

# PUBLISHED FOR INFORMATION ONLY. SPECULATIVE PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

ESF CO-FINANCE



European Union  
European Social Fund  
Investing in jobs and skills

TENDER **NW-EMPLOYER-S01**  
TENDER NAME



Leading learning and skills

## SPECIFICATION and QUESTIONNAIRE (PART A)

### SECTION 1: ACTIVITY SUMMARY AND DELIVERY ARRANGEMENTS - Please be aware that minimum scores have been set for questions 1-4.

#### Activity Overview (Not Scored) (Max character limit = 500)

Tip: Please provide a summary of the activities you intend to deliver. This will be used for publicity purposes and by completing it the applicant will be deemed to have given permission for its use in this way.

Please enter your answer here

#### 1 Meeting the Service Requirements

(Max score available = 12, Min score required = 8) (Max character limit = 6,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate how the proposed activity is innovative and/or builds on effective practice to address the Service Requirements Section of the Tender Specification.

Tip: Please provide a summary of the activities you intend to deliver and give examples / evidence of how they link into the Service Requirements Section of the Tender Specification.

Identify the aim and SMART objectives for your proposed activity. An aim identifies ultimately what the activity is seeking to address. An objective identifies how the activity will deliver its aim. A SMART objective is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. In identifying your activity's aim ensure that it is relevant to the Tender Specification and that your SMART objectives clearly explain how the aim will be delivered.

In responding to this criteria clearly explain what activities you propose to undertake, who the participants are what it is you propose to do with them and where. Indicate how your proposed activities are innovative and/or build on effective practice to achieve impact and identify the results that will be achieved.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

#### 2 Defining the Target Groups (Max score available = 6, Min score required = 4 (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate an understanding of the target group and their needs.

Tip: The Tender Specification will identify a number of target groups (employers and/or individuals). This section must clearly identify which of the target groups listed in the relevant Tender Specification will be supported through the activity you are proposing to deliver.

Explain who the target group are, what their needs are, make reference to any specific characteristics that your target group may have and specify in what way your proposed activities have been designed to meet those needs. Identify how you propose to access complementary activity or use funding secured via this Tender Specification to provide learner support ie childcare, transport costs or additional learner support costs. When identifying the needs of the target group refer to any documents that identify these needs and quote them in this section.

Where the Tender Specification identifies employers as the target group please explain how you will identify the employers to be supported via your proposed activity.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

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## 3 Engaging and Meeting the Needs of Eligible Target Groups (Max score available = 10, Min score required = 6) (Max character limit = 6,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate how the proposed activity will engage with and meet the needs of the target group.

**Tip:** In responding to this criteria:

Explain how you will engage with, recruit and retain individuals and/or employers and/or deliverers/intermediary bodies (as appropriate to the Tender Specification) and demonstrate that this process is appropriate. Explain how you will work with other organisations including the Skills Brokerage Service.

- Explain how individual needs will be identified and addressed in an imaginative and innovative way and how you will ensure equality of opportunity throughout the programme;
- Identify how you will ensure your participants will progress into further learning (where relevant).

Explain what links you have with employers and how they will be developed and describe your referral process.

- Identify how you will ensure that participants (individuals and/or employers) are eligible for support.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

## 4 Employer Needs and Understanding of the Local Economy (Max score available = 8, Min score required = 5) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate how the activities proposed will respond to the needs of employers and the local economy.

**Tip:** Demonstrate how the activities you are proposing to deliver will:

- Respond to the needs of the local employer base and known skill shortages.
- Support the region's priority sectors and/or growth sectors.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

**PLEASE BE AWARE THAT ANY PROPOSALS WHICH FAIL TO MEET THE MINIMUM QUALITY THRESHOLD FOR QUESTIONS 1 TO 4 WILL NOT CONTINUE TO BE SCORED BY THE ASSESSMENT PANEL**

## 5 Responding to Strategies and Plans (Max score available = 4) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate how the activities will add value and complement relevant strategies, plans, frameworks and policy initiatives.

