Preliminary Market Engagement

Reference	PH/CORP/LCC/26/402
Title	Lancashire Teaching Agency – Provision of Supply Services to Schools
Return date	12th November 2026 - 12 noon.

Preliminary Market Engagement (including Questionnaire)

Lancashire County Council is the fourth largest Local Authority in England and Wales and employs approximately 35,000 staff. It serves a population of 1.1 million which is rich in cultural diversity, and covers an area of 3,070 sq. km.

Further information about Lancashire County Council can be found at:

http://www.lancashire.gov.uk

The Authority is seeking to appoint a Service Provider to undertake the recruitment and provision of full and part time teachers, teaching assistants and all support staff roles to maintained schools and academies within Lancashire and neighbouring authorities in order to promote the highest quality of candidates and service delivery. Applicants should note that LCC agency staff assigned to work within the Council are not included as part of this contract.

The Lancashire Teaching Agency currently provides over 50,000 teacher supply days to Lancashire schools per annum. Approximately 730 teachers and 200 support staff are registered with the LTA. The LTA represents around 30% of the market share of supply staff to.

The LTA offers a specialist recruitment service to best match the needs of the school to the skills of the supply staff, providing training and rigorous safeguarding practices to ensure all staff are compliant with current requirements.

Tenderers must be aware that the LTA has no exclusivity to supply any Lancashire schools and likewise no exclusivity can be given under the Contract. Schools are free to make their own decisions about the sources of supply cover they use and they are under no obligation to take such services from the LTA.

Lancashire County Council is aware of the Government Commercial Agency Supply Teachers and Education Recruitment Framework and is currently considering how the framework will interact with the Lancashire Teaching Agency contract.

The draft specification issued as part of this pre-market engagement exercise does not address the operation of the Supply Staff Framework at this time.

Further detail will be provided within the final published specification and tender documentation, including how services will be delivered and managed.

Further information about the LTA can be found using the following link:

Lancashire Teaching Agency - Lancashire Teaching Agency

The tender procedure, the form of contract, and the project timetable

The tender procedure is anticipated to be a Competitive Flexible above-threshold services procurement. The evaluation weightings will likely be a mixture of quality and technical considerations. The Authority is currently drafting suitable contract terms.

The tender will likely be advertised in December 2026. Ideally, the Authority will award the tender no later than April 2027. Services are anticipated to commence from 01 September 2027. The Authority will confirm the timelines in the tender procedure.

Questions & Topics – requiring your response:

1. Introductory details: please provide a brief overview of your company. Details to include:
    a. Company structure, ownership.
    b. Annual turnover.
    c. Typical client base.
    d. Familiarity with providing supply teachers and support staff to schools within Lancashire
    e. Contact name, role, telephone number, and email address.

2. Briefly describe your capabilities and your potential to meet our scope of requirements, including providing the teachers and support staff and the ability to cover schools within and neighbouring the Lancashire Border and the ability to mobilise for September 2027.

3. Which digital functionalities would you consider to be standard within a modern education supply staffing service and therefore reasonably expected by schools and supply staff using a consultant-led staffing model, to improve customer experience, efficiency and responsiveness whilst maintaining human oversight?

4. Are there any digital capabilities, reporting tools or service features that you believe the Council should consider including within the specification to ensure it remains fit for purpose throughout the contract term?

5. Are there any requirements within the draft specification that may unintentionally restrict innovation or limit access to available market solutions whilst not being essential to service delivery?

6. Are there any specific issues that would either encourage or discourage you from bidding to deliver these services to Lancashire County Council?

Contact and return:

Please respond to the questionnaire no later than **12th November 2026 at 12 noon.**

Completed questionnaires must be returned electronically to the Authority's procurement team via email at: contractscorporate@lancashire.gov.uk

The Authority is not obligated to review any late responses to this market engagement.

Important Notes

This preliminary market engagement exercise does not constitute a formal tender or pre-qualification process. It is issued for the sole purpose of market engagement and information gathering to help shape the final procurement approach.

Participation in this preliminary market engagement exercise is not mandatory and will not affect eligibility to participate in the formal procurement process once launched.

Responses to the preliminary market engagement exercise will not be scored but will be reviewed by the Authority to understand market appetite, delivery capability, and preferences regarding contract terms and risk allocation.

Submission of a response to this preliminary market engagement exercise does not constitute a contractual offer and shall not be construed as creating any obligation on the part of the Authority to proceed with a formal procurement or to award any contract.

The Authority reserves the right to:

- Make changes to the scope or timing of the procurement process, including changes to the draft specification.
- Proceed or not proceed with the procurement process at its absolute discretion.

All information shared in responses will be treated in confidence and used only for the purposes of refining the procurement strategy. All information issued by and provided to the Authority should and will be treated as confidential and used only for internal purposes relating to project planning and procurement preparation.