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Department of Education

Procurement Support for the Implementation of the Post- primary Schoolbook Scheme 2025/26

Frequently Asked Questions

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1. Introduction

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document has been developed to support schools with procurement questions or queries arising from the implementation of the Post-primary School Book scheme. It is divided into sections based on the query type and will be updated as new queries are received from Schools through the lifecycle of the procurement exercise.

For more information, including supporting documentation and templates, please see the SPU website at: [Post-Primary Schoolbooks Scheme - SPU](#)

For further queries not covered in this FAQ document, please contact the support team by email at: postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie

The department, in conjunction with Schools Procurement Unit (SPU) is holding a number of information webinars outlining the different phases of the procurement process using the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS).

The document contains answers to questions asked by schools after the first webinars, which took place on 31st March and the 2nd and 3rd April 2025.

2. Use of the DPS

1. Is the system live and ready to go?

Yes, the system is fully available to schools now.

The DPS may need to be paused from time to time to facilitate the processing of applications for admittance from suppliers.

2. How long after registration does it take to get confirmation of admittance to the DPS?

You should receive a confirmation email from the eTenders platform. Usually within 48 hours.

The email account provided in the registration for the DPS should be the same as for the eTenders account. You can check those details after clicking on “CA administration” and choosing “User Management” from the dropdown menu. If the school needs to add a user (with a CAPC role!) or edit current profile they can do so, by following steps in this document (page 5): <https://www.spu.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/eTenders-CA-Organisation-User-Management.pdf#page=5>

Confirmation of admittance to the DPS may be delayed if there are any errors in the information provided. If this happens, your school will be contacted.

3. Will it be possible to purchase extra books later in the 2025/26 school year if the need arises?

Yes – schools will be to order additional books from their winning tenderer throughout the 2025/26 school year as needs arise, e.g. the arrival of new students or students changing subjects.

4. Can I use DPS to appoint a supplier to provide schoolbooks and core classroom resources under one lot? I did this last year using eTenders and it worked well with one point of contact for all.

The DPS is just for schoolbooks. Schoolbooks is defined in the scheme guidance as “all relevant textbooks, including ebooks, and workbooks in use at school level to support teaching and subject learning at Junior Cycle, and Senior Cycle, including Transition Year. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required books of past examination papers”.

Following the appointment of a supplier via the DPS to supply schoolbooks, a school may include that supplier when it is requesting three written quotes for the supply of classroom resources, provided the total contract value for the classroom resources element is less than €50,000 excluding VAT.

5. When using the DPS do I need to get three quotes first?

No, when you issue your mini competition (or call for tender) via the DPS, it will be notified to all the suppliers who have registered for inclusion in your lot. They will then have the opportunity to tender.

6. If we are granted more than €50,000 but won't be spending more than €50,000 on schoolbooks, can we still use the 3 quotes system to order ourselves as the rest of the grant will be used on stationery and classroom resources?

Yes, you can use the 3 quotes system, however the department recommends that schools use the DPS for the procurement of schoolbooks, regardless of the spend level.

7. Do we need to use the DPS to get quotes for classroom resources - e.g.: copies, stationery for students etc?

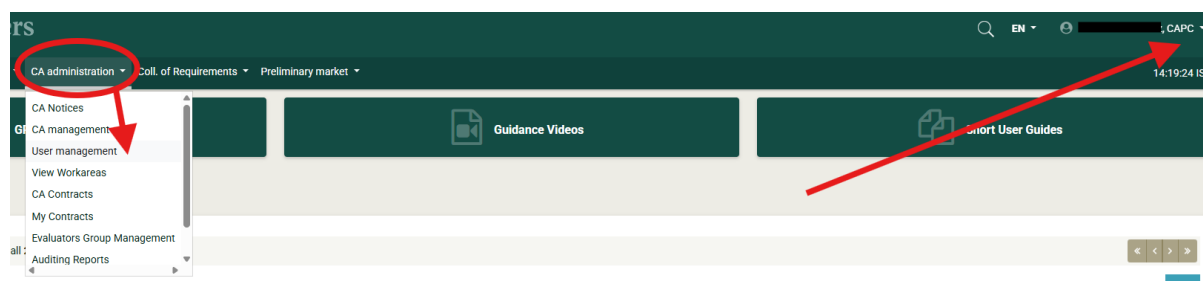
No, the DPS is for the procurement of schoolbooks only. Please refer to sections 2 and 3 of the [Procurement Guidance Document](#) for further information.

3. eTenders profiles

8. We have used eTender profile for building projects, is it the same account we use for the eTender of the books?

Yes – if it is an active school's account, that has a CAPC role assigned it can be used to create a mini-competition within the DPS or publish any other call for tenders that the school requires. The role assigned to the profile is (1) visible on the right-hand side next to the account's name or (2) can be checked in the User Management – to access that page, click on “CA Administration” in the top menu and then choosing “User Management” from the dropdown list.

Please see introduction to eTenders [here](#).



9. If I have a principal email address and a separate procurement email address, how is the DPS registration linked to my eTenders account?

The email account provided in the registration for the DPS should be the same as for the eTenders account. You can check those details after clicking on “CA administration” and choosing “User Management” from the dropdown menu. If the school needs to add a user (with a CAPC role!) or edit current profile they can do so, by following steps in this document (page 5): <https://www.spu.ie/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/eTenders-CA-Organisation-User-Management.pdf#page=5>

10. Once the DPS registration form is completed, how long does it take to appear on the CA DPS under the cft management tab on the eTenders portal?

It may take two days. Once admitted to the DPS, the email address registered on eTenders will receive an automated email notification.

11. Where can you find the organisation ID on eTenders?

Directions can be found [HERE](#)

4. The lotting structure

12. Is there a likelihood that there might only be one supplier in a lot?

No, all lots have a minimum of 4 suppliers.

13. Do we have to use the suppliers in our area, what if we have an existing relationship with a supplier from a different area?

