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What is the Postbox?

The Postbox is an online submission facility which allows buyers to receive responses from suppliers electronically in a secure environment.

Responses are submitted through the portal and held in the secure Postbox until the deadline for responses has expired. Nominated members of a buying organisation can then unlock the Postbox to access the submissions.

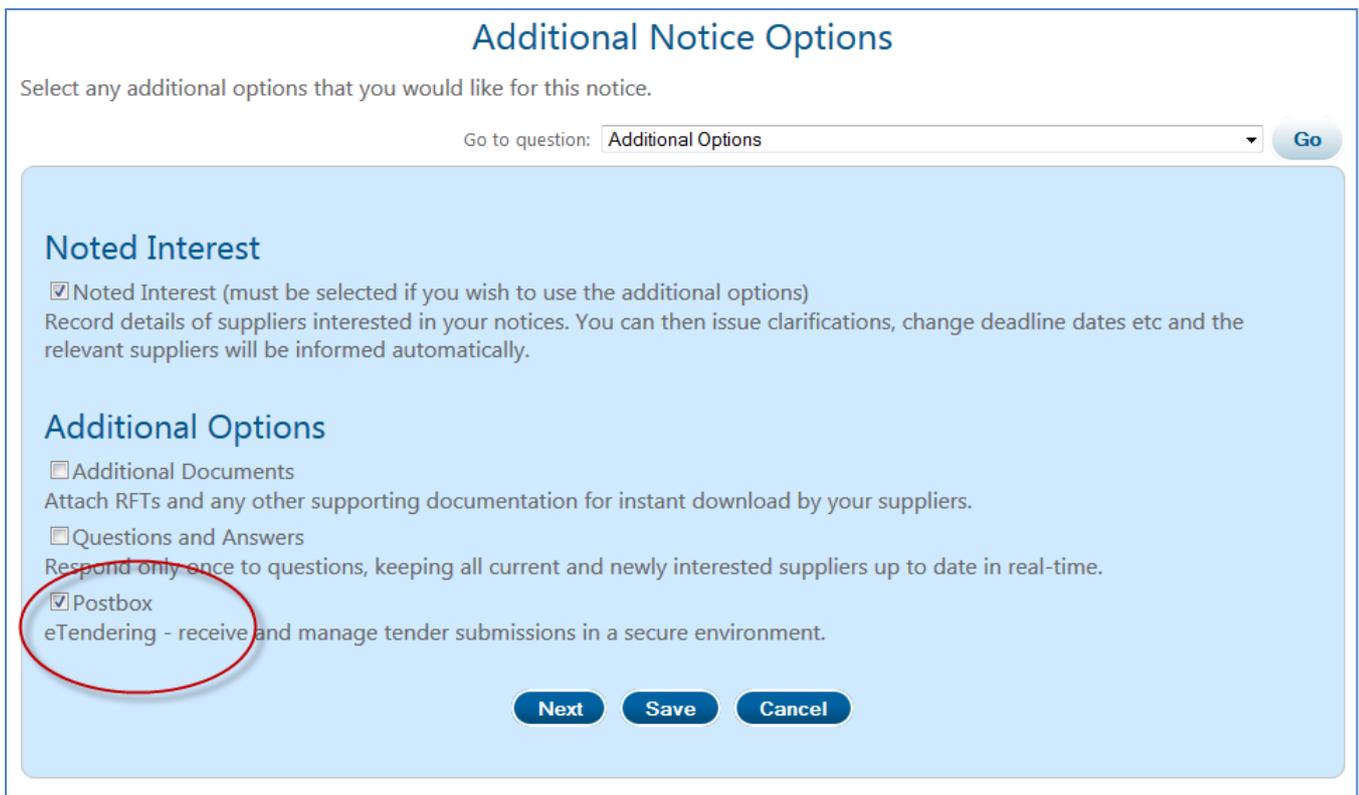
The Postbox can be used for receipt of completed tender documents in an open procedure or completed PQQs in a restricted procedure. {Note: To use the Postbox for the second stage in a restricted procedure please see the Stage 2 user guide.}

A full audit trail is kept of all access to the Postbox and a complete record of all supplier submissions is stored.

