



merlin standard

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The Merlin Standard

The Merlin Standard has been designed to support Organisations develop, recognise and promote sustainable excellence and positive partnership working within supply chains.

The following describes the requirements of the Standard and provides guidance for those Organisations seeking to achieve it.

The Merlin Principles

The Merlin Standard is built upon four fundamental and integrated Principles:

- 1 Supply Chain Design
- 2 Commitment
- 3 Conduct
- 4 Review

These Principles have been designed to explore key areas of the relationship between an Organisation and its Supply Chain Partners. The Principles also provide feedback on the role of the procurement process, and how supply chain behaviour is affected by the behaviour of the procurer (or Commissioner for publicly funded contracts).

The Principles are established to validate positive behaviour of an Organisation and its partners in supporting healthy and high performing supply chains.

The Merlin Elements

Each Principle contains contributing Elements and there are 10 Elements in total. The Elements allow leaders within an Organisation to consider and better understand the cause and effect relationships between what their Organisations do and the results that they achieve. A robust assessment is carried out based upon the Elements, to ascertain the degree of excellence of the Organisation's supply chain management.

Evidence of achievement and excellence against each Element will dictate the outcome of the assessment and offer a clear indication of where an Organisation needs to improve as well as highlighting and recognising excellence.

The Criteria

Within each Element, there are a number of Criteria, which provide a structured approach to assess the overall performance of an Organisation. There are 50 Criteria in total and they support the assessment process used by Merlin Assessors, as well as providing guidance for each Organisation's own self-assessment.

The Assessment Process

The assessment process has been designed to facilitate an inclusive and supportive assessment with minimum disruption to the Organisation.

Feedback will be sought from a representative selection of past, present and prospective Supply Chain Partners during the assessment. This will include those involved in early negotiations and not subsequently selected as sub-contractors.

In addition, the views of Supply Chain Partners with no formal contract in place, and at all tiers of the supply chain will be captured and considered. Organisations will need to supply this information to their Merlin Lead Assessor as part of the assessment planning process.

The Lead Assessor will be responsible for selecting a representative sample of Supply Chain Partners for interview from information provided by Organisations, and those coming forward to request an invitation to contribute.

At the end of the assessment the Organisation will receive a summary report detailing the result of the assessment, which will highlight areas for improvement and areas of excellence to support continued improvement activity.

We recognise that the standard assessment cost of £8583 may be a barrier to small organisations and we may be able to offer support. Discounts will be considered on application, on a case by case basis, for small organisations having a supply chain of under 20 and interested in applying for Merlin on a voluntary basis, but struggling to meet the financial cost. Please contact emqc to discuss how we may be able to help.

The Merlin Standard Assessment Outcomes

At the end of the assessment, the Organisation will be notified of the outcome of the assessment. The outcome will be one of the following four categories:

Excellent

The Organisation has exhibited behaviours that demonstrate significant strengths and areas of best practice in relation to the requirements of the Merlin Standard.

Good

The Organisation has exhibited behaviours that fully meet the requirements of the Merlin Standard, and some areas of good practice are demonstrated.

Satisfactory

The Organisation fully meets the behaviours that are required to meet the requirements of the Merlin Standard with areas for improvement being identified.

Unsatisfactory

The Organisation has areas that are not currently meeting the requirements of the Merlin Standard and there are areas that require improving in order to meet the Merlin Standard.

The Key Steps

The following are the 10 key steps within a successful assessment process:

Step 1

The Organisation makes a commitment to undertaking an assessment by registering on the Merlin website, a Merlin Lead Assessor is allocated at this stage.

Step 2

When ready to begin the assessment process the Organisation submits their booking form on to emqc Ltd.

Step 3

The Organisation reviews their current practices in relation to the Standard and begin to populate the online self-assessment questionnaire with the help of the Merlin Lead Assessor.

Step 4

The Organisation will inform all their Supply Chain Partners that their Merlin Assessment is being planned and signpost them to the Merlin Website for information on how to contribute should they not be chosen as part of the sampling process.

Step 5

The Organisation will work with their emqc Ltd Merlin Lead Assessor to prepare and plan the evidence gathering process and assessment timetable.