**Tip:** Identify the strategies, plans, frameworks, policy initiatives and other programmes which are relevant to your proposed activities. Identify how what you are proposing to deliver will complement and add value to these strategies etc. Please ensure that as a minimum you specifically identify how your proposal will link into Skills for Jobs and/or Train to Gain.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

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## 6 Partnership Working (Max score available = 4) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Describe the added value of partnership working and what this feature will bring.

**Tip:** Requests for funding may be made by one organisation acting on behalf of a number of partners/sub-contractors. This approach may help to achieve economies of scale, strengthen the strategic / regional impact of the proposed activity and prevent duplication.

Please use this section to:

- Identify whether the activities will be delivered by a partnership. If it is not anticipated that partners will be involved, then explain why this is the case and provide justification that this will not inhibit the success of the activity in any way.
- Briefly outline the role of the lead organisation.
- Demonstrate how the partnership will support and facilitate the progression of individuals.
- Name your active partners including SSCs, (sector skills councils) SSPAs ( sector skills productivity alliances) and employer groups; and explain their role and responsibilities in planning, delivery or evaluation.
- If potential partnerships are not fully established, identify which organisations would be expected / invited to participate in proposed activities, and how you will secure their commitment and / or involvement.
- Please describe the extent to which unsecured partner involvement is required, and highlight where reduced or lack of involvement might place the proposed activities at risk.
- Please note the LSC reserve the right to contact all named Partners in this section.

**NB:** Should Applicants be invited to enter into contracting discussions they will need to provide the LSC with signed letters of support from all partners identified as active partners.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Are the proposed activities being delivered by a partnership?

Yes

No

Please enter your answer here

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## Role of the lead organisation

Please enter your answer here

## Partner/Sub-contractor 1

Name of Partner/Sub-contractor: Please enter name here

If this tender is successful will this partner be in receipt of ESF funds from this proposal?  Yes  No

If yes, please identify the approximate amount which will be awarded to this partner: £ 0

Is this organisation an active partner in the proposed activities at the point of Tender Submission?  Yes  No

Is this organisation a sub-contractor?  Yes  No

Roles and Responsibilities: (Max character limit = 250)

Please enter answer here

## Partner/Sub-contractor 2

Name of Partner/Sub-contractor: Please enter name here

If this tender is successful will this partner be in receipt of ESF funds from this proposal?  Yes  No

If yes, please identify the approximate amount which will be awarded to this partner: £ 0

Is this organisation an active partner in the proposed activities at the point of Tender Submission?  Yes  No

Is this organisation a sub-contractor?  Yes  No

Roles and Responsibilities: (Max character limit = 250)

Please enter answer here

## Partner/Sub-contractor 3

Name of Partner/Sub-contractor: Please enter name here

If this tender is successful will this partner be in receipt of ESF funds from this proposal?  Yes  No

If yes, please identify the approximate amount which will be awarded to this partner: £ 0

Is this organisation an active partner in the proposed activities at the point of Tender Submission?  Yes  No

Is this organisation a sub-contractor?  Yes  No

Roles and Responsibilities: (Max character limit = 250)

Please enter answer here

## Partner/Sub-contractor 4

Name of Partner/Sub-contractor: Please enter name here

If this tender is successful will this partner be in receipt of ESF funds from this proposal?  Yes  No

If yes, please identify the approximate amount which will be awarded to this partner: £ 0

Is this organisation an active partner in the proposed activities at the point of Tender Submission?  Yes  No

Is this organisation a sub-contractor?  Yes  No

Roles and Responsibilities: (Max character limit = 250)

Please enter answer here

## Please put details of additional Partners/Sub-contractors below.

Please enter answer here

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## SECTION 2: MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

### 7 Delivery Mechanisms (Max score available = 9) (Max character limit = 6,000)

**Criteria:** The delivery mechanisms for the proposed activity demonstrate that they are appropriate to the proposed target groups, sectors and geographic locations.

**Tip:** This section must demonstrate how the activity will be delivered. As a minimum please address the bullet points below.