How to create a notice with a Postbox

During notice creation the publisher ticks “Tender Postbox” from the “Additional Notice Options” screen.

Additional Notice Options Screen - Notice Creation



Additional Notice Options

Select any additional options that you would like for this notice.

Go to question:

Noted Interest

Noted Interest (must be selected if you wish to use the additional options)
Record details of suppliers interested in your notices. You can then issue clarifications, change deadline dates etc and the relevant suppliers will be informed automatically.

Additional Options

Additional Documents
Attach RFTs and any other supporting documentation for instant download by your suppliers.

Questions and Answers
Respond only once to questions, keeping all current and newly interested suppliers up to date in real-time.

Postbox
eTendering - receive and manage tender submissions in a secure environment.

On clicking “next” the publisher is then asked to select a user(s) from their buying organisation to be given the rights to unlock the Postbox. Only those users with “opener” access will appear in the list:

Selecting the Postbox openers - Notice Creation

Tender Submission Postbox

You can elect to use the Tender Submission Postbox facility to receive responses from suppliers to your notice electronically. If you use the Postbox you must designate one or more members of your organisation to 'unlock' the postbox after the notice deadline.

Go to question: Postbox Go

Please select one or more members to unlock the postbox:

| | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jane Brown (jane.brown@qrbcs.gov.uk) | Next Save Cancel |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Smith (john.smith@qrbcs.gov.uk) | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peter Wilson (peter.wilson@qrbcs.gov.uk) | |

Once the notice has been published the postbox openers will receive an e-mail confirming the details of the Postbox, which reads:

*Notice ID : DEC081494
Title: Stationery Supplies
Deadline: 11/12/2013 12:00*

The above notice has now been published. Responses to this tender will be received electronically and the following members of your buyer organisation are responsible for the monitoring and opening of the tender Submission Postbox:

*Jane Brown
John Smith
Peter Wilson*

You can view the status of the Tender Submission Post box for this notice here:

(Link to Notice View page)

From there, the number of responses received to date can be viewed and when the deadline has passed the postbox can be opened and full details of the responses viewed and documents downloaded.

*Regards
Public Contracts Scotland Website Support
Tel: 0800 222 9003*

Note: The deadline for the Postbox is set by the date you provide in the Procedure Timescales Question.

This is the date and time provided in the field:

Deadline for Receipt of Tender Documents – Open Procedures

Deadline for Requests to Participate – Restricted Procedures

The deadline can be changed post publication if required, but not after the deadline time and date have passed.

How do Suppliers know a Postbox is being used?

Once the notice is published on the portal it will appear with a yellow key symbol denoting that the electronic Postbox will be used:

Postbox icon – Browse notices page

| Date | Notice Details |
|---|---|
| 10/12/2013  | Stationery Supplies Reference No: DEC081494 Published By: Queens Road Council Deadline Date: 11-Dec-13 Notice Type: Contract Notice |

A Link will also appear in the short description of the notice instructing suppliers to register their interest and instructing that the Postbox function will be used for this notice.

Any supplier who wishes to submit a Postbox response must record their interest in the notice on the portal.
(Note: For more details on the supplier process please see the relevant user guide.)

Dealing with Postbox Submissions

Once a submission has been dispatched to the Postbox by the supplier, an e-mail is sent to all authority users who have access to the Postbox. This e-mail reads:

Tender Ref: MAY045456

Title: Plant Hire

Deadline: 28/05/2013 12:00

A response, reference 188, has been received for the notice shown above on 14 May 2013 13:38:44

You can view the current status of your Tender Submission Postbox for this notice at -

(link to Postbox submission page)

The Postbox status page is only accessible by the authority Controller(s) and the selected openers. It is accessed by going to the 'My Published Notices', clicking the relevant notice title and then "view submission Postbox" under "additional notice options".

Postbox Status

Postbox Status

Details of the Tender Submission Postbox for this notice are shown below.

