

Job Description

Job Title: Commercial Manager (Digital, Transformation & Technical Services)

About SLC

Student Loans Company is a non-profit making Government-owned organisation set up in 1989 to provide loans and grants to students in universities and colleges in the UK. We are responsible for student support delivery in the UK.

Company Mission

We enable our customers to invest in their futures by delivering secure, accurate and efficient assessment, payment and repayment services.

Company Vision

Our vision is to be valued as a digital, customer-focused, centre of excellence.

Job Details

Overview of department:

The purpose of the Commercial function within SLC is to buy the right thing at the right time in the right way from the right supplier for best value through the supply life so as to support the relevant business area to achieve its objectives.

- “Right thing” means a clearly defined written specification with appropriate written financial approval in place.
- “Right time” means in good time for best use by the business area.
- “Right way” means in the simplest way whilst complying with public procurement law and central government controls & guidance.
- “Right supplier” means it’s their core business, they are stable and used to dealing with the public sector.
- “Best value” means a pre-determined balance agreed with the business area between price and quality.
- “Supply life” means managing the resulting contracts and relationships so that the customer and supplier are both able to achieve their objectives.

Grade: 5

Reporting to: Senior Commercial Manager for DTTS

Budget Responsibility: For procurement related activity, delegated authority to sign contracts up to the value of £1M, subject to appropriate governance and approvals processes. Specific procurement budgets are held by individual budget holders in the business areas.

Line Management Responsibility: Staff - access to a pool of 6 Commercial Officers and Advisors for support

Job Purpose:

- Provide expert advice to SLC on all aspects of the public procurement regulations and other controls, including those from Cabinet Office and the parent department, that apply to Non-Departmental Public Bodies such as SLC;
- Support the continued development of Commercial's role as an enabling service to SLC business areas;
- Procure goods, services and works at best value for the taxpayer in accordance with all applicable Regulations, HMT Managing Public Money requirements and SLC policies;
- Ensure that commercial management activity is performed to the standards expected from a central government body;

Key responsibilities:

- Establish a comprehensive understanding of current and future commercial needs for your allocated DTTS divisions;
- Work with your allocated DTTS divisions to design, plan and implement commercial strategies, in line with SLC objectives and consistent with its status as a Non-Departmental Public Body;
- Manage procurement exercises from inception to completion, ensuring that procurement is only carried out with clear evidence of appropriate budgetary authority;
- Ensure that all items are procured using the most appropriate route to market to deliver best value to the taxpayer, whilst complying with all applicable public procurement regulations and policies;
- Make best use of all public sector framework agreements in determining the route to market;
- Lead commercial negotiations, making tactical decisions that will lead to added value for the taxpayer;
- Prepare all relevant documentation, evaluate offers received and make recommendations; using and updating standard templates as appropriate;
- Build collaborative working relationships with your allocated DTTS customers, support staff and external parties, communicating the benefits delivered by the Commercial team while setting out the need to comply with all relevant policies and regulations;
- Manage all commercial matters for your allocated DTTS contracts, including forward planning for expiry dates and supporting DTTS to drive best performance from suppliers;
- Use appropriate tools and techniques to assess the supply market, risks, level of competition, trends and new opportunities to inform market understanding;
- Maintain the Contract Management Database, Exceptions Log, Activity Trackers, Savings Log, Forward Procurement Plan and other relevant Commercial datasets for your allocated DTTS divisions' activity;
- Identify and categorise the commercial risks faced by your allocated DTTS divisions, including designing and implementing appropriate mitigation strategies;
- Keep up-to-date with best practice in public procurement, and share this information with the Commercial team;
- Contribute to the continued improvement of SLC's commercial processes and documentation; and
- Other Commercial team duties as agreed from time-to-time.

Knowledge, Skills and Experience:

Education, Qualifications and Training:

- Demonstrable in-depth knowledge of public sector procurement practices and emerging trends;
- Procurement qualification (MCiPS or equivalent); and
- High level of literacy and numeracy.

Technical Skills / Experience:

- Substantial track record of delivering complex procurement projects in a public sector environment;
- Experience of strategic supplier contract and relationship management;
- Extensive use of MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint;
- Risk identification relative to procurement and supplier management; and
- Demonstrable team leadership and management skills.

Personal Attributes:

- High level of credibility in order to influence and manage internal and external business relationships;
- Customer focused – committed to ethos of an accountable, cost effective, high-quality, customer-driven service delivery;
- Able to present clear and logic reasons for proposals and decisions;
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills at all levels (presentations, reports, working groups, etc);
- Ability to explain technical procurement procedures and provide training and advice to a wide audience;
- Analytical and inquisitive mind with developed problem-solving skills;
- High-degree of commercial awareness;
- Demonstrable organisational and time-management skills;
- Ability to use initiative and prioritise own workload;
- Able to work with discretion on confidential matters;
- Ability to assimilate information quickly and to follow through work assignments with no supervision to the highest standard and by set deadlines; and
- Able to work as part of a team.

Special Requirements:

- Must be prepared to work flexibly to meet deadlines; and
- Must be prepared to travel to suppliers, internal customers and other government bodies, including overnight stays as required.