



Tendering time limits

Cheat sheet / decision tree

This learning aid is designed as a quick reference guide to the different time limit requirements under the Procurement Act 2023.

Definitions

Participation period means the period beginning with the day following the day on which a contracting authority invites the submission of requests to participate in a competitive flexible procedure and ending with the day by which those requests must be submitted.

Tendering period means the period beginning with the day following the day on which a contracting authority invites the submission of tenders as part of a competitive tendering procedure and ending with the day by which tenders must be submitted.

Remember, these are minimum timescales. You should consider the nature and complexity of your requirements and allow sufficient time for suppliers to respond, particularly if there is a need for them to subcontract whilst balancing this against the importance of avoiding unnecessary delays.

All contracting authorities

Scenario	Participation period (days)
Minimum timescale	25
Where the contracting authority considers there to be a state of urgency that means that a 25 day participation period is impractical	10
The contract is a light touch contract	No minimum

Central government authorities

Scenario	Tendering period (days)
Where tenders may not be submitted electronically and all associated tender documents are not provided at the same time as the tender notice	35
Where tenders may not be submitted electronically but all associated tender documents are provided at the same time as the tender notice	30
Where tenders may be submitted electronically but all associated tender documents are not provided at the same time as the tender notice	30
Where tenders may be submitted electronically and all associated tender documents are provided at the same time as the tender notice	25
A qualifying planned procurement notice has been issued	10
Where the contracting authority considers there to be a state of urgency that means any other applicable minimum tender period is impractical	10
Where a contract is being awarded under a dynamic market	10
The contract is a light touch contract	No minimum

Non-central government authorities

Scenario	Tendering period (days)
Where tenders may not be submitted electronically and all associated tender documents are not provided at the same time as the tender notice	35
Where tenders may not be submitted electronically but all associated tender documents are provided at the same time as the tender notice	30
Where tenders may be submitted electronically but all associated tender documents are not provided at the same time as the tender notice	30
Where tenders may be submitted electronically and all associated tender documents are provided at the same time as the tender notice	25
A qualifying planned procurement notice has been issued	10
Where the contracting authority considers there to be a state of urgency that means any other applicable minimum tender period is impractical	10
Where a contract is being awarded under a dynamic market	10
The contract is a light touch contract	No minimum
Where you have included a condition of participation stage and only pre-selected suppliers are invited to submit a tender	10
Where you have included a conditions of participation stage and only pre-selected suppliers are invited to submit a tender, and you have agreed a timescale with those suppliers	No minimum

Decision tree - determining the minimum time limits