Step 6

emqc Ltd Merlin Assessors gather evidence.

Step 7

Assessment decision and feedback by emqc Ltd Merlin Assessors.

Step 8

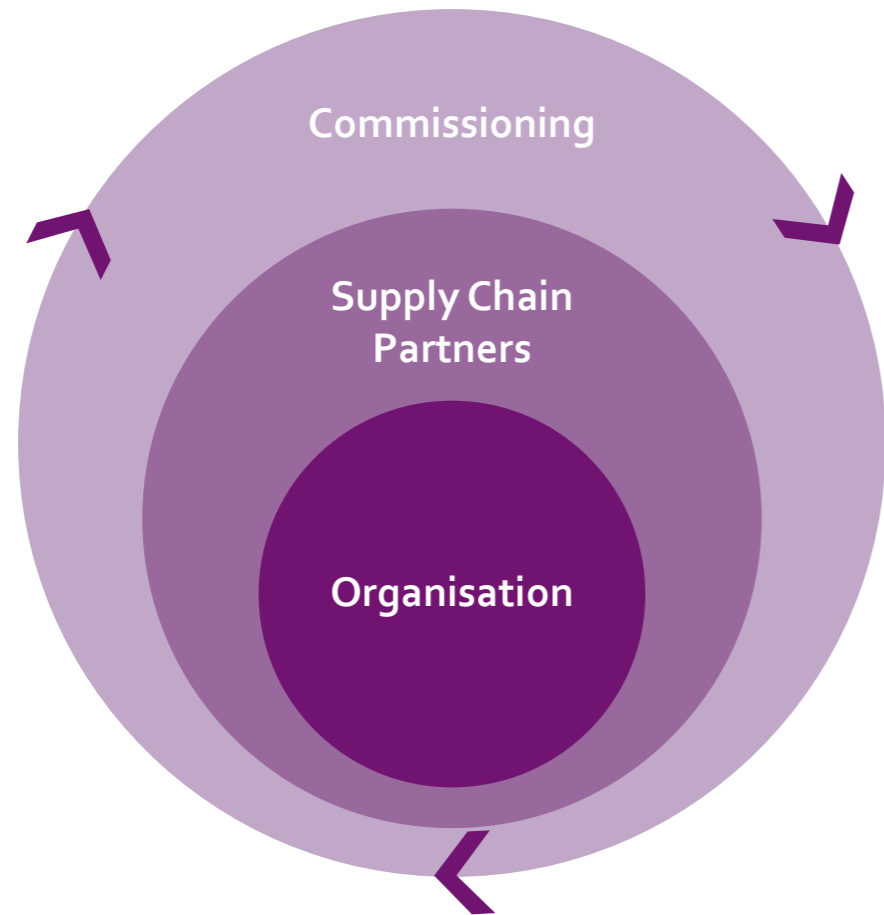
The Organisation develops a continuous improvement plan based on the feedback received both orally and in writing.

Step 9

The Organisation regularly reviews their practices against the requirements of the Merlin Standard and their continuous improvement plan.

Step 10

On achieving the Merlin Standard the Organisation undertakes their 2 year review.



The Merlin Standard is designed to be assessed at 3 levels:

