

INFORMATION RELEASED UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Information released title	Information relating to Universal Services update
Original request	<p>I would be interested to know, under the concepts of 'freedom of information (FOI)' and transparency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to what extent UKCES's plans, as announced in the subject update, were - and will be - subject to public and expert consultation and scrutiny; the cost of SERCO Consulting's input to UKCES's budgetary shortfall recovery plan and what else the former has been promised or might expect from its contract; How 'blurring' SSC footprints through contested (competitive?) tendering will benefit 'host' and 'guest/customer' sectors. <p>I'm sure that there will be considerable interest in the contents of your reply.</p>
Date of release	14.07.2011
Requester type	Awarding Organisation

Information released:

Thank you for your request for information which we received on 6 July 2011, for information relating to Universal Services. This request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please find below the UK Commission for Employment and Skills response to your questions:

- to what extent UKCES's plans, as announced in the subject update, were - and will be - subject to public and expert consultation and scrutiny;*

Your email references a 'subject update' and our assumption is that this is in reference to the update issued to FAB/JCQ and then circulated to the Awarding Organisation network. UKCES can confirm the plans within this update have been subject to expert consultation which include SSCs, SSOs, AOs (via FAB & JCQ), the Devolved Administrations and main Government bodies. There are no plans to engage in a public consultation exercise.

- the cost of SERCO Consulting's input to UKCES's budgetary shortfall recovery plan and what else the former has been promised or might expect from its contract;*

The cost of the SERCO contract was £81,810 (excl VAT). The contract with SERCO was delivered to the contract specification and no further contracts have been promised as a result.

- *How 'blurring' SSC footprints through contested (competitive?) tendering will benefit 'host' and 'guest/customer' sectors.*

UKCES are not seeking to blur existing licensed SSC footprints. We will be inviting bids to deliver services to develop and maintain National Occupational Standards and Apprenticeship/Modern Apprenticeship frameworks (where required) from within the SSC network.

If you are unhappy with the way your request for information has been handled, you can request a review by writing to the Head of Secretariat Services at the following address:

UKCES
3 Callflex Business Park
Golden Smithies Lane
Wath upon Dearne
South Yorkshire
S63 7ER

If you remain dissatisfied with the handling of your request or complaint, you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone 08456 30 60 60 or 01625 54 57 45, Website: www.ico.gov.uk

There is no charge for making an appeal.