While the school can only apply for inclusion in the lot for their county, it is not necessarily the case that you will not be able to consider a particular supplier, as the suppliers may apply for inclusion in a maximum of 12 lots. It is open to schools to contact suppliers with whom they have an existing relationship; to encourage them to apply to the DPS so they may have the opportunity to tender for the schools' contract.

14. We are geographically between two counties, but the lots seem to be by county. Should we just pick one or other and not overthink it?

You should be guided by your school's postal address to select your lot.

15. Will we know who the suppliers in our region are?

You will know when you reach the point of issuing your invitation to tender. The suppliers who have applied to service your geographical area will be listed there.

16. Are we limited to our geographical area when selecting our lot?

Yes, you can only apply for inclusion in the lot for your county. It is not necessarily the case that you will not be able to consider a particular supplier, as the suppliers may apply for inclusion in a maximum of 12 geographic lots. It is open to schools to contact suppliers with whom they have an existing relationship; to encourage them to apply to the DPS so they may have the opportunity to tender for the schools' contract.

17. How many suppliers do we need to invite please.

Suppliers have been prequalified in those geographic lots for which they have applied for admittance. When you issue your invitation to tender, it must go to all suppliers who have been admitted to your geographic lot.

18. Can we assume that the large suppliers have applied to all geographical lots?

No, suppliers can only apply to be included in a maximum of 12 geographic lots.

5. Subscriptions, apps and online resources

19. How does a school decide if an item is an additional classroom resource?

Additional classroom resources:

1. must be used for the purpose of the delivery of the relevant curricula,
2. must not be allowable under other funding streams,
3. the cost of the resource would have been or be provided by parents/guardians.

If a school determines that an additional classroom resource meets these criteria, it is at the discretion of the school to choose resources in line with the school's context.

20. Can we purchase CAT4 & PPADE with grant?

Standardised tests, aptitude tests and other assessment-based tests for literacy are not eligible expenses under the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme.

21. Can we purchase StudyClix with the grant?

Once a school has provided all schoolbooks (defined on page 6 and 7 of the guidance) and core classroom resources (as set out in Appendix 1 of the guidance) and has surplus funding, the school can purchase additional classroom resources. If a school determines that this meets the criteria for an additional classroom resource, schools may use the surplus funding for digital media support, which relates to teaching and learning within curricular requirements.

22. Is Google Workspace for Education covered under the Free School Book Scheme or is it covered under the ICT Grant?

Google workspace is not covered under the free schoolbooks scheme.

Decisions regarding the use and deployment of digital technology in schools is a matter for the Board of Management of each school in the context of their digital learning planning. Schools are advised to consult with members of the school community including parents when planning for the introduction of digital technologies including devices with cost and other implications been fully considered by the Boards of Managements before a decision is made.

Schools, in conjunction with parents, are responsible for decisions on the use of digital technology, including tablet devices, laptops, and learning platforms, and how best to manage their integration into classroom practice reflective of their own context and requirements. Oide- Technology in Education (formally the PDST-TIE) offers advice and supports to schools on digital learning. Advice sheets are available

on digital technology in education, including on the adoption of laptops and tablets in schools.

The criteria applying to the ICT Infrastructure Grant is detailed in the associated circular at the time of issue of the grant. Full details including guidance for the equipment and infrastructure that may be purchased under the ICT Grants Scheme can be found in the most recent ICT grant circular, available at Circular 0039/2024 - Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure

23. Under which lot do we select online subscriptions as this is not an online book?

Only schoolbooks can be purchased through the DPS. Schoolbooks is defined in the scheme guidance as **“all relevant textbooks, including ebooks, and workbooks in use at school level to support teaching and subject learning at Junior Cycle, and Senior Cycle, including Transition Year. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required books of past examination papers”**.

24. Can I buy an app subscription for French classes - for example Lingvascope?

Once a school has provided all schoolbooks (defined on page 6 and 7 of the guidance) and core classroom resources (as set out in Appendix 1 of the guidance) *and* has surplus funding, a schools can purchase additional classroom resources.

Additional classroom resources:

4. must be used for the purpose of the delivery of the relevant curricula,
5. must not be allowable under other funding streams,
6. the cost of the resource would have been or be provided by parents/guardians.

If a school determines that an additional classroom resource meets these criteria, it is at the discretion of the school to choose resources in line with the school's context.

6. Senior cycle, extra books, ebooks and exam papers

25. Teachers cannot yet decide on books for new Senior cycle subjects as not all books are available. How can this be managed?

Where a school has an estimated spend in excess of €50,000, they must use the DPS to procure their schoolbooks. Due to the publication of new subject specifications for senior cycle, suppliers will not be able to provide all the textbooks required at this stage, however, a circular setting out the prescribed texts is currently being finalised and will be issued to schools shortly.

Schools should be in a position to make a reasonable estimate of the total value of their book requirements (excluding VAT) by including the books currently available for those subjects in their booklists (pricing schedule) published as part of the competition tender documents.

If there are schoolbooks to be replaced or where a school knows that they will have additional requirements later in the school year that they do not currently have all the information on, there is no need to hold up the tender process by either waiting for confirmation on the new texts or including the old texts in the pricing schedule.

The primary role of the Pricing Schedule in the tender documents is solely to evaluate the tenderers on the Cost Criterion. While it would be preferable to include everything that is required in the schedule, in reality, for various reasons, the Pricing Schedule will not be the final order. So, after the tender process is completed and a winning tenderer selected, there will be a phase where the final order of books required will need to be rationalised and agreed between the school and the supplier by updating quantities, adding or removing books etc. The discount tendered by the supplier will be same and fixed regardless. This will allow schools order additional books with the winning tenderer throughout the year as needs arise, e.g. the arrival of new students or students changing subjects late in the day.

26. Can exam papers be excluded from the schoolbooks order and ordered directly from companies?

No, exam papers are included in the definition of schoolbooks: Schoolbooks includes all relevant textbooks, eBooks, and workbooks in use at school level to support teaching and subject learning at Junior Cycle, and Senior Cycle, including Transition Year. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required books of past examination papers including eBooks and workbooks.