1. Organisation

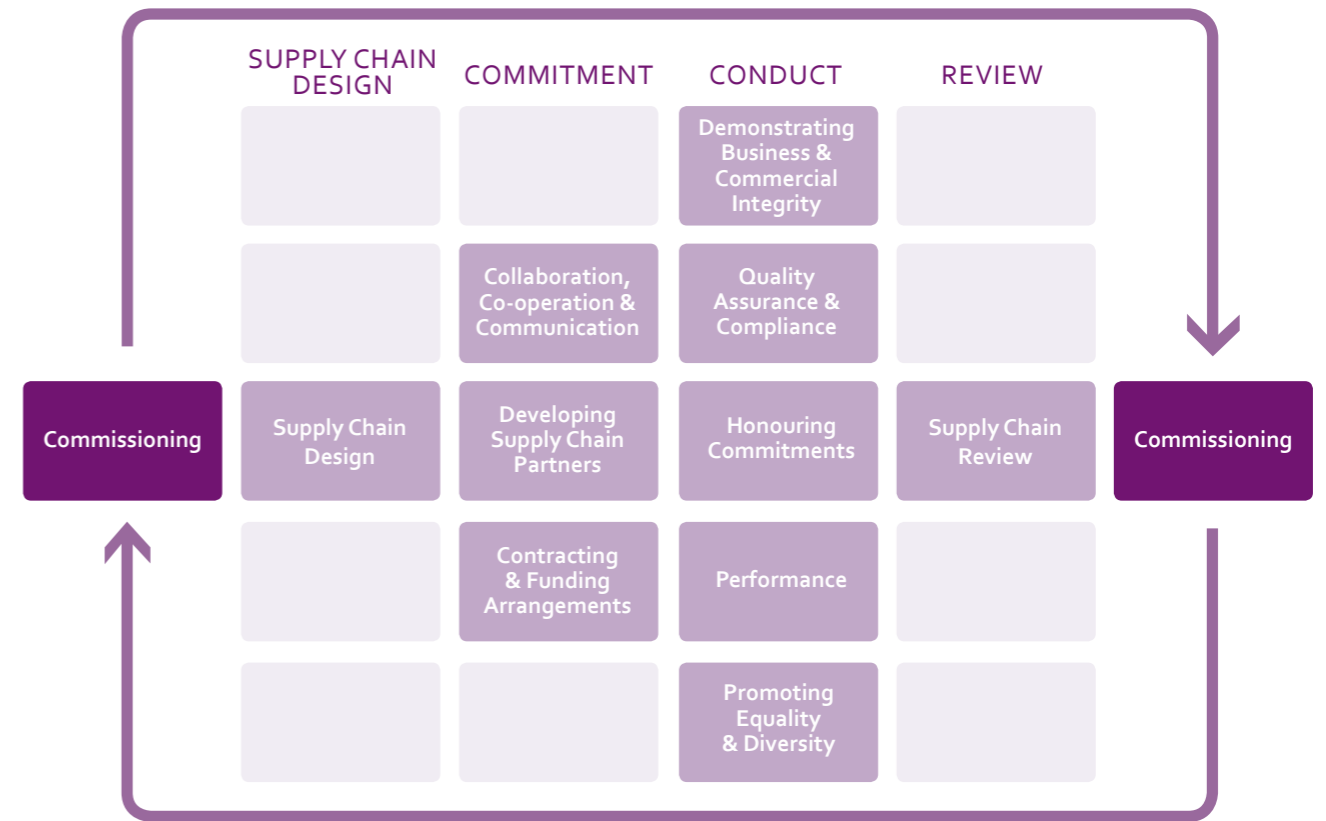
By confirming adherence to the Merlin Standard, identifying best practice and gaining feedback on Commissioning activity.

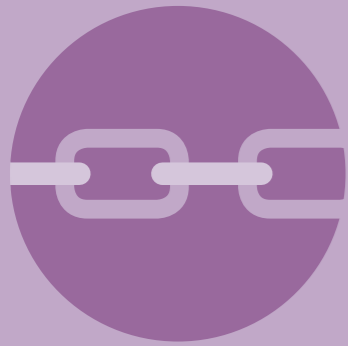
2. Supply Chain Partners

By confirming the behaviour of Organisations against the Merlin Standard, identifying and confirming best practice and identifying any commissioning activity that affects supply chain behaviour.

3. Commissioning

Identifying impacts on supply chain behaviour resulting from contract design and procurement activity.





Supply Chain Design

Excellent supply chains are innovative, flexible and creative.

Successful supply chain design is fundamental to achieving healthy and high performance, including in the way Supply Chain Partners are chosen. Organisations should promote innovation within their supply chain and in the way that they approach supply chain management. Organisations should look to innovate and learn from each other, share good practice and strive to create new solutions to increasingly complex problems. By sustaining a truly innovative approach, supply chains will achieve and maintain excellence and meet the needs of stakeholders and customers.

