



Legal Aid
Agency

Procurement Process for CLA Specialist Telephone Advice Contracts from September 2025 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Many questions will be answered by the information given in the Invitation to Tender documents (ITTs), which are available on the Tenders page of our website:

[Specialist Telephone Advice from September 2025 - GOV.UK](#)

The deadline for questions about the ITT or the tender was **23:59 12 February 2025** (note this is referred to as the “End date for supplier clarification messages” on the e-Tendering system). We are therefore unable to answer questions received after that deadline.

Questions that we consider to be of interest have been collated and answered centrally in writing to ensure that all interested parties have equal access to information in the answers. These questions and answers have been published in this FAQ document.

Where not defined in this FAQ document, capitalised terms are either defined in the relevant ITT or in the 2025 Civil Legal Advice Contract (the “Contract”)

Technical Questions on how to use the e-Tendering system

There is a Helpdesk to provide technical support to Applicant Organisations using the e-Tendering system. However, the Helpdesk is **unable** to assist you with problems with your own computer hardware or systems. For these types of issues, you should contact your usual IT support.

Questions for the helpdesk should be emailed to: help@bravosolution.co.uk. Alternatively, the telephone number for the helpdesk is 0800 069 8630 and lines are open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

The Helpdesk remains open until the tender closes. However, we recommend that you start to complete your tender early so that you identify any areas where you might need technical help as soon as possible, as the Helpdesk is likely to be very busy in the days leading up to the tender deadline and cannot guarantee that queries received close to the tender deadline will be dealt with in time.

The Tender Deadline is 17:00 on 10 March 2025

1. If we are to apply for the three tenders due to close on 10th March, and we believe there are economies of scale in linking the labour profile, can we link that in the answering of the ITTs, or do you need to see 3 standalone models?

If tendering to deliver Contract Work in more than one Category of Law an Applicant will need to complete each Sub-criteria in the relevant ITT in full, including submitting Mandatory Attachments. It may be the case that there is cross-over in responses/resources used between the ITTs. Where for example staff will be deployed on more than one Category of Law the Applicant will need to demonstrate in their responses that they have the relevant skills and experience.

2. Is there is a minimum Dun & Bradstreet rating or Failure Score required to pass the financial assessment for the CLA contract? If there is, can you advise what that threshold is please so that Applicants can check that they can meet that threshold before doing the work required to complete the tender process.

Financial assessment is not part of the assessment process for awarding CLA Contracts. Question A.11 in the SQ ITT requests an Applicant's D-U-N-S number in order to inform the LAA's contract management approach should the Applicant be awarded a CLA Contract. It is not a pass/fail question.

3. In the question regarding social value you say:

● **Inclusive and accessible recruitment practices, development practices and retention-focussed activities including those provided in the Guide for line managers on recruiting, managing and developing people with a disability or health condition.**

When you refer to "the Guide" is this a guide that we hold or something you are specifying?

Additionally, when you are asking for a timed project plan are there any key milestones or aspects you are particularly looking for tenders to cover?

The Guide for line managers referred to in sub-criterion 4.1 (Social Value Question) can be found at the following link:

[Recruiting, managing and developing disabled people: a practical guide for managers - GOV.UK](#)

A timed project plan should include any relevant key milestones and actions that you will carry out in order to implement your commitment to ensure that opportunities under the contract deliver the Social Value Policy Outcome and Award Criteria, in supporting health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health, in the contract workforce.

4. Question 4.1 (Social Value Question) asks for a method statement with a timed project plan and process. Please can you confirm if this part of the response can be uploaded as an attachment? If so will it form part of the character count stipulated?

Is there any way of the commissioner accepting attachments in addition and/or in place of text answers, such as for 1.3.38, Question 4.1, Social Value Question - we have a detailed plan in a table which we like to upload as an attachment for this if possible?

The response to Sub-criterion 4.1 and all other Sub-criteria must be provided in the text boxes provided in the e-Tendering system. The only attachments that can be provided are the Mandatory Attachments required in response to N.1- N.4.

5. We have downloaded all the documents across all the options related to Project 178 in Education, Discrimination and Housing and Debt, and we cannot find the minimum tech specifications or the DDI requirements for the telephony services.

Can you please confirm if the document uploaded titled 'Remote Speciality Telephony Handbook' is the correct document for the title, and where we should be able to find the minimum tech specs and DDI requirements.

The 'Remote Specialist Telephony Handbook' published in the tender documentation was made up of two documents:

- a Specialist Provider high level design and an AWS connect; and
- a Manager console training guide.

An additional document – an AWS Connect Agent Training Guide – should also have been included. This is now shared (as an attachment in the e-Tendering system titled 'Remote Specialist Telephony Handbook part III) and includes details of minimum system and browser requirements.

The DDI requirements are set out in Annex 1 (Specification), Annex 4 (IT requirements, CMS and business continuity) and the AWS connect – Manager console training guide, the AWS Connect Agent Training Guide and the Specialist Provider high level design.

Further guidance and support will then be provided to successful bidders on contract award.

6. Will the contract holder be able to use the Amazon to make outbound calls?

No, outbound calls are to be made using the CLA Provider's own telephony infrastructure.