27. For books that are specific to higher and ordinary level - can we order in September from the company who wins the contract once we know the numbers required?

Yes, you can order later when you have all the necessary information.

28. As some book quantities are known in early May and others unknown until September, are they viewed as two separate orders?

No, schools should be in a position to make a reasonable estimate of the total value of their book requirements (excluding VAT) by including the books currently available for those subjects in their booklists (pricing schedule) published as part of the competition tender documents.

If there are schoolbooks to be replaced or where a school knows that they will have additional requirements later in the year that they do not currently have all the information on, there is no need to hold up the tender process by either waiting for confirmation on the new texts or including the old texts in the pricing schedule.

29. What is the expected life expectancy of the new Tranche 1 Senior Cycle books? The first edition/iteration may prove to not be good enough. Would it be expected that we stick with these “not up to scratch” books for a good number of years, or could we envisage having money to replace in a year or two?

Schools continue to have the autonomy under this scheme when selecting textbooks, and resources to deliver the various subjects in the curriculum. Schools should consider the lifespan of schoolbooks and other resources giving particular consideration to the reduction of single use schoolbooks such as workbooks.

30. Can schools charge a deposit to parents/guardians?

Schoolbooks are owned by the school. It is important to ensure that students and their families are reminded of their crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of the scheme - parents should realise that it is required that students return books, in good condition, to the school in accordance with the school policy, either at the end of the year or the end of the programme. Parents and/or students should also take responsibility for ensuring that schoolbooks have a durable cover throughout the term of use by the student. While schools must not charge parents/guardians for the costs associated with schoolbooks and core classroom resources, schools are permitted to request a refundable deposit, which will be returned to parents/students when books are returned to the school in re-usable condition and in accordance with

the school's schoolbooks scheme policy. This is to incentivise students and parents to take care of books and to ensure the sustainability of the book scheme over time.

31. We have devices. We want to reuse first year books, but the eBook codes have been used this year already. How can we reuse these books?

You should engage directly with the publisher on this.

32. Besides the large booklist for as main supplier, do you do the process each time for smaller orders like graphics materials for one class etc

No, all schoolbooks should be included on the pricing schedule and procured using the DPS where the total contract value is estimated to be greater than €50,000 excluding VAT.

All classroom resources should be procured, where possible, from one supplier. The school should request three written quotations from different suppliers and award the contract to the most economically advantageous tender.

33. Exam papers were included on the Excel last year, but they are not there this year. Can we buy exam papers using the grant this year, like last year?

Yes, exam papers are included in the definition of schoolbooks: Schoolbooks includes all relevant textbooks, eBooks, and workbooks in use at school level to support teaching and subject learning at Junior Cycle, and Senior Cycle, including Transition Year. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required books of past examination papers including eBooks and workbooks.

Exam papers are included on the pricing schedule.

34. Do we put the TY books in the Senior Cycle section - TY book grant came as separate remittance?

Yes, the TY books are listed on the senior cycle tab of the pricing schedule and should be included there for procurement purposes.

35. Can we tender a separate smaller value within the ebook only lot 22?

The school needs to order some physical schoolbooks and some ebooks.

Schoolbooks and eBooks should be sourced separately within the DPS, subject to estimated value of both contracts.

Printed schoolbooks, including printed workbooks, should be procured through the DPS using Lots 1 – 21 depending on the geographical location of the school. eBooks should be procured separately through Lot 22 only.

36. Is it still the case that if using eBooks only that they are purchased directly from the publisher?

Many schools now use eBooks either alongside, or instead of, conventional textbooks. The funding provided through the scheme can be used to purchase eBooks. Where a school only wishes to purchase the eBook version of a schoolbook, Lot 22 of the DPS must be used. Publishers are admitted to this lot only.

37. Can Novels be bought separately?

No, novels are included in the definition of schoolbooks: Schoolbooks includes all relevant textbooks, eBooks, and workbooks in use at school level to support teaching and subject learning at Junior Cycle, and Senior Cycle, including Transition Year. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required books of past examination papers including eBooks and workbooks.

38. None of the new science books for senior cycle are on the pricing schedule, do we list them ourselves based on the RRP online?

It is open to schools to add books to the pricing schedules that are not presently included; however, the pricing schedule will be updated to include new texts for senior cycle as they become available.

7. Pricing schedule, barcoding and book covering

39. When is the pricing schedule list available to view

The pricing schedule is available now to view, however, it may need to be removed periodically as updated information is received from publishers. Once the updated information is populated into the schedule, it will again be made available on the website. This is outside of the control of the Department and the Schools Procurement Unit, but every effort will be made to ensure that such updates are completed promptly.

40. Where books are not listed on the pricing sheet is there the option to add a book only available from certain website, ie not widely available from a main publisher.

Publishers have only been admitted to lot 22 of the DPS, which is solely for eBooks. Should you wish to add a particular book to the pricing sheet, it is designed to allow you to do that.

41. My pricing schedule does not have the boxes for barcoding, covering etc

The pricing schedule has been amended and those boxes are now included.

42. Does barcoding on the spreadsheet mean that the book company will provide barcodes or that they will attach barcodes provided by the school?

This is something that can, and should, be managed locally between the school and the chosen supplier.