- Describe how the different activities within your proposal will be developed, implemented, measured and evaluated and how these activities will together deliver the aim, objectives and milestones identified. When completing this section, ensure that the activities proposed are eligible (ie that they are within scope of the relevant Tender Specification);
- Describe the infrastructure for the delivery of your proposed activity in the proposed geographic locations. If the lead organisation is based outside of the LSC sub-region in which it is proposing to deliver activity, please set out here what the arrangements will be for managing and delivering the proposed activity;
- How you plan to publicise and promote the programme – this must include clear links to existing agencies supporting the target groups specified for the Tender Specification;
- Details of any additional staff and resources which will need to be secured, including any staff training needs. Where additional staffing is required please state what posts these will be and how you intend to recruit to them.
- How your activity will remain sufficiently flexible over the term of your contract to respond to emerging economic development and policy initiatives and changes.
- The qualifications which will be delivered by your proposal, the number of each qualification to be delivered and the qualification's NVQ equivalent. Further guidance regarding NVQ equivalencies can be found in the ESF Guidance Handbook, a copy of which can be downloaded from [www.esf.gov.uk](http://www.esf.gov.uk).

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

If you are proposing to deliver qualifications, please specify which qualifications will be delivered, their NVQ equivalent and the number of each qualification you expect to be delivered.

Please enter your answer here

If you are proposing to deliver qualifications, please specify which qualifications these are and the number of each qualification you expect to be achieved.

Please enter your answer here

If you are proposing to deliver qualifications, please specify which qualifications will be delivered, their NVQ equivalent and the number of each qualification you expect to be delivered.

Please enter your answer here

If you are proposing to deliver qualifications, please specify which qualifications these are and the number of each qualification you expect to be achieved.

Please enter your answer here

### 8 Ensuring Quality of Provision (Max score available = 5) (Max character limit = 6,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrates that the activity will be delivered within a quality assurance framework.

**Tip:** Please explain how you will ensure the quality of provision offered by your proposal. As a minimum, your proposal must contain:

- What your quality assurance arrangements are; how you will ensure continuous improvement and how you will seek and evaluate employer/learner feedback, including details of quality systems used by your organisation such as self assessment within the Common Inspection Framework, Matrix standards etc;
- An explanation of how your organisation assures the quality of its provision if it is not currently inspected.
- Confirmation that your organisation is an accredited centre to deliver the qualifications/activity being proposed.
- How you plan to monitor programme activity and learner needs throughout the lifetime of the programme;
- Your organisation's commitment to or recognition as an Investor in People;
- Your management information systems and resources and how they will be applied to the gathering and recording of the information required for the Individual Learner Record (ILR) and/or details of the companies supported and performance management;
- How you will monitor financial spend including your internal audit arrangements;

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

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## 9 Timescales and Milestones (Max score available = 6) (Max character limit = 6,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate a clear programme of the key stages of your proposal indicating how they will deliver the activities with appropriate timescales and milestones.

**Tip:** Outline the key stages of your programme and how it will meet the description of Service Requirements section of the Tender Specification. Ensure the response provides a clear programme plan, indicating activities, timescales and people responsible for these activities. The plan must also:

- Describe the timescales (start and end dates) for the main processes and stages of the programme including any lead-in time required for activity design, planning, partnership development, etc;
- Demonstrate that these dates are realistic in relation to the activities and expected outcomes;
- Provide details of the implications (if any) of the programme not starting on the specified date

All Tenders must include the following milestones and timescales for their achievement:

- Staff Recruited/In Place
- Partnership Agreements Signed
- Project Plan Agreed
- Delivery Commences
- Marketing Activity Commences
- Employers Engaged/Participants Recruited

When completing this section please also ensure that key milestones and timescales also reflect the outputs and results profile specified in Part B.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

## 10 Management and Monitoring Arrangements (Max score available = 6) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate that effective management and monitoring arrangements are in place.

**Tip:** Identify how the activities will be managed and monitored effectively to ensure delivery of the aims and objectives, outputs and results.

- Identify how you will ensure that participants (individuals and/or employers) are eligible for support.
- Identify what arrangements are in place for evaluating the project

Please also identify how and where evidence of delivery will be monitored and stored.

