

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

Tender responses are submitted through the portal and held in the secure Postbox until the deadline for responses has expired. Nominated members of an authority 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 Restricted Procedure 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.

**Jump to:** Additional Options

**Noted Interest**

Noted Interest

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.

**Note:** Noted Interest must be selected if you wish to use the additional options.

**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.

Tender Postbox

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

Next

Save

On clicking “next” the publisher is then asked to select a user(s) from their authority 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.

**Jump to:**

Please select one or more members to unlock the postbox:

- Jane Brown (j.brown@qrbcc.gov.uk)
- John Smith (j.smith@qrbcc.gov.uk)
- Peter Wilson (p.wilson@qrbcc.gov.uk)

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

*Tender Ref: MAY123456  
Title: Supply of Stationery  
Deadline: 04/10/2009 12:00*

*The above notice has now been published. Responses to this tender will be received electronically and the following members of your authority 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 Postbox for this notice here:*

[\(link to Postbox submission page\)](#)

*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.*

**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.

## 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



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: MAY123456*

*Title: Supply of Stationery*

*Deadline: 04/10/2009 12:00*

*A response, reference 212, has been received for the notice shown above on (date and time)*

*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 published notice workspace (Purchasers>Notice Workspace>Published Notices), clicking the relevant notice title and then “view submission Postbox” under “additional notice options”.

## Postbox Status Page

### Postbox Status

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

Title: Supply of Stationery  
 Created: 28/05/2009 10:26  
 Deadline: 28/05/2009 12:00  
 Status: Locked

### Current Response Status

Created	Reference No	Status
28/05/2009 10:47:33	401	Submitted
28/05/2009 10:49:57	402	Submitted
28/05/2009 10:52:06	403	Not Submitted

Please note that the name of the supplier cannot be exposed until the postbox is unlocked.

### Authorised Openers

Name	Email	Status	Unlocked
Jane Brown	j.brown@qrbc.gov.uk	Locked	
John Smith	j.smith@qrbc.gov.uk	Locked	
Peter Wilson	p.wilson@qrbc.gov.uk	Locked	

The postbox status page gives details of responses created and submitted. The response status shows responses submitted and created but not yet submitted. In the example, responses reference 401 and 402 have been submitted to the Postbox. Response reference 403 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.

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".

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.

Title: Supply of Stationery	<input type="button" value="Open"/>  <input type="button" value="Cancel"/>
Created: 28/05/2009 10:26	
Deadline: 28/05/2009 12:00	
Status:	

#### Current Response Status

Created	Reference No	Status
28/05/2009 10:47:33	401	Submitted
28/05/2009 10:49:57	402	Submitted
28/05/2009 10:52:06	403	Not Submitted

Please note that the name of the supplier cannot be exposed until the postbox is unlocked.

#### Authorised Openers

Name	Email	Status	Unlocked
Jane Brown	j.brown@qrbc.gov.uk	Unlocked	28/05/2009 14:46:02
John Smith	j.smith@qrbc.gov.uk	Unlocked	28/05/2009 14:45:12
Peter Wilson	p.wilson@qrbc.gov.uk	Unlocked	28/05/2009 14:42:27

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 Supplier Name. To download the entire postbox into a zip file click on the relevant link.

**Ref:** DEC080199

**Title:** Stationery Supplies

**Created:** 19/12/2011 15:08

**Deadline:** 19/12/2011 12:00

**Download:** [Download all postbox responses \(Zip File\)](#)

#### All Responses

Date and time received	Reference	Supplier Name
19/12/2011 15:22:18	15126	<a href="#">PP Paper Ltd</a>
19/12/2011 15:23:36	15143	<a href="#">Viking Paper Ltd</a>
19/12/2011 15:27:18	15127	<a href="#">Stationery Ink Ltd</a>

#### Postbox Access Log

Date	Name	Access Type
19/12/2011 15:30:19	Duncan Dallas	Illegal Unlock
19/12/2011 15:31:28	Jane Brown	Unlock
19/12/2011 15:32:52	John Smith	Unlock
19/12/2011 15:33:25	Peter Wilson	Unlock

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. To do this click on the link shown above. 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.

## Notes:

**Deadline:** Submissions can be created and submitted up to the stated tender deadline. Once the deadline has passed submissions can neither be created or submitted. 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:** Purchasers 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 'Tender Submission Postbox' facility.* If purchasers 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. Purchasers should define their policy in this regard in the tender document (e.g., it will be rejected).

**Document Types:** It would be helpful if purchasers 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.

**File Upload:** To facilitate organisations receiving multiple tenders file names and descriptions should, as far as possible, be relevant to your company and the content of the particular document rather than using generic descriptions – for example 'company name, section name/number' or 'company name, tender name/number, section name/number'. It is not advisable to upload protected or encrypted documents as these cannot be opened by the contracting authority.

**Multiple submissions:** As mentioned above, 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.