

Why choose a Framework agreement?

Our handy guide

Framework Agreements set out the principles for accessing goods, works or services with an economic operator (supplier) and can enable a contract to be drawn up in a shorter time and reduced cost when compared with a direct tender.



PROCUREMENT
ASSIST

| What is a framework agreement?



The Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR Regulations) define a framework agreement as: “an agreement between one or more contracting authorities and one or more economic operators, the purpose of which is to establish the terms governing contracts to be awarded during a given period, in particular with regard to price and, where appropriate, the quantity envisaged.”

A Framework Agreement is a general phrase for agreements with Service Providers that set out terms and conditions under which agreements for specific purchases (known as call-off contracts) can be made throughout the term of the agreement. In most cases a Framework Agreement will not itself commit either party to purchase or supply, but the procurement to establish a Framework Agreement is subject to PCR Regulations.

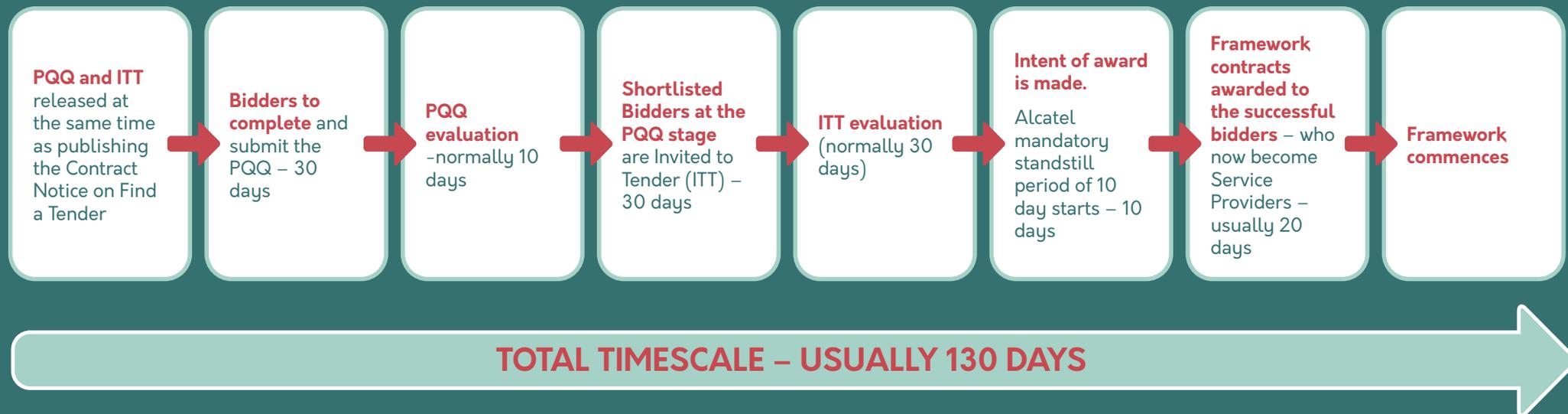
Framework Agreements must be set for a period of time (usually 4 years). The Framework Agreement concept is not new – they have been present in the UK since early 2003.

Framework Agreements – a two stage process

A Framework Agreement comprises of two parts: a Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) and Invitation to Tender (ITT). The document sets for both stages are released to the market at the same time.

- **PQQ** – is an assessment of an economic operators' technical, commercial, and financial competence
- **ITT** – is a formal, structured procedure generating competing offers from different potential economic operators looking to obtain an award of business activity – in either works, goods or services (a Framework can only be set up as one category)

The stages and timings in the procurement of a Framework Agreement are as follows:



Benefits of a Framework Agreement



- Option for direct call off or to carry out a further call to competition
- Accessing a Framework is instantaneous
- Reduces procurement timescales from 9 months to 4 weeks (on average)
- Choice of pre-validated suppliers that have been subjected to rigorous scrutiny as part of the selection process
- Agreed terms and conditions
- Agreed Framework pricing
- Reduces duplication of effort – no need to run separate tenders
- Clients Resource can be directed to more strategically
- Wider Public Sector using the Framework – having more users accessing the agreement means greater spend through the Framework which drives economies of scale when compared to tendering directly into the market

Our top 10 FAQ's



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How do I access a Procurement Assist Framework agreement?