Please be aware that under Co-financing arrangements the lead organisation may only sub-contract to one level of provider. The lead organisation should ensure that their sub-contractors do not subsequently sub-contract any element of their delivery. The lead organisation should be aware that should there be a need to add further partners after approval has been granted, then these will have to be secured through an open and competitive tendering process.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

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## SECTION 3: ADDED VALUE AND VALUE FOR MONEY

**11 Adding Value to Other Activities Available for Target Groups in the Geographic Location**  
(Max score available = 8) (Max character limit = 6,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate how the identified activities will add value to other activities available for the target groups in the proposed geographic locations.

**Tip:** The LSC aims to support activity which enhances and complements rather than duplicates existing provision. Therefore your response should:

- Give details of any similar or complementary projects and highlight linkages between these and the activities you propose to deliver, describing how you will ensure that the projects are operated to maximum mutual benefit, and how duplication will be avoided.
- Explain how your proposed activity will contribute towards workforce development.
- Identify how the activity will complement and link into existing LSC funded provision.
- Refer to recent or existing projects, mainstream programmes or research projects.
- Explain how you have researched this issue and what other activity is taking place.
- Deliver creative ideas that are not already delivered;

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

**12 Value for Money** (Max score available = 6) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate value for money

**Tip:** In the space provided, and **where applicable** to the Tender Specification, please state the total number and an average cost for each of the following. **Please note that where national funding rates have been applied this criterion will not be used.**

- Company assisted
- Individual assisted
- Full qualification achieved.

For comparison purposes, indicative average costs have been included in the Tender Specification where relevant (with the exception of hour of support). All completed Questionnaires must contain a unit cost for each hour of support/learning delivered.

Within the justification for value for money section, if the average costs for this activity vary widely from the given standards, you must explain why this is the case and justify the additional/lower costs associated with the proposed activity in the space provided.

All applicants must explain here how the activity has been designed to ensure maximum effectiveness, promote excellence and high quality delivery and avoid unnecessary bureaucracy.

Guidance on how to calculate each of the value for money criteria is specified below.

- **Company Assisted** – If the main beneficiary is a company, divide the total cost of the project by the number of companies assisted eg 10 companies are assisted by a project costing £50,000. Therefore cost per company assisted = £50,000 / 10 = £5,000
- **Individual Assisted** – Divide the total cost of the activity by the total number of participants assisted eg 25 participants are assisted by activity costing £50,000. Therefore cost per participant assisted = £50,000 / 25 = £2,000
- **Qualifications Achieved** – If you are proposing to deliver qualifications, divide the total cost by the number of full qualifications to be achieved. For example 15 qualifications are to be achieved via activities costing £50,000. Therefore cost per qualification achieved = £50,000 / 15 = £3,333.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please provide a number and average cost for each of the following (where applicable)

	Number	Average Cost £
Average cost of a company assisted		£0.00
Average cost of an individual assisted		£0.00
Average cost of a qualification achieved		£0.00

Justification for Value for Money

Please enter your answer here

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## SECTION 4: TRACK RECORD

### 13 Track Record of Managing and Delivering Similar Activity and Management Capacity (Max score available = 12) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate that the lead organisation and its staff have a track record of managing and successfully delivering similar activity and that the organisation has the capacity to manage activity of the size proposed.

**Tip:** Outline the lead organisation and its staff's previous experience of managing and delivering similar activities; including:

- Details of projects managed indicating the size of projects managed.
- Justification that the lead organisation has the capacity to deliver the proposed activity.
- Details of staff and staff qualifications relevant to the activities proposed.
- Identify any relevant specialist expertise in your organisation particularly in ESF delivery.
- Where activity is being delivered by a consortium or partnership please outline previous experience of managing partners/ sub-contractors.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

### 14 Track Record of Working in Geographic Locations (Max score available = 6) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate that the organisations involved in delivering the proposed activity have a successful track record of working in the proposed geographic locations.

**Tip:** Indicate the lead organisation and/or partners' track-record of working in the proposed geographic location(s), specifically naming projects/initiatives. Specify what the projects originally intended to deliver and the results achieved; include details of success rates, outputs and results targets and volumes delivered. If the proposal is to be delivered via a partnership or sub-contracting arrangement then please identify which organisations have the relevant experience. Please ensure that the examples relate to each relevant sub-region as well as the Northwest as a whole.

Applicants who do not have a track-record of working in the proposed location(s), must describe how they and their partners have worked in similar areas and explain how this experience will inform your work in the new location(s).

