

Roles and Responsibilities in Procurement - Role of Procurement Officers

The term "procurement officer" is used to describe any member of staff who is formally authorized to procure goods, services and works (i.e. to place contracts on behalf of the organization) – these officers will tend to sit within the formal procurement function and not the end user division, department, etc. The key elements of the procurement officer's role in the procurement process are to provide support and guidance to the end user/customer in:

- Market analysis and engaging in initial market dialogue, where appropriate;
- challenging end users' requirements for cost-effectiveness and need, taking account of whole life costs and corporate social responsibility/sustainability issues;
- Identifying and engaging other subject matter experts as required (e.g. end user, legal, finance etc.);
- developing an appropriate output-based specification which is fashioned to attract market interest and stimulate competition and innovation;
- developing a procurement strategy which requires consideration of existing and/or collaborative contracts;
- ensuring that all procurement processes (tender, order from framework etc.) are compliant with relevant legal and policy obligations, advertising through the national portal where appropriate;
- publicizing procurement contact points and making available as much information as suppliers reasonably need to respond to the bidding process;
- understanding and complying with relevant legal obligations relating to the goods, services or works to be procured, e.g. environmental/health and safety legislation;
- ensuring that procurement decisions take account of wider policy requirements;
- ensuring that procurement decisions are aligned against organizational objectives;
- ensuring that the organization's policies on corporate social responsibility/sustainability are adhered to;
- managing the procurement procedure;
- supporting partnership working arrangements;
- conducting any procurement clarification required prior to contract award;
- finalizing the contractual agreement and formal contract documentation;
- establishing a clear audit trail (including recording the contract on the organization's contract register);
- notifying the outcome of bids promptly and, within the bounds of commercial confidentiality, debriefing winners and losers on the outcome of the bidding process to facilitate better performance on future occasions;
- ensuring that adequate contract and supplier management arrangements are in place, supporting supplier management as appropriate;
- sharing knowledge to develop best practice; and
- Handling Freedom of Information requests on procurement matters in accordance with organizational policy.