Postbox Details

Title: Stationery Supplies
 Created: 10/12/2013 2:12 PM
 Deadline: 11/12/2013 12:00
 Status: Locked

[Unlock](#)
[Back](#)

Current Responses

| ID | Created | Status |
|-------|---------------------|---------------|
| 15882 | 10/12/2013 14:36:11 | Submitted |
| 15883 | 10/12/2013 14:36:43 | Submitted |
| 15902 | 10/12/2013 14:37:01 | Submitted |
| 15884 | 10/12/2013 14:40:01 | Not Submitted |

Please note that the name of the supplier cannot be exposed until the postbox is unlocked.
 'Submitted' refers to responses completed and submitted by suppliers on the interest list to the post box.
 'Not Submitted' refers to responses partially created by suppliers on the interest list but not yet dispatched to the post box.

Authorised Openers

[Change Opener Access](#)

| Name | Email | Status | Unlocked |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------|----------|
| Jane Brown | jane.brown@qrbcs.gov.uk | Locked | |
| John Smith | john.smith@qrbcs.gov.uk | Locked | |
| Peter Wilson | peter.wilson@qrbcs.gov.uk | Locked | |

The postbox status page gives details of submitted and unsubmitted responses. In the example, responses reference 188 and 189 have been submitted to the Postbox. Response reference 190 has been created by a supplier but not yet submitted to the Postbox. Supplier details are not visible until the deadline for submissions has passed.

The Postbox status page also lists the authorised Postbox openers which, if required, can be changed by the Controller by clicking on "Change Opener Access".

If one of the openers attempts to unlock the Postbox before the stated deadline, this will be unsuccessful and their attempt to open the Postbox will be logged in the access log.

Once the deadline has passed the nominated Postbox openers will receive an e-mail reminding them to log into the site to unlock the Postbox.

Before submissions can be accessed each selected user must click "Unlock" to the top right.

The time and date of each unlocking is recorded. Once all relevant users have unlocked the Postbox, the option to “Open” the Postbox will appear:

Unlocked Postbox

Postbox Status

Details of the Tender Submission Postbox for this notice are shown below.

You have successfully unlocked your section of the postbox.

Postbox Details

Title: Stationery Supplies
 Created: 10/12/2013 2:12 PM
 Deadline: 10/12/2013 15:00
 Status: Unlocked

[Open](#)
[Back](#)

Current Responses

| ID | Created | Status |
|-------|---------------------|---------------|
| 15882 | 10/12/2013 14:36:11 | Submitted |
| 15883 | 10/12/2013 14:36:43 | Submitted |
| 15902 | 10/12/2013 14:37:01 | Submitted |
| 15884 | 10/12/2013 14:40:01 | Not Submitted |

Please note that the name of the supplier cannot be exposed until the postbox is unlocked.
 'Submitted' refers to responses completed and submitted by suppliers on the interest list to the post box.
 'Not Submitted' refers to responses partially created by suppliers on the interest list but not yet dispatched to the post box.

Authorised Openers

| Name | Email | Status | Unlocked |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| Jane Brown | jane.brown@qrb.gov.uk | Unlocked | 10/12/2013 15:06:58 |
| John Smith | john.smith@qrb.gov.uk | Unlocked | 10/12/2013 15:05:06 |
| Peter Wilson | peter.wilson@qrb.gov.uk | Unlocked | 10/12/2013 15:01:01 |

On clicking “Open”, the Postbox View page is displayed and responses can be downloaded. The access log is also shown on this page.

Postbox View

Postbox View

Details of the Tender Submission Postbox for this notice are shown below. To view the full supplier details and download the supporting documents *click* the appropriate ID. To download the entire postbox into a zip file click on the relevant link.