All UK Public Sector organisations can access any of our Framework agreements by commissioning Procurement Assist either through a direct award of a contract to the highest ranked supplier (using our No Assist Service Level), or by carrying out a further call to competition using either using our Assist or Full Assist Service Levels). If you choose to commission Procurement Assist using the Full Assist service, we manage the full procurement process for you.

Our top 10 FAQ's



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How does a Framework tender work?

There are two methods to accessing a supplier from a Framework. The first is to direct award a contract to the highest ranked supplier awarded 1st place on the framework agreement. The second method is to carry out a further call for competition. This method involves carrying out a further competition based on additional or amended terms or specification requirements that weren't covered in the Framework agreement itself. This can be assessed and evaluated.

Our top 10 FAQ's



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Can you direct award from a Framework?

Yes, you can but the regulations only allow a direct award to the highest ranked supplier on a Framework Agreement, and where the pricing and specification of the Agreement meet your specific requirements. Should your requirements vary, or the highest ranked supplier cannot, or does not, wish to enter into an agreement with you (for instance due to contract size being too big/small, or geographical location) then a further competition must be carried out. There are no other compliant methods to direct award from a Framework agreement.

Our top 10 FAQ's



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Can I select my own quality/cost weighting?

When selecting a further competition, you must use the percentage weightings used when the Framework was originally procured for your call for competition. However, there is an 'unwritten' rule that it can be varied 10% either way – Procurement Assist advises on using the same weightings used in the Framework Agreement.

Our top 10 FAQ's



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What specification can I use when accessing a Framework agreement?

You must adopt the Framework's specification if carrying out a call for competition, however it can be varied (the initial reason for the call for competition).

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Is a Framework agreement procurement and call for competition both managed electronically?

Yes, they are - the process must be fully electronic, to comply with the regulations. Procurement Assist manage all 'further competitions' electronically, using an open, transparent, and fully auditable online portal.

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Is a Procurement Assist Framework agreement PCR2015 compliant?

Yes, all our Frameworks are fully PCR2019 compliant. To satisfy the legislative obligations of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 – Regulation 37 (6) Procurement Assist is required to partner with a Public Sector Body (a Contracting Authority as defined by the Public Contracts Regulations 2015) in order to deliver PCR 2015 compliant procurement solutions. iFM Bolton are a Contracting Authority by virtue of being a wholly owned subsidiary of the Public Sector Body Bolton NHS Foundation Trust and can legally act under PCR 2015 Regulation 37 (6) as Procurement Assist's Contracting Authority. Procurement Assist and iFM Bolton Ltd have formed a long term strategic partnership for the purpose of providing centralised purchasing activities for the acquisition of goods, services and works for the use of Public Sector Organisations (including, but not limited to The National Health Service (NHS), Social Housing, Education, Charities, Local Authorities and Wider Government

Bodies). All Procurement Assist's Dynamic Purchasing Systems and Frameworks are procured with iFM Bolton Ltd named as the contracting authority on contract notices published in the PCR2015 in accordance with the obligations imposed by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 Regulation 37 (6).

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Can I add in elements of my Zero Carbon policy into the call for competition?

Yes, you can. Each Framework agreement has generic supplier requirements for supporting Zero Carbon initiatives. Should any specific requirements be required, they can be included in a call for competition.

Our top 10 FAQ's



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Can I include Social Value in my call for competition?

Yes, you can. Each Framework agreement has Social Value supplier requirements for adding value into client contracts. Should any specific requirement need to be added, then they can be included in a call for competition.