ELEMENT 1a Supply Chain Design

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
1a.1 how it ensures scope and variety within supply chain design to support the achievement of the commissioner's/procurer's objectives and meet contractual requirements.	The strategies, processes and activities undertaken to identify the scope required of the supply chain to meet the objectives of the commissioner/procurer and contractual requirements.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2c.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3d.1 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.3 Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.3 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.6
1a.2 how it utilises, public and private sector organisations to enrich supply chains to address the holistic needs of customers and where appropriate local demographics.	How the supply chain comprises of a varied mix of organisations (public, private, and third sector) of all sizes that meet the needs of the commissioner/procurer as identified by the research activities.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.3 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.6
1a.3 that it has effective strategies to deliver comprehensive support services to customers and stakeholders through the use of wider networks outside of supply chains.	There are strategies in place that identify how the Organisation engages with organisations outside of their formal supply chain network to offer specialist support to stakeholders, customers and partners.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2b.2 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.3



Commitment

Excellent supply chains are built through excellent relationships.

Organisations should look to establish relationships with their Supply Chain Partners to mutual advantage. For such a supply chain relationship to be very positive, commitments made when supply chain relationships are formed must be honoured and any changes made by mutual agreement during the procurement process and as contracts are delivered. Supply Chain Partners should expect clear and consistent communication from the Organisation and must also play their role in developing a successful working relationship with the Organisation.

ELEMENT 2a

Collaboration, Cooperation and Communication

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
2a.1 how it communicates proactively and effectively with its supply chain at all stages of procurement activity, underpinned by established communication processes.	There is an effective communication strategy/process in place and the Organisation can give examples of how it has communicated with its supply chain before and during procurement activities.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2c.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.3 , 3c.1 and 3c.4 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.1
2a.2 how consultation with the supply chain informs decisions (including the design of systems and processes).	The range of processes used to consult with its supply chain. Managers and staff can give examples of where consultation has led to decisions/ changes made.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.1 , 3b.2 , 3b.8 and 3d.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.1 and 4a.2
2a.3 can demonstrate how supply chains work collaboratively and with open participation to deliver comprehensive services to customers.	How it supports and encourages its supply chain to work collaboratively. Managers and Supply Chain Partners can give examples of actions taken and impact to customer service delivery. It should be noted that all Supply Chain Partners must be included in the scope of the Merlin assessment and have the opportunity to talk openly and candidly about their experiences with the procurer/ commissioner and other members of the supply chain.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.2 and 1a.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.1 , 3b.2 and 3d.1
2a.4 clear communication channels to ensure that there is no ambiguity regarding the business relationship underpinning supply chain arrangements.	Communications activities with the supply chain are clear, transparent and effective to ensure they are understood throughout the supply chain. Managers and staff can give examples of how and when communications are conducted.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria on 1a.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.1 , 3c.2 , 3c.4 , 3d.4 and 3e.1
2a.5 has created a culture in which communication is open, honest and without unreasonable constraint.	The practices that support the culture ensure the supply chain feels it is a two way process where they feel able to express concerns and ideas to the procurer/commissioner, other Supply Chain Partners, and to representatives of external quality standards, including Merlin.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.2 , 3a.3 and 3b.3

ELEMENT 2b

Developing Supply Chain Partners

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
2b.1 how the development of all Supply Chain Partners is supported and encouraged.	How it drives the development of its Supply Chain Partners. Managers can give examples of what developments have taken place and the resources used.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4 , 3b.2 and 3b.8 Principle 4 particularly Criteria 4a.5 and 4a.6
2b.2 how it identifies and assists the supply chain to obtain additional funding/finance streams and support services where available, to build capacity and deliver comprehensive services.	How it supports Supply Chain Partners to obtain additional funding/finance streams, those that the Organisation can offer internally across the network and external funding/finance viable from outside the supply chain, and encourages the Supply Chain Partners to work together to build capacity.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.2 , 3d.2 and 3d.5
2b.3 how it actively promotes and facilitates the development of staff within supply chains.	The development it offers to Supply Chain Partners giving examples of what development has been offered and how this has been implemented and how impact on quality of service has been measured.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.3 and 3d.2