Postbox Details

Ref: DEC081495
 Title: 5 bespoke chairs
 Created: 10/12/2013 2:53 PM
 Deadline: 09/05/2014 10:00
 Download: [Download all postbox responses \(Zip File\)](#)

All Responses

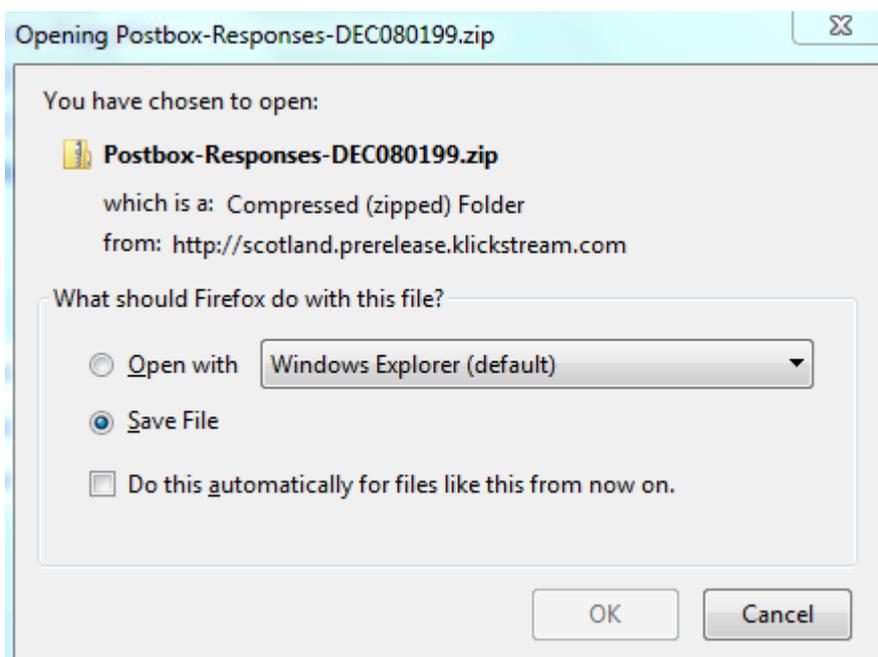
| ID | Received | Supplier Name | Late Responses |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 15885 | 11/12/2013 10:10:39 | Millstream | |
| 15886 | 11/12/2013 10:22:57 | Riverside Design | |

Postbox Notes [Create New](#)

| Created | Notes | Who |
|------------|--|-----------------------------|
| 09/05/2014 | Riverside Design have only submitted half their tender documents | Administrator Administrator |

The open Postbox only lists completed submissions. The original responses are stored in the system and can be downloaded as many times as required. Each response has a unique reference number which is provided to the supplier when they successfully submit their response.

You can download the entire Postbox into a zip file. This should generate a pop up window asking whether you want to save or open the file to which you should select your favoured option.



Within the zip file there will be a folder containing all responses and a .txt file listing the responses and the postbox details.

Each response is provided in its own folder and contains each document the supplier uploaded to their response as well as a .txt file detailing the response.

You can also view and download responses individually by clicking on the supplier name.

Dealing with late Postbox Submissions

Suppliers are able to submit postbox responses after the postbox deadline as long as the postbox has not yet been unlocked by each designated opener. It is left to the buyer's discretion to accept or reject the late response.

If a late submission has been dispatched to the Postbox by the supplier, an e-mail is sent to the postbox openers. This e-mail reads:

Postbox late response notification

Ref: MAY045421
Title: Plant hire
Deadline: 09 May 2013 12:00

A response, reference 159, has been received for the Quick Quote shown above on 09 May 2013 13:23:57.

**Please note: This response was received after the postbox deadline.
The response may be accepted at your discretion.**

You can view the current status of your Submission Postbox for this Quick Quote at -
(link to Postbox submission page)

Regards
Public Contracts Scotland Website Support
0800 222 9003

Late responses are flagged as such on the postbox status page. The buyer is unable to see the name of the supplier who submitted the postbox response but the response ID is provided. If the buyer has had communication with a supplier who has submitted a late response they should ask the supplier for their response ID and take the appropriate action. Late responses must be accepted / rejected before opening the postbox and once a decision has been logged it is irreversible. Late responses which are rejected will not be displayed in the opened postbox.

Postbox status – Current responses

| Current Responses | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|--|
| ID | Created | Status | Late Responses |
| 17742 | 26/08/2016 10:53:26 | Submitted | Is Late? Yes Is Accepted? - Accept/Reject |
| 17743 | 26/08/2016 10:56:35 | Submitted | Is Late? Yes Is Accepted? - Accept/Reject |

Clicking on 'Accept/Reject' next to late response opens the below screen. The postbox opener must enter a reason for accepting or rejecting the late response before clicking the appropriate button and confirming their decision.