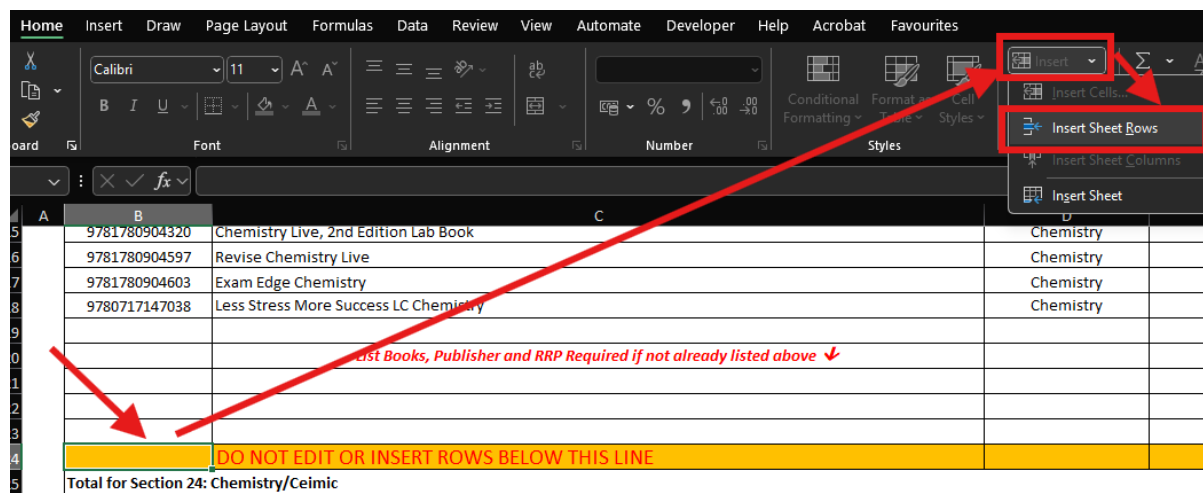
43. Is it possible to edit pricing spreadsheet this year?

There are fields that need to be edited by schools when preparing their schedules, editing of these fields is enabled.

44. Can extra lines be added to the pricing schedule to add books that are not included?

Yes, it is possible to add lines. This can be done by following these steps:

First, click on the first cell in the orange row in the section needed. Next, insert rows by using the function in “Home” tab >> “Insert” >> “Insert sheet rows”:



Please make sure to copy any formula that is necessary to calculate overall value of the contract into those rows. The easiest way to do it is to highlight relevant cells as shown below:

			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00	
			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00	
			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00	
			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00	
0			€0.00			€0.00	

And then “copy”. When the cells are copied, select cells from the same column in the inserted row and “paste”:

			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00		☐
			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00		☐
			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00		☐
			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00		☐
			€0.00	€0.00	0%	€0.00		☐
								☐
								☐
0			€0.00			€0.00		☐

45. Could you award the contract in a timeframe of less than three weeks?

46. How can I be sure I have created my mini competition in the correct lot?

List Of All Specific Contracts

DPS: CL3028DPS - DYNAMIC PURCHASING SYSTEM FOR THE SUPPLY OF SCHOOLBOOKS INCL EBOOKS TO COMMUNITY AND COMPREHENSIVE, AND VOLUNTARY SECONDARY SCHOOLS (EXCLUDING ETB SCHOOLS) WITHIN THE FREE EDUCATION SCHEME (STATUS: ESTABLISHED)

