

Universal Services Q&A

Q I have received a Schedule of Outputs pro-forma to complete outlining our intended deliverables for 12/13. In the pro-forma it uses the term 'stages'. Does 'stage' mean the completed output or milestone within the process to achieve a completed output?

A *The term 'stage' refers to the full completion of an output that has meet the quality assurance specification.*

Q When completing the 'Schedule of Outputs' pro-forma do I need to identify and name specific apprenticeship frameworks to be reviewed and maintained or can I say 3 of the 14 frameworks will be maintained?

A *Each output proposed in the 'Schedule of Outputs' pro-forma individually named and identified are supported by evidence of need and demand and met the criteria highlighted in the product specification.*

Q One of our proposed outputs within our plan indicates the development will span 2 financial years, year 1 (12/13) will involve 5 months development work and year 2 (13/14) will involve 4 months development work plus additional time to be quality assured. Can you advise how I present this in the 'Schedule of Outputs' pro-forma?

A *The contracts for Universal Services will pay on the submission and approval of a final output. Therefore if you start a project in 12/13 and intend to complete and submit a quality assured output in 13/14 the product should be included in the 13/14 schedule.*

Q I have received a request from an employer to review a suite of NOS in 12/13. Whilst we are the custodians of the NOS the SOC code sits within another SSC supplier and is not part of our agreement with UKCES. Could UKCES advise on how best I take this forward?

A *We advise that you contact the lead SSC for the collaboration who is responsible for delivering the outputs for the SOC in question. The NOS review should appear in the proposed schedule of outputs submitted by the lead body that has the supplier agreement to deliver outputs against the SOC code. This however does not prevent you from developing/reviewing the NOS if agreed between yourself and the lead SSC.*

Q I have to submit a completed 'Schedule of Outputs' by 10 February. Will the Commission contact me prior to the 10th February to negotiate unit price or will negotiations take place after the 10th February.

A *If required, negotiations on unit price will take place after the 10th February. A full description of what constitutes a unit cost is highlighted in the Commissioning document.*

Q Does the Commission require an SSC to provide monthly or quarterly progress reports as part of the annual activity for Universal Services?

A *The Commission does not require an SSC/O to provide any progress reports*

Q We are in the process of finalising our schedule of outputs, if an output from the Schedule is delivered and quality assured ahead of the expected completion date is there is there any flexibility of payment early?

A *If an output from the schedule is completed early and has meets the quality specification payment can be claimed early.*

Q Can you confirm what the payment terms will be for the Universal Services contract? Will payment be based on payment on completion of the products or could it be based on a quarterly/monthly output/report based approach?

A *UKCES will pay on the completion and delivery of a quality assured which meets the product and quality specification.*

Q We are finalising our plans for the Universal Services Schedule of Outputs and looking at the financial aspect. We understand we will no longer receive monthly profile payments which would help support development work. Are UKCES able to provide financial payments at the start of the contract to support cash flow?

A *. It has been agreed that the Commission will provide a working capital payment of 10% of the agreed annual schedule amount. However, please note we cannot guarantee that we will be able to make a working capital payment for subsequent years.*