Accept/ Reject late postbox submission

Accept/Reject late postbox submission

This response was received after the postbox deadline and therefore the response may be accepted at your discretion. Please enter a **Reason** and *click* the **Accept** or **Reject** button depending on your choice of action.

* Required information.

Response Details

Response ID: 17743
Title: test
Created: 26/08/2016
Received: 26/08/2016 10:56 AM

Reason for accepting or rejecting this late response

* Reason:

Accept

Reject

Cancel

Once a late response has been accepted or rejected the decision is displayed on the Postbox status page. It will also display the reason for the accepting or rejecting.

Postbox Notes

After opening the postbox, Buyers have an option to add a note to the postbox. This can be used to capture all information relating to the postbox submissions to be kept as an audit.

To add a new notice from the Postbox page select "Create New".

Postbox Details

Ref: DEC081495
Title: 5 bespoke chairs
Created: 10/12/2013 2:53 PM
Deadline: 09/05/2014 10:00
Download: [Download all postbox responses \(Zip File\)](#)

All Responses

| ID | Received | Supplier Name | Late Responses |
|-----------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 15885 | 11/12/2013 10:10:39 | Millstream | |
| 15886 | 11/12/2013 10:22:57 | Riverside Design | |

Postbox Notes

[Create New](#)

Refresh |  

| Created | Notes | Who |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-----|
| No notes found for this post box. | | |

Enter the note and then save.

Post Box Note

Please enter the text for the note below and *click* Save to create a new note.

Note

Riverside Design have only submitted half their tender documents

[Save](#)
[Cancel](#)

The note will be displayed against the postbox with a date stamp and a record of the user who added the note.

| Postbox Notes | | | Create New |
|---------------|--|---------------|---|
| Created | Notes | Who | Refresh   |
| 01/09/2016 | Riverside Design have only submitted forms 1,2 and 4 and are therefore disqualified from the process. | Duncan Dallas | |
| 01/09/2016 | Clarification sought on Section 1.2.4 of ABC Contractors Tender response. Day rate should read £200 and not £2000. | Duncan Dallas | |

Notes:

Deadline: Responses should be submitted before the deadline. Any response submitted after the deadline and before the postbox is opened by the buyer will be noted as a late submission and can be accepted at the buyer's discretion. It is not advisable for suppliers to wait until the last moment before creating and dispatching a response in case of any last minute problems.

Postbox Security: Postbox submissions cannot be accessed by anyone, including Millstream, until the deadline has passed. Once a response has been submitted it cannot be recalled or edited. If a supplier realises they have made an error in their response, the only remedy for this is to submit another response which supersedes the original.

Terms and Conditions/Request for Tender Documents: Buyers may wish to consider reviewing the terms and conditions in their request for tender documentation in light of late delivery or technical issues.

Information: All notices using the tender Postbox for submissions will automatically display the below statement: *The awarding authority has indicated that it will accept electronic responses to this notice via a 'Submission Postbox' facility.* If buyers are only accepting electronic responses via the Postbox this should be made clear in the tender notice and in the documents.

Viruses: The server virus checker will scan all documents when they are uploaded and if a virus is detected the file will be deleted and the supplier notified. Provided that the deadline has not passed, the supplier will have the opportunity to replace with a clean file.

Corrupt Documents: Corruption in documents cannot be detected. Buyers should define their policy in this regard in the tender document (e.g., it will be rejected).

Document Types: It would be helpful if buyers specified in the notice or tender documents what file/document types can be accepted and read by your organisation for online submissions.

Document sizes and maximum documents allowed: There is a maximum size limit of 10Mb for any document to be sent via the Postbox. If suppliers attempt to upload a document larger than 10Mb it will be rejected and will not be added to the submission. The size of Postbox responses must not exceed 30Mb in total.

Multiple submissions: If a supplier has already submitted a response it cannot be recalled. However, they can submit a second tender if they wish, stating which response is to stand.

Help Desk: For further advice on using the online submission facility please contact the support team using the contact details provided on the site home page.