1Lot 1 - Cavan / Monaghan Printed Books

Sc ID

Title

Name of Contracting Authority

Status

2Lot 2 - Clare Printed Books

Sc ID

Title

Name of Contracting Authority

Status

3Lot 3 - Cork Printed Books

Sc ID

Title

Name of Contracting Authority

Status

4Lot 4 - Donegal Printed Books

Sc ID

Title

Name of Contracting Authority

Status

CREATE SPECIFIC CONTRACT

CREATE SPECIFIC CONTRACT

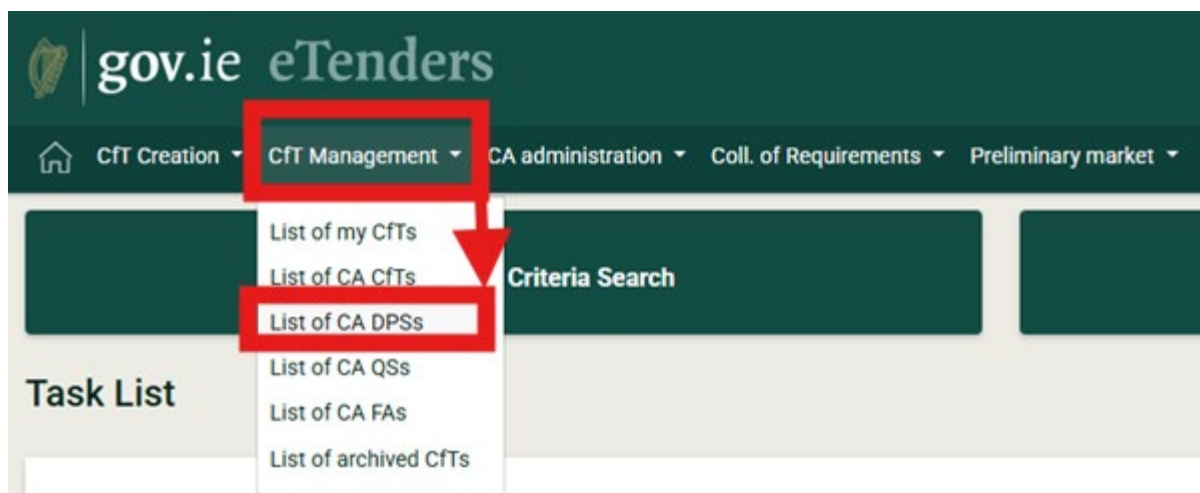
CREATE SPECIFIC CONTRACT

CREATE SPECIFIC CONTRACT

Show DPS Menu

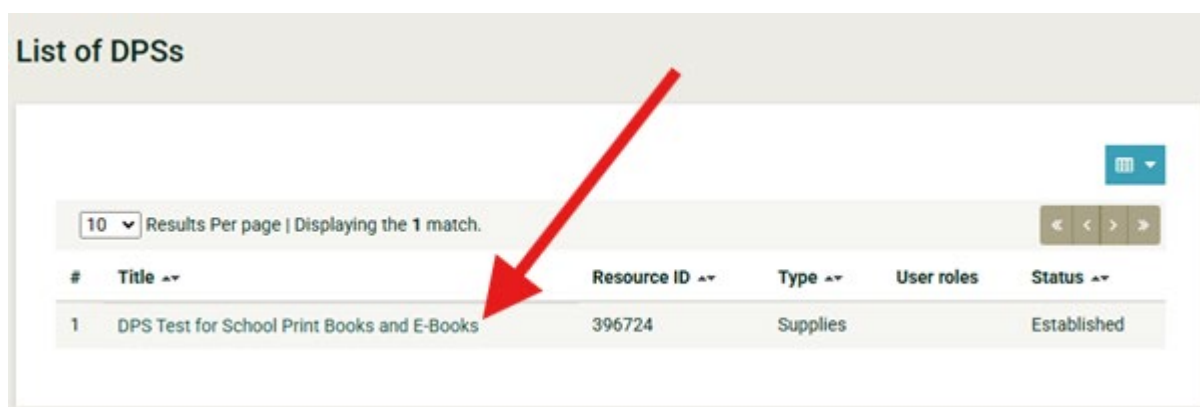
First, log into your Contracting Authority Procurement Coordinator (CAPC) profile on

22

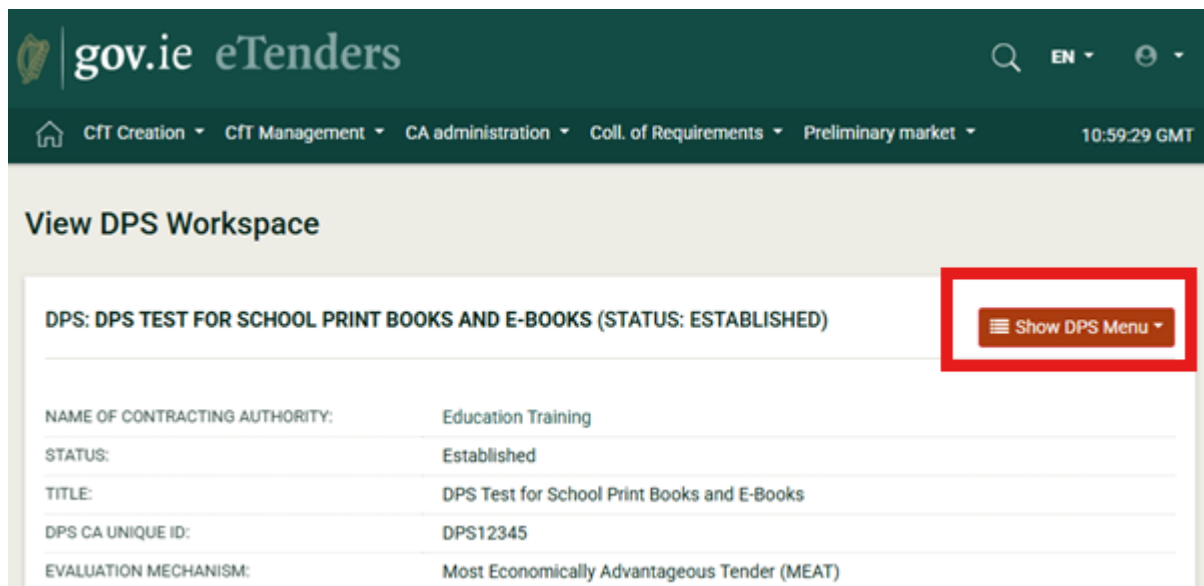


This will load a webpage with the list of DPSs that the school signed up to (it will be similar to what is shown on the screenshot below).

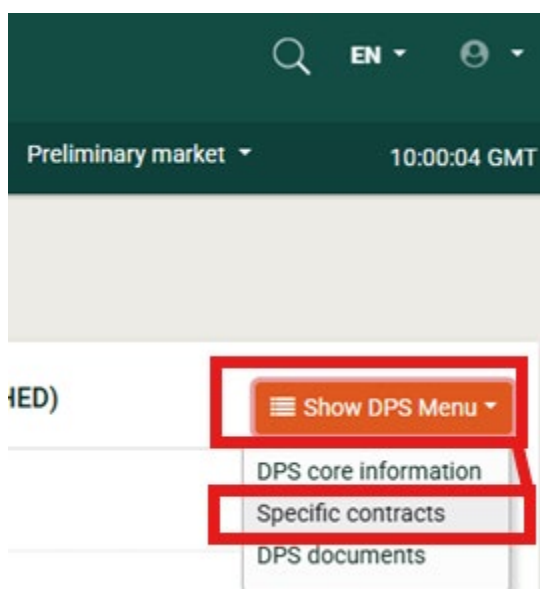
Next, **click on the title of the DPS** for the supply of schoolbooks: “CL3028DPS - Dynamic Purchasing System for the Supply of Schoolbooks incl eBooks to Community and Comprehensive, and Voluntary Secondary Schools (excluding ETB schools) within the Free Education Scheme”.



This will open a webpage called “View DPS Workspace” with details of the DPS listed below and a menu button on the right hand-side called “Show DPS Menu”.



Click on the “**Show DPS Menu**” and choose “**Specific contracts**”



This will open a page with all the Lots within the DPS, similar to the one shown below.

List Of All Specific Contracts

DPS: CL3028DPS - DYNAMIC PURCHASING SYSTEM FOR THE SUPPLY OF SCHOOLBOOKS INCL EBOOKS TO COMMUNITY AND COMPREHENSIVE, AND VOLUNTARY SECONDARY SCHOOLS (EXCLUDING ETB SCHOOLS) WITHIN THE FREE EDUCATION SCHEME (STATUS: ESTABLISHED)

[Show DPS Menu](#)

Sc ID	Title	Name of Contracting Authority	Status
1Lot 1 - Cavan / Monaghan Printed Books			
			CREATE SPECIFIC CONTRACT
2Lot 2 - Clare Printed Books			
			CREATE SPECIFIC CONTRACT
3Lot 3 - Cork Printed Books			
			CREATE SPECIFIC CONTRACT
4Lot 4 - Donegal Printed Books			
			CREATE SPECIFIC CONTRACT

If your mini-competition is listed under your geographical lot, all is correct. If it is listed under a different lot, this mini-competition will have to be cancelled and a new one created.

