



PROCUREMENT POLICY

Version control

This version (2) of Qualifications Wales' Procurement Policy was approved on 20 June 2018 by the Management Board.

A formal review of this document will take place at least once a year, and will include a review of the effectiveness of the policy, and its currency. Its next review is due to take place no later than 30th June 2019. Feedback on this policy is welcomed in the meantime. Please send your comments to procurement@qualificationswales.org.

Review Notes 2018

1. Inclusion of reference to Procurement Strategy.
2. Update definition of 'commissioning'.
3. New link to Welsh Procurement Policy Statement.
4. Clarification regarding procurement team oversight / intervention
5. Commitment to CPD and CIPS Ethics training.
6. Replaced section 14 on Modern Slavery with the Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains.
7. Reference to 'lotting' of requirements.
8. Reference to Concession Contracts Regulations 2016.
9. Reference to declaration of interest.
10. Amended in line with our tone of voice.

General principles of the Procurement Policy

This policy is for Qualifications Wales staff, its suppliers (including subject experts and research organisations) and potential providers of goods and services to Qualifications Wales. It explains how we manage our procurement and commissioning activity.

Qualifications Wales was established through the Qualifications Wales Act as the regulator of non-degree qualifications and the qualifications system in Wales. Our principal aims and the matters to which we must have regard in carrying out our duties are covered in the [Qualifications Wales Act 2015](#).

We are a Welsh Government Sponsored Body, independent of government and accountable to the National Assembly for Wales for delivery of our statutory duties.

Our procurement and commissioning activity is subject to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 or the Concession Contract Regulations 2016 .

The aim of this policy is to explain the principles against which we will carry out our procurement and commissioning processes. Our Procurement Strategy describes how we will support our organisational objectives whilst being guided by the principles detailed below.

Definition of Procurement

The process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation but also to society and the economy whilst minimising damage to the environment.

Procuring the Future 2006: Sustainable Procurement Task Force

Definition of Commissioning

The process of identifying needs within the population and of developing policy directions, service models and the market, to meet those needs in the most appropriate and cost effective way.

Institute of Public Care

Procurement Policy Principles

In carrying out procurement and commissioning activity, we will adopt the following policy principles in line with the Welsh Government's [Wales Procurement Policy Statement 2015](#) (WPPS) as is appropriate for a small organisation:

1. Strategic

We recognise and manage Procurement as a strategic corporate function that organises and understands expenditure, influences early planning and service design and gets involved in decision making to support delivery of overarching objectives. The procurement team has measured its practices against the Welsh Government's procurement maturity model and included areas for improvement in the Procurement Strategy. The Head of Procurement is a member of the Senior Leadership Group.

2. Professionally resourced

We will subject procurement, commissioning and contract management activity to an appropriate level of professional involvement and influence. A procurement professional will lead all procurement and commissioning activity for contracts with a value of £25,000 and above excluding VAT and scrutinise all procurement activity providing guidance and support to staff for the award of contracts with a value between £5,000 and £24,999 excluding VAT. Our procurement professionals will each complete at least 30 hours of CPD annually.

3. Economic, social and environmental impact (Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act)

We consider value for money as the optimum combination of whole of life costs in terms of not only generating efficiency savings and good quality outcomes for Qualifications Wales but also to benefit society, the economy and the environment, both now and in the future. In taking this approach, we pay due regard to the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 to set objectives that maximise our contribution to the well-being goals set out in the Act, taking a whole life costing approach and considering the longer term impact of our actions.

4. Community benefits

We consider the delivery of social, economic and environmental benefit through effective proportionate application of the Welsh Government's Community Benefits Policy .

5. Open, accessible competition

We will adopt a risk based, proportionate approach to procurement to ensure that contract opportunities are open to all and smaller local suppliers are not precluded from winning contracts individually, as consortia, or through roles within the supply chain.

In doing so we aim to advertise all contracts over £25,000 excluding VAT (where a suitable framework is not available) and will publish the associated award notices on www.sell2wales.gov.wales. We will also:

- consider the 'lotting' of requirements,
- apply the Welsh Government 'SQUID' approach to supplier selection (the Welsh Government is updating the SQUID to conform with the European Single Procurement Document required under EU Procurement legislation – we will use the new version once introduced) , and
- publish a forward contract programme

6. Simplified standard processes

Our procurement and commissioning processes will be open and transparent and based on standard approaches and use of common systems that appropriately minimise complexity, cost, timescales and requirements of suppliers.

We will make best use of available e-procurement tools.

We aim to pay all correct invoices on time and have adopted a 'no purchase order – no payment' policy for our procurement activity.

7. Collaboration

We participate in framework agreements such as those managed by the National Procurement Service (NPS) to:

- reduce duplication
- get the best response from the market
- embed the principles of the Policy Statement for the benefit of Wales and
- to share resources and expertise.

We will also seek opportunities to collaborate with other Welsh public bodies where possible.

8. Supplier engagement and innovation

We will engage in dialogue with suppliers to:

- get the best response from the market place,
- to inform and educate, and
- to deliver optimum value for money.

We support pre-market engagement and seek to provide useful de-briefing on tender feedback.

9. Measurement and impact

In accordance with good management practice, we will monitor procurement and contract performance and outcomes to support continuous improvement, and openly share examples of good and poor practice.

10. Ethical Procurement

Our staff involved in procurement and commissioning must demonstrate high ethical standards based on honesty, integrity and transparency. Procurement and commissioning activity will be conducted in a manner which is fair, transparent and unbiased towards suppliers, evidenced through robust record keeping. The Procurement team adopts the [Code of Conduct](#) as set out by the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply.

Our procurement professionals will complete the CIPS Ethical Procurement and Supply training annually.

11. Equality and Diversity

We have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that public goods and services are accessible to all users to ensure that no one group is disadvantaged in accessing public goods and services. We will consider equality-related issues in the procurement and commissioning process where they are relevant to the subject matter, or relate to the performance, of the contract.

12. Welsh Language

Before letting any new contract for the delivery of services, we will consider the relevance of the inclusion of Welsh Language requirements in the contract and ensure that the company, organisation or individual that undertakes the work on our behalf conforms with the relevant requirements of the Welsh Language Act. This will be achieved by including relevant details of the Act's requirements in tendering documents, contracts, agreements and conditions and, where appropriate, asking for statements on how those services will be delivered.

13. Bribery Act

We are subject to the Bribery Act 2010. The Act details general offences in relation to bribing another person or being bribed and a specific offence relating to bribing foreign public officials. It also covers bribery offences and attempts to influence decision-makers by offering benefits other than what can be legitimately offered as part of the tendering process. Contracts for goods and services that we enter into will include clauses addressing the issue of bribery. We will exclude bidders from a procurement process where they have received a conviction under the Bribery Act. We require that all members of an evaluation panel complete a declaration of interest to ensure that any potential conflicts are managed.

14. Code of Practice on Ethical Employment in Supply Chains

The Code of Practice has been developed in response to:

- the supply chain provision in the Modern Slavery Act 2015
- concerns around ongoing problems with unfair employment practices including false self-employment, blacklisting of unionised workers, unfair use of umbrella employment schemes and zero hours contracts
- the Welsh Government's commitment to promoting the Living Wage Foundation's Living Wage.

We commit to working towards taking necessary actions to comply with the Code of Practice in a proportionate way appropriate to our size and the relevance of the issues covered by the Code to our supply chains.

For any queries on this policy or any questions about being a provider of goods and / or services to Qualifications Wales please contact procurement@qualificationswales.org

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