed the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index.

Lowest total cost =    15%

Other bids   =   Lowest cost

                        Total cost of bid being evaluated     x 15

**SECTION 6: CONTRACT SPECIFICATION**

* 1. **Background**

Qualifications Wales (QW) has been established through the Qualifications Wales Act 2015 as the regulator of non-degree qualifications in Wales. It is a Welsh Government Sponsored Body, independent of government, and is accountable to the Senedd Cymru.

According to the Act, one of QW’s two principal aims is promoting public confidence in qualifications and in the Welsh qualification system.

To fulfil the second aim, aside from other activities, QW runs a program of measuring and exploring confidence in qualifications and the qualification system. An important part of this program is an ongoing piece of qualitative research which explores stakeholder confidence in qualifications and the qualification system. The research was initiated in 2015 and since then seven waves have been conducted[[1]](#footnote-2). With the latest contract now complete, we aim to commission a similar piece of research.

In June 2024 Qualifications Wales was listed under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. We expect the sustainable development principle to influence how we think about public confidence and this research. This stakeholder research is just one way in which we seek to involve others in our work. We also hope it will help us to think long term and prevent future problems by, for example, helping us to identify problems and their solutions.

* 1. **Research outline**

The focus of the study is to explore factors that are impacting, or are likely to impact, on stakeholder confidence (positively or negatively) in qualifications and the qualification system. This could include our own activity. In each wave of data collection, we intend to explore one or perhaps two topics of interest. For example, in the most recent wave we explored stakeholder views on using digital assessment and artificial intelligence in qualifications. The topics will be of strategic interest to the qualification system.

The research contract will run for five years and will include three waves of data collection. Data collection will take place approximately once every 18 months. We consider that the most appropriate periods for the field work are February-April and October-December. We reserve the right to postpone data collection for waves two and three by six months. The contract will come with an option to be extended by an additional wave of data collection.

 *Stakeholder groups*

To give a representation of the number of participants to be involved, if interviews are used, we envisage that about 30 interviews are conducted in each wave. We are open to various options in terms of the mode of data collection, including face-to-face, telephone, online, or a mixed approach.

We are interested to explore the views of the following stakeholder groups:

* Welsh Government and public bodies in the education system (e.g. Estyn, local Consortia)
* Awarding bodies and Federation of Awarding Bodies
* School staff and teacher unions
* Further education providers
* Work-based learning providers
* Higher education providers (Wales and England) and UCAS
* Employer representative organisations

Depending on the topic of interest, we may decide to exclude a stakeholder group listed above from a wave or to include an additional group or specific organisations (e.g. [ColegauCymru](https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=03da30f7bd4ad433a0714d0332156c4ae457485fe56bac4e08c7c630177efd2bJmltdHM9MTczNzU5MDQwMA&ptn=3&ver=2&hsh=4&fclid=37deeddd-ff09-6462-0078-f9f9fe70655f&psq=Colegau+Cymry&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuY29sbGVnZXMud2FsZXMv&ntb=1) and the National Training Federation Wales) while keeping the number of participants the same.

We do not include learners and their parents/carers in the scope of this project. In general, we consider these stakeholders are better engaged within separately designed projects. We also have existing reference groups for engaging with parents and learners.

The study is not longitudinal; however, some organisations need to be included in every wave, and it is likely that the same representatives from those organisations are interviewed during different waves.

*Methodological approach*

The study should be based on a qualitative research approach agreed with the Bidder. In the previous waves, the researchers employed mostly interviews to collect the data. Although interviews are an appropriate method to continue this work, we are open to the Bidders to advise on an alternative or amended approach/methods of data collection, if they feel this is more appropriate in reaching a balance between quality and resources needed. The Bidders should explain their rationale for the methods suggested and their strengths and weaknesses. We also reserve the right to negotiate a different approach for a particular wave (e.g. include some focus groups even though the initial proposal envisaged only interviews).

When appropriate, the sample of participants within each stakeholder group should be broadly representative across relevant variables. For example, the sample should include schools in different regions of Wales, and include English, Welsh and bilingual medium schools.

To reach our aim, we require the Bidder to ensure that respondents’ views and the reasons for those views are explored in depth and placed in the appropriate context.  Each wave would likely include similar lines of enquiries, but we could add specific questions that are of interest at the time of data collection. The lines of enquiries/ questions will be drafted in each wave by the Bidder with our contribution.

* 1. **Requirement**

The Bidder will be required to:

* + 1. Design the study and collect the data. The Bidder is expected to:
1. Select the method which would best meet the research aim.
2. Design the data collection approach.
3. Draft contact letters, consent forms, and information sheets and share them with Qualifications Wales for approval.
4. Recruit participants and conduct the data collection.  We expect that there will be a pause and reflect exercise after the initial wave of data collection.
5. Maintain accurate records of all research activities and responses gathered. As a minimum, detailed notes must be taken during data collection activities.   However, we encourage Bidders to consider whether transcribing the discussions would provide value for money.

* + 1. Analyse the data gathered and submit a written report to Qualifications Wales.  The analysis should avoid over-summarising or over-simplifying the findings. The report should include:
1. A description of the methodology including a reflection of the strengths and/or limitations of the data.
2. Summary of key findings.
3. Detailed description of findings. The second and third reports should also include a comparison of the findings across the previous wave(s).

The report should be structured using sub-headings to help organise the findings and to enable conclusions or discussion points to be clearly identified. The Bidder is not required to provide recommendations.