47. If we want to include parent collection at the supplier's premises as a requirement, can we do that?

That is something you may wish to include in your TRD document under **Delivery & Other Services**. Please see guidance on how to complete the document.

48. When would you recommend the final date for submission of tenders?

No later than 8 weeks before the goods are needed.

49. Last year's supplier has contacted us to say we are still under contract to them (12 months from June 2024). They were putting pressure on for our book order, but we are not ready with that yet.

Last year's contract was to service the 2024/25 school year only.

The procurement process must be undertaken again for the 2025/26 school year.

50. Last year we had major problems with delivery. Can we include potential penalties within the RFT if books not delivered by a reasonable date?

No, this is not recommended.

All suppliers admitted to a lot must be afforded an equal opportunity to tender for a business opportunity. Should a school have concern about historic quality of service, then they should build into their tender documents as mandatory requirement or a weighted sub criteria and evaluate accordingly.

51. Can a school include compatibility with a named software system as a requirement in the TRD Response Document?

Yes, that can be included in your TRD document. Please see [guidance](#) on how to complete the document.

9. Call for tender queries

52. Can you explain what “weight” is?

Procurement weighting is a method used to assess and rank different criteria when making procurement decisions. Essentially, it involves assigning values or “weights” to each factor based on its importance or relevance to the overall objective.

53. Can schools use the weighting system in the CFT document, or must they make up their own weighting system?

Yes, schools must use the suggested weighting system in the CFT document.

54. What should a school do if no tender submissions are received?

Contact SPU as soon as possible.

10. Classroom resources and stationery

55. Does this process just cover schoolbooks and if so, what do we do about stationery?

Stationery and classroom resources are not purchased on the DPS. Please refer to sections 2 and 3 of the [Procurement Guidance](#)

56. Art supplies are packed in unique packs home packed by a shop. How can I have this service?

Clearly state your delivery requirements when seeking quotes for art supplies.

57. Can we get Art packs with the grant? (paints, pencils, carry case, sketch book, brushes, pen erasers). If so, would we have to get it through the DPS/preferred stationery provider (or could we go with a trusted provider once we got 3 quotes)

Art packs come under classroom resources. They are not procured on the DPS.

58. Can I use DPS to appoint a supplier to provide schoolbooks and core classroom resources under one lot? I did this last year using eTenders and it worked well with one point of contact for all.

The DPS is just for schoolbooks. Schoolbooks is defined in the scheme guidance as “all relevant textbooks, including ebooks, and workbooks in use at school level to support teaching and subject learning at Junior Cycle, and Senior Cycle, including Transition Year. It also includes necessary additional texts such as novels and plays for English and where required books of past examination papers”.

Following the appointment of a supplier via the DPS to supply schoolbooks, a school may include that supplier when it is requesting three written quotes for the supply of classroom resources, provided the total contract value for the classroom resources element is less than €50,000 excluding VAT.

11. General queries

59. Is there a direct contact for dealing with eTenders queries rather than the general eTenders support line?

Queries should be submitted to postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie

There is also a dedicated phone line, however, submitting your queries by email is preferable as staff may need to consult with SPU and/or EPS in order to answer some queries fully.

60. Last year, we were provided with Google Docs/Sheets version of the CFT, TRD and Pricing Schedule - will the same happen this year?

Templates for CFT, TRD and Pricing Schedule are available on the SPU website [here](#).

Software that allows to view documents online may have limited capabilities, it is recommended to read and amend those templates using desktop Microsoft Office.

61. Is there a template for a School Book Scheme Policy?

Schools may introduce a schoolbooks scheme policy that has been developed in consultation with the school community.

This policy would explain how deposits would be sought from parents, and how they would be refunded. The board of management is responsible for implementing the scheme within a school and decisions regarding the refunding of deposits are a matter for the board of management/ETB of each school.

The Department would advise that any school choosing to implement a deposit scheme to support the return of schoolbooks would collect the deposit separately from any other charges or voluntary contributions for transparency and ease of return at the end of the school year or relevant programme (JC, TY, SC).

62. Is there a standstill period required after final date for receiving tenders before they can be awarded?

Guidance around the process of awarding tenders is in development and will be available to schools in the coming weeks.

63. If we are not a device school, can we purchase devices for the exclusive use of LCA students as they normally use material generated by teachers and not textbooks?

With the exception of post-primary schools that use teacher generated content and resources in place of schoolbooks, funding under the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme does not extend to the purchase of digital devices or iPad pens by schools.

When schools that use teacher-generated resources and content have eliminated the cost of all required schoolbooks and classroom resources as outlined in the guidance, and if surplus funding remains, schools may use the funding to facilitate the provision of a digital device loan scheme to students as required. Any digital devices provided by the school remain the property of the school and must be collected from students at the end of the school year.

The Department would ask any schools providing teacher generated content only to LCA students to make contact directly at the email address below:
postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie.

64. If your total spend is going to be under 50k, do you still need to upload the pricing schedule sheet to the eTender part of the process?

Schools are encouraged to use the new central procurement arrangement, the DPS, for contracts in this value range, as the DPS is essentially fulfilling the current requirement of obtaining three quotes. However, contracts between €5,000 and €50,000 may also be awarded on the basis of responses to written specifications (for example, sent by email) to a minimum of three suppliers.

65. How do we refund if we charge a deposit?

Section 6.7 of the published guidance outlines the position on deposits. Schools are permitted to request a refundable deposit, which will be returned to parents/students when books are returned to the school in re-usable condition and in accordance with the school's schoolbooks scheme policy. Schools may introduce a schoolbooks scheme policy that has been developed in consultation with the school community.