7. Please can we have clarification as to whether a regular report can and/or will be issued during the delivery of the contract, to the provider, with regards to the status of cases on the CHS system?

CLA Providers do not currently have the ability to run reports from the CHS system but the LAA does provide management information on a regular basis, for example to show

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performance against KPI's and with regard to KPI 4 'Unaccessed Cases' is able to share individual case details.

8. Please can you advise regarding the following: Paragraph 4.29, clause (b) (vii) of Annex 1 of the Civil Legal Advice Contract refers to Providers having a 'Delivery of Contract Work Policy' in place, specifically, that Caseworkers laptop devices are only to be used for work relating to the provision of Contract Work. The wording of this clause suggests that all members of staff will be required to be provided with a laptop exclusively for the purpose of conducting Contract Work and therefore in turn, an additional laptop device for the purpose of internal and/or other work conducted. If this is correct, this could be costly and impractical for providers and would require staff to potentially be provided with two laptop devices and be required to work from these simultaneously.

Please confirm whether this is a drafting error and whether the wording of this clause should read "ensuring laptop devices are only used for work relating to the provision of company and/or Contract Work purposes only" as is the current agreed position.

The intention of the LAA in relation to this provision was to mirror the existing requirement on laptop use within the current contract provisions on the Homeworking Policy, which restricts the use of laptops to Contract Work and any other work arising from the usual activities of the contracted organisation.

To reflect this intention, the LAA has now amended and republished the Contract with the following amendment (highlighted in red below) to Paragraph 4.29(b)(vii) of Annex 1 (Specification) to the Contract:

4.29 You must have in place a Delivery of Contract Work Policy which sets out that regardless of where Contract Work is delivered from the following requirements are met:

(a) you must have a clear documented plan for the supervision of Caseworkers which includes how you will assess the quality of Adviser interactions with Clients;

(b) you must have appropriate data and information security measures in place which must include: ...

(vii) (ensuring that laptop devices are only used for work relating to the provision of Contract Work and any other work arising from the usual activities of your organisation.

The requirements in 4.29 should be read in conjunction with requirement NFR-SEC-070 in Annex 4 (IT Requirements, CMS and Business Continuity) to the Contract, which specifies the following:

You must ensure your Staff perform Contract Work using one or more Approved Devices. Any Approved Devices must have been provided by you to your Staff for the purpose of delivering the CLA service and must exclude:

- any personal devices or devices that are used for personal reasons,

- devices that are routinely used by Staff for reasons not related to your operations and
- devices that are shared with individuals not involved in delivering the CLA service.

9. Are providers able to claim costs back through disbursements for interpretation services required for clients coming into the specialist telephone advice service?

Interpretation services for CLA cases are provided via the MoJ Language Services' contract (the "Interpreter Service") rather than as a disbursement. Contract holders must meet the requirements in Paragraph 2.27 and 2.28 in Annex 1 (Specification) to the Contract, which sets out provisions on identifying and responding to an individual's need for an interpreter through the approved Interpreter Service. CLA Providers who are awarded a Contract will be provided guidance on how to access and use the Interpreter Service prior to the Service Commencement Date. CLA Providers will incur no costs by using the Interpreter Service and therefore no disbursements will be available for this.

10. On page 9 of the ITT documents, it states one of the requirements is that the Applicant "Have access to an Authorised Litigator with experience of carrying out cases within the relevant Category of Law". Please can we have clarification on the definition of what is meant by 'have access to'.

There is no definition of "have access to" in the Contract and the provision should be read according to the natural meaning of these words. A Contract holder will need to have arrangements in place to be able to contact an Authorised Litigator who can provide advice and support on cases where litigation might be required. There is no explicit requirement for this person to be employed by the Contract holder or to have any specific formal arrangements in place.

Applicants should note that Clauses 7.9 and 7.10 of the Standard Terms to the Contract require Contract holders to comply with all relevant legislation and any Relevant Professional Body rules. There may be instances where carrying out legal representation in the civil courts under Licensed Work would require a Contract holder to use an Authorised Litigator to comply with the Legal Services Act 2007 and other legislation. The Contract permits an Agent to be used as part of the delivery of Licensed Work in certain circumstances set out in Paragraph 4.5 of Annex 1 (Specification) to the Contract.

11. Would we be able to use an external supervisor who meets the CLA/LAA standard level but doesn't currently deliver CLA/LAA contract work?

Paragraph 4.9 of Annex 1 (Specification) to the Contract states that you must have at least one full-time equivalent a Supervisor who is "either one of your employees or a director of or partner in or member of your organisation (where you are a company, partnership (other than an LLP) or LLP respectively)". External supervision may only be permitted during a temporary supervisor absence in the circumstances set out in Paragraphs 4.22 and 4.23 of Annex 1 (Specification) to the Contract.

12. Could the commissioner clarify if the CLA operator would transfer calls through to providers outside of core hours (i.e. evenings/weekends) should the provider make this available as part of their delivery model?

The CLA Operator would not transfer calls through to CLA Providers outside of Core Hours. However, any calls that come in outside of the CLA Providers' Core Hours and are deemed eligible will be allocated on the call handling system for the CLA Providers to contact during their Core Hours.