The report should be written to a publishable standard. This includes the use of an appropriate referencing system, full proofing and formatting and consistent use of acronyms.  We will have the final report translated into Welsh.

The report may be subject to a minimum of three rounds of editing. The Bidder must respond to the comments in a timely manner, using tracked changes and comments boxes to track and log feedback.

* + 1. Adhere to timescales - Suggested timescale for round 1 :

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| **Milestone** | **Date 2026** |
| Agree data collection tools  | 2 January  |
| Qualitative data collection to be completed | January-March  |
| Submission of the initial draft report     | May |
| Feedback from Qualifications Wales to Bidder on draft report   | Two weeks after submission |
| Submission of 2nd draft   for comment   | One week after feedback |
| Feedback from Qualifications Wales to Bidder on 2nd draft   | One week  |
| Submission of final draft report     | End of June |
| Review meeting   | Any day July-September  |
| Sign off of report and agreeing the final version     | By end September 2026     |
| Fortnightly updates, either by email or online/face-to-face meeting  | Throughout contract   |

Any variations to the agreed milestones must be discussed in advance with us and subject to a contract change notice signed by both parties.

* + 1. Attend an inception meeting at the start of the contract, a review meeting after each data collection wave and a review meeting at the end of the contract.  Depending on the circumstances the meetings will be held either face-to-face or via telephone/online communications.  The Bidder is also expected to participate in regular catch-up meetings or provide email updates during the active phases of the project (data collection and report writing).

* + 1. The Bidder should indicate which industry standard ethical guidelines and code of conduct they are adhering to (e.g. MRS code of conduct, BERA’s ethical guidelines) and demonstrate how they would comply with those regulations.   If you plan to use artificial intelligence systems in any aspect of the research, you should include consideration of the risk.
		2. The Bidder should have or aim to develop a good knowledge of the education and the qualification systems in Wales to be able to deal effectively with challenges that this type of research could pose. During previous waves, stakeholders’ level of knowledge differed considerably on some issues.  Some respondents might not have a view on certain aspects while some will have extensive knowledge and opinions. Some respondents might have erroneous information about certain aspects, and researchers should be able to pick up those misunderstandings as much as possible to be able to effectively probe respondents’ opinions. We expect the Bidder to carefully select the quotes used in the report so that factual information is accurate. We will assist the Bidder with this aspect. Another challenge could be the relatively low number of participants representing certain stakeholder groups. This could lead to some areas being under-researched or to difficulties in correctly interpreting some of the opinions when those were expressed only by one or two stakeholders from the same group.
		3. The Bidder must securely retain, personal data for one year from the date of report publication, after which it should be removed, and Qualifications Wales should be informed. The anonymised analysis files will be securely held for six years.

**6.4** The Bidder should have adequate delivery capacity throughout the Contract period.

If the Bidder uses subcontractors, the Bidder should specify them. The Bidder will be as responsible for subcontractors’ work as for its own.

**6.5** The Bidder must have Cyber Essentials Plus certification or ISO/IEC 27001 or equivalent before the contract start.

**6.6** Depending on the language preferences of the participants, and for compliance with the Welsh Language Standards, the Bidder should have the ability to conduct data collection in English and Welsh, and make available documents and communications in both languages.

**6.7** If you plan to use artificial intelligence systems in any aspect of the research, you should include consideration of the risk.

**6.8** The delivery is considered complete when all agreed documentation has been handed over to QW and the report is signed off. QW will retain Intellectual Property rights of produced materials, such as collected data, reports etc.

**6.9** Bidders are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the previous research reports.

**6.10 Duration of Contract, and Budget**

The contract will commence in November 2025 for a period of five years with an option to be extended by up to 12 months, subject to the termination clauses in the terms and conditions of contract.

We do not have a fixed budget for the work described in the specification; however the total contract value (excluding the extension) will not exceed £100,000 including VAT.

 We do not expect the cost to be divided evenly among waves, given the initial development work that will take place during wave one.

**6.11 Performance Management**

Qualifications Wales will agree key performance indicators (KPIs) with the Bidder to monitor the quality of work that is produced.  Performance against these will be recorded, scored and stored securely on our contract management system.  Review meetings will be held throughout the period of the contract but specifically at the end of each research period.

Proposed KPIs :

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| --- |
| 1. Effective communication |
| 2. Maintain a high-quality, publishable standard (The final report) |
| 3. Deadlines for submission. |
| 4. Standards and code of conduct. |

**SECTION 7: TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT**

The terms and conditions of contract that will apply are:

Terms and Conditions Supply of Services 2021

These have been uploaded as a separate document on Sell2Wales

The following document templates are to be used to prepare your submission and have been uploaded separately on Sell2Wales

**SECTION 8: FORM OF TENDER**

The Bidder signs the Form of Tender to confirm that it understands the tender and accepts the Terms and Conditions of Contract and other requirements relating to its participation in the procurement exercise.

**SECTION 9: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PRO FORMA**

**SECTION 10: EVALUATION CRITERIA RESPONSE FORM**

**SECTION 11: PRICING SCHEDULE**

1. The reports can be found on our website under Publications & Resources. The most recent reports by published year: [2024](https://qualifications.wales/publications-resources/equality-equity-and-inclusion-in-non-degree-qualifications-and-the-system-in-wales-stakeholders-and-parents-views/), [2023](https://qualifications.wales/publications-resources/stakeholder-confidence-in-non-degree-qualifications-in-wales-and-the-qualifications-system/) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)