This policy would explain how deposits would be sought from parents, and how they would be refunded. The board of management is responsible for implementing the scheme within a school and decisions regarding the refunding of deposits are a matter for the board of management/ETB of each school.

The Department would advise that any school choosing to implement a deposit scheme to support the return of schoolbooks would collect the deposit separately from any other charges or voluntary contributions for transparency and ease of return at the end of the school year or relevant programme (JC, TY, SC).

66. If you have a surplus, could you use some of this for RE retreats which is something that supports the delivery of RE. Traditionally we would have charged parents for retreats as part of essential costs.

Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme funding does not include, or cover costs associated with school trips, retreats or conferences (e.g. Young Scientist, Young Social Innovators, Student Enterprise Programme etc).

67. Can any of the grant be used for student iPads or the accessories in a school that uses iPads

With the exception of post-primary schools that only use teacher generated content and resources in place of schoolbooks, funding under the Post-primary Schoolbooks Scheme does not extend to the purchase of digital devices or iPad pens by schools.

When schools that use teacher-generated resources and content have eliminated the cost of all required schoolbooks and classroom resources as outlined in the guidance, and if surplus funding remains, schools may use the funding to facilitate the provision of a digital device loan scheme to students as required. Any digital devices provided by the school remain the property of the school and must be collected from students at the end of the school year.

Schools that are wholly or largely reliant on teacher-generated resources may be asked to provide details of their implementation of the scheme to the Department. If you are a teacher generated content school, please email postprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie for further information.

68. Could you use money left over for purchasing of iPads for students or apple pens or keyboards?

No, iPads, Apple iPens or keyboards are not an eligible purchase under the scheme.

Please also refer to Section 4.6 of the Scheme Guidance on Teacher generated resources and content available at gov.gov.ie - Schoolbooks Scheme in Post-Primary Schools

69. Can a sole supplier of a particular printed textbook/workbook be admitted to the DPS?

If a supplier is the sole supplier of a particular printed textbook/workbook, that cannot be purchased through any third party, then schools may purchase that item directly from the supplier.

If the supplier meets this criteria, there is no benefit to applying for inclusion in the lots of the DPS as they will only be able to register for 12 out of 21 lots.

12. Questions received on Evaluation Phase:

70. What do we do if no tender submissions are received?

Contact SPU as soon as possible.

71. Should feedback in the award criteria section of the spreadsheet point out a number of positives from the TRD and outline what the company has lacked to lose marks?

Feedback should be a meaningful assessment of the responses to the questions posed in the TRD and reflect both the positives and deficits which ultimately justify the mark awarded in each award criterion.

72. If there is an error on the TRD, can schools contact the supplier?

Suppliers cannot provide additional information once the deadline for submitting proposals has passed. However, clarifications can be sought on information already provided, generally a yes/no response.

73. How long is the standstill period?

Schools cannot engage with the successful supplier during the 8 calendar day standstill period.

74. Does the 8-day standstill period begin on the day that you notify the successful & unsuccessful tenderers or the next day?

The standstill period begins the day after the result letters have issued.

75. Do the Tenderers have to send you a copy of their insurance cert before it is a pass or if they state they have it, is it sufficient?

Suppliers can confirm that they have/will have the necessary insurance in place. When a supplier is identified as the preferred option following evaluation of all of the proposals, at that point, they must provide proof of insurance before any contract can be awarded and concluded.

76. We received two Tender Response Documents. In one document, under all three sections where it asks to "please confirm that you can provide ALL the above mandatory requirements", they have not selected yes or no. Does that disqualify their submission?

Not necessarily. If they have completed the text but not ticked the boxes, the school can seek confirmation/clarification that the supplier meets all mandatory requirements.

77. Can a tender fail because the supplier didn't sign the TRD?

No. When a supplier is identified as the preferred option following evaluation of all of the proposals, at that point, if the submitted TRD is unsigned, they can be asked to sign it before any contract can be awarded and concluded.

78. Where a school has specified that the contract should include the labelling of books, but the supplier has requested that the school supply the labels, is this considered failing to meet the requirements?

That would depend on the detail included. Was it specified by the school in their definition of service requirements that the supplier must generate the labels? If not, was it intended that the school would produce the labels and send them to the appointed supplier to affix to the books? Further clarity would be needed to respond to this. Should this situation arise, please contact SPU.

79. Can a tender fail because the supplier used the template, did not remove the author comments, and did not fill in correct lot?

Please contact SPU.

80. Can we contact tenders to clarify points while marking.

Only if it's a yes or no response. No additional information can be provided by tenderers after the deadline for submission of tenders/proposals.

81. What, if any, are the consequences if they don't follow through on TRD. Can we go with the next tender?

That would depend on the situation. Further clarity would be needed to respond to this. Please contact SPU.

82. One of the suppliers under 'Criterion C' did not tick either of the boxes (Yes or No) saying whether they would provide all of the above mandatory requirements. They have given information below in the different sections. Do I mark them as a fail for this? It is the second section in the 'Mandatory requirements' tab of the Excel file.

Not necessarily. If they have completed the text but not ticked the boxes, the school can seek confirmation clarification that the supplier meets all mandatory requirements.

**83. Is it mandatory or is it advisable for me to provide bespoke feedback?
Could this expose me to challenge if I do not have an expertise or
training in tender assessment?**

Yes, you should provide feedback specific to answers provided in the TRD. Schools should refer to the second tab of the evaluation spreadsheet.

It is best practice that the tender submissions are assessed by two or more individuals in the school.