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

### 15 Track Record of Working with Identified Target Groups, Sectors and Employers (Max score available = 12) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrate that the organisations involved in delivering this activity have a successful track record of working with the proposed target groups, sectors and employers.

**Tip:** Indicate the lead organisation and/or partners' track-record of working and/or knowledge and understanding of the proposed target groups, sector(s) and employers, specifically naming projects/initiatives and employers they have worked with. If the proposal is to be delivered via a partnership or sub-contracting arrangement then please identify which organisations have the relevant experience. The response must:

- Indicate your experience of designing and delivering activity for the target groups including any additional support provided.
- Provide evidence of previous success in engaging target groups (employers and/or individuals as appropriate to Tender Specification).
- Provide details including specific examples of engagement and retention strategies that have proved successful with the proposed target groups.
- Specify what the projects originally intended to deliver and the results achieved; include details of success rates, outputs and results targets and volumes delivered.

Applicants who do not have a track-record of working with the proposed target groups, sectors and employers, must describe how they and their partners have worked with similar target groups, sectors and employers and explain how this experience will inform their work.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

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## SECTION 5: CROSS CUTTING THEMES AND EXIT STRATEGY

### 16 Contribution to Equality & Diversity Cross-Cutting Theme

(Max score available = 12 across all 4 questions) (Max character limit = 3,000 characters for each of the 4 sub questions)

16A Do you understand the wide range of needs you might have to deal with when working with the participants? (3 points)

Tip: Describe the wide range of needs that exist within the individuals that will be supported via your proposed activities and demonstrate that you understand these different needs. Explain any previous experience you have of working with the different groups of individuals and or/how you have conducted research or consultation exercises to find out about their different needs. Explain how you will influence employer behaviour to respond to the needs of participants.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

16B How will the way you design and deliver your activities meet these different needs? (3 points)

Tip: Explain how the design and delivery of your proposal takes into account the wide range of needs that exist within the individuals. Explain how your previous experience and/or research/consultation have informed the design and delivery of the proposed activities.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

16C Does your organisation have an Equal Opportunities Policy and a Plan that explains how you will put this into place and monitor progress? How will this impact on your proposed activities? (3 points)

Tip: Explain how your Policy and Plan will impact upon staff and participants involved in your proposal. Describe what equal opportunities targets you will set and explain how these will be monitored and reviewed during its lifetime. If you are working with other organisations, explain how you will ensure that they are committed to equal opportunities. Explain how you will deal with any complaints of discrimination, bullying or harassment that you may be made by staff, participants or the general public. Finally, please confirm that you organisation will meet its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act, the Sex Discrimination Act, the Employment Equality Regulations for Sexual Orientation and Religion/Belief, and any other relevant legislation in the delivery of the proposed activities. It is not necessary to attach a copy of your organisation's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

16D Will you use appropriate marketing and publicity for your proposed activities that reflect your organisation's commitment to equal opportunities? (3 points)

Tip: Describe the different methods and types of marketing and publicity material you will use to promote your proposed activities, with particular reference to how equal opportunities issues will be reflected in your choice of material.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

### 17 Contribution to Sustainable Development Cross-Cutting Theme

(Max score available = 4) (Max character limit = 6,000)

**Criteria:** Demonstrates contribution to the Sustainable Development Cross Cutting Theme.

Tip: Outline how the proposed activities will support the regional approaches to sustainable development, particularly focusing on:

- Protecting the environment
- Careful use of natural resources
- Progress that recognises the needs of everyone
- Maintaining high and steady levels of economic growth and employment.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here

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**18**      **Exit Strategy** (Max score available = 4) (Max character limit = 3,000)

**Criteria:**    **Demonstrate that the project has a clear and appropriate exit strategy**

**Tip:**        The LSC does not wish to become a long-term sole funder of learning activities outside of core-funded programmes, which are wholly dependent on our funds to survive. Provide an exit strategy for your proposed activities which demonstrates how:

- Activities will lead to ongoing delivery through core funds, or;
- Development will be able to secure access to other funding streams, or.
- The activity will come to a natural close at the end.

Ref: **EXAMPLE**

Please enter your answer here