**84. One of the tenders did not pass the mandatory requirements, thus were
flagged as failed at that stage. How do we go about excluding them from
the Award Criteria tab so that they are no longer part of the process and
need to be allocated % scores?**

If they fail in the mandatory requirements part 2, they should put that TRD to one side and do not fill anything else out on the sheet for that tenderer. Non-compliant letters to issue to such suppliers are available on the SPU website

**85. One of the suppliers failed to provide prices for all books - quantity for
books was still given and no explanation as to why. This is the reason
they were the cheapest supplier but incomplete. Does that qualify for a
fail?**

On the pricing sheet, the supplier has to include is their discount. If they have not included a discount for a particular item, two questions arise; can they supply it and, please confirm the discount for this book is the same as all other books for that publisher, i.e., YES or NO answers. If the answer is NO to either then they must be disqualified.

**86. What happens in the event that only one company submits tender
documentation?**

Assess the tender to ensure that it meets all mandatory requirements and passes the 60% quality thresholds at evaluation. Should it fail, the school should contact SPU at its earliest opportunity.

87. Do you post your letter to supplier or upload to tender?

All tender correspondence must be written and take place through the eTenders messaging service. When you send an email on eTenders you can see if and when the supplier opened / read the message. If they haven't opened within 1 – 2 days, then you could phone them advising them that they have correspondence on eTenders regarding the tender that needs action ASAP.

88. If something is missing from the TRD returned by a supplier is it ok to engage with them through eTenders messages?

Yes, but again only if it's a yes or no response. No additional information can be provided by tenderers.

89. How do you contact the supplier - by posting the letter or uploading to etender site? Can we phone company before 8 days elapses.

Letters should be emailed and posted the same day. No, schools should not contact the preferred option supplier during the standstill period.

90. In order to ask a supplier for clarification, for e.g. on delivery date, should this be done through etenders or can we email them?

Either, as long as there is written evidence of the query and the response.

91. I sent out three quotations from three suppliers all three said they would respond but only one did? How do I proceed?

When you create your competition CFT on eTenders you must invite all suppliers admitted to that lot to tender. Please refer to the demonstration webinar in relation to creating an invite to tender off the DPS. If you have only asked 3 suppliers to tender, we would advise that you cancel this competition and start again with a new mini competition.

92. One of the suppliers added prices to the additional books we have added to the pricing schedule, and the other did not. Does that mean that the latter tenderer is non-compliant?

The last 3 lines in each section on the pricing schedule were not protected to allow schools to add additional books. When adding additional books school should have ensured to liaise with the publisher to obtain the most up to date information including ISBN, title, publisher, and most recent RRP.

List Books, Publisher and RRP Required if not already listed above ↓									
9781234567890	Book Title	English	No*	Gill Education		20	€16.99		€0.00
									€0.00
									€0.00
DO NOT EDIT OR INSERT ROWS BELOW THIS LINE									
Total for Section 2: English/ Bearla									
						20			€339.80

Section 3: Mathematics / An Mhatamaltic

ISBN	Title	Subject	eBook Included Yes/No?	Publisher	Publisher Code	Quantity Required	Unit RRP Ex VAT	Tendered Discount	Net Price	Total Amount
------	-------	---------	---------------------------	-----------	-------------------	----------------------	--------------------	----------------------	-----------	-----------------

If the prices were not added by one or more tenderer, please see below for more information.

When evaluating the completed Pricing Schedule returned by the supplier, it is essential to ensure that a like-for-like comparison is made across all returned pricing schedules. Therefore, the evaluator must ensure that the following are done when completing the price evaluation:

- Check that the supplier has provided a discount amount for all books where the school has a quantity requirement. If not, please see Note 1 below on action required.

List Books, Publisher and RRP Required if not already listed above									
9781234567890	Book Title	English	No*	Gill Education	20	€16.99	15.0%	€14.44	€288.83
								€0.00	€0.00
DO NOT EDIT OR INSERT ROWS BELOW THIS LINE									
Total for Section 2: English/ Bearla					20				€288.83
Section 3: Mathematics / An Mhatamaitic									
ISBN	Title	Subject	eBook Included Yes/No?	Publisher	Publisher Code	Quantity Required	Unit RRP Ex VAT	Tendered Discount	Total Amount

- Check that the supplier has provided a price for all additional service items required. **If not, this is an automatic disqualification.**

Additional Services	Quantity	Rate	Total Amount	VAT Applicable	Total Amount Incl VAT
Barcoding (Per book)	20	€3.00	€60.00	23.0%	€73.80
Book Covering (Per book)	0		€0.00	23.0%	€0.00
Labelling (Per Book)	0		€0.00	23.0%	€0.00
Additional Item	0		€0.00		€0.00
Additional Item			€0.00		€0.00
Additional Item			€0.00		€0.00
Sub-Total for Additional Services			€60.00		€73.80

- Check that no RRP's have been changed. If they have, correct to ensure that RRP's are the same across all suppliers. Any corrections must be communicated to the relevant tenderer and their agreement confirmed.
- Check that RRP's are provided, and are the same, for all additional books added at the bottom of each subject section.
- Check that the Computation Check Total at the bottom of both the Junior & Leaving Cert worksheets matches the subtotal amount in the Tender Summary worksheet including the quantities for additional services.

DO NOT EDIT OR INSERT ROWS BELOW THIS LINE									
Total for Section 25: Junior Cycle schoolbooks not covered in subject sections 1 to 24 above (DO NOT DELETE THIS LINE)							0		€0.00

Computation Check	20	€288.83
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Sub-Total for Junior Cycle Books EXCL VAT	€288.83
Sub-Total for Leaving Cert Cycle Books EXCL VAT	€0.00

Note 1:

In a scenario where a supplier has omitted a discount price for a book title or titles that has a requirement quantity with no explanation in the Supplier Notes cell, this should be clarified with the supplier by doing the following:

- Ask the supplier to confirm (**by providing a YES / NO answer**) if they can supply the relevant book title. If the answer is No, then that supplier must be disqualified.

2. If they can supply the required book title (YES), ask them to confirm that the same discount (for either that specific publisher, or the whole schedule if the same throughout) already included in the pricing schedule can be applied to the omitted items. **Again, this must be a YES / No answer.** If the answer is NO, then the supplier must be disqualified.