ELEMENT 2c

Contracting and Funding

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
2c.1 that its procurement processes are fair and transparent, including in the way it selects and communicates with its Supply Chain Partners.	How processes and procedures to support procurement are managed effectively. The process used to select and score Expressions of Interest (EOI's). Managers can give examples of how Supply Chain Partners were given feedback whether successful or not.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.1 Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.1 , 3c.3 , 3d.3 and 3e.1 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.3 and 4a.6 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3c.1 and 3c.4
2c.2 that funding/payment arrangements are fair, proportionate and do not cause undue financial risk for Supply Chain Partners.	How the financial model used took account of potential financial risks to both the Organisation and its Supply Chain Partners. Managers can give examples of how and when the arrangements were discussed and agreed.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3c.1 and 3c.4
2c.3 that it devises contractual documentation which clearly defines the obligations of both the Organisation and its Supply Chain Partners.	There is a contract or service level agreement (SLA) in place depending upon the level of delivery. The documentation is clear, concise, defines obligations of each party and is not overly burdensome.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.2 and 2a.4 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4 , 3c.1 , 3c.2 , 3c.3 , 3c.4 , 3d.3 and 3e.1
2c.4 clear rationale to support a viable and transparent allocation of market share within supply chains.	How the allocation of market share was agreed according to the Organisation's needs and Supply Chain Partners abilities as identified through research activities.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.4 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3c.1 and 3c.4
2c.5 has proactively negotiated regarding volume, funding/finance and performance expectations.	Clearly, how it negotiated with its individual Supply Chain Partners, regarding volume, funding/finance and performance expectations. Examples can be given of the processes undertaken and documentation completed.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3c.1 and 3d.3
2c.6 how the requirements of Supply Chain Partners have been taken into account in pre and post contract award processes and payment structures.	The negotiations undertaken took account of the individual needs of the Supply Chain Partners and they can give examples of any specific payment terms negotiated to support Supply Chain Partners.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3c.1 , 3c.4 and 3d.3
2c.7 a successful strategy to manage the transfer of funds/finance within the network.	The strategy for transfer of funds/finances across the network is effective and ensures the funding/financial model, payment structures and systems used were taken into account. Arrangements were flexible and take the needs of the Supply Chain Partners into consideration.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.4 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.1 , 3a.4 and 3d.3
2c.8 transparency in the way fees, including where appropriate management fees, and other costs are explained, discussed and agreed.	The Organisation can give examples of documents/guidance given to Supply Chain Partners, that identifies a clear breakdown of what costs and fees are incurred. Where a management fee is charged, the Organisation should ensure that Supply Chain Partners are made aware of what they receive for their management fees.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3c.1 , 3c.4 and 3d.3



Conduct

Excellent supply chains are led and managed with integrity, honesty and transparency and supported by effective processes.

Organisations have a responsibility to manage their supply chains with integrity and openness and in compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements. Effective processes, assurance and clear business principles underpin effective relationships. Supply Chain Partners should expect to be clearly informed of the Organisation's expectations, managed in a transparent way and supported via clear communication and guidance. Supply Chain Partners also need to play an active role in supporting Organisations to comply and excel.

ELEMENT 3a

Demonstrating Business and Commercial Integrity

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
3a.1 how the supply chain is governed by a mutually agreed set of core principles that are embedded in organisational practices.	A set of core principles were developed and agreed with the Supply Chain Partners, which are embedded and govern the way the supply chain is managed and is monitored for effectiveness.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.5
3a.2 has clear and effective strategies in place to manage the TUPE process.	There is a clear strategy in place regarding TUPE and that they have supported their Supply Chain Partners undertaking TUPE activities and monitor the appropriateness of those activities and outcomes.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3e.1
3a.3 that interactions between Organisation and Supply Chain Partner staff are positive and supportive.	How it interacts with its supply chain on an individual basis and collectively across the network. Managers can give examples where they have offered and/or given support.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.2 , 2a.5 and 2b.3
3a.4 that there are effective policies and procedures in place to support and maintain legislative and regulatory requirements and that the supply chain is kept up to date with changes in legislation and contractual/statutory requirements in a timely manner.	The policies and procedures ensure that Supply Chain Partners are adequately supported and informed of legislative and regulatory requirements through a range of effective and timely communications. The Organisation can give examples of how this takes place and the systems they use to support and monitor this.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2b.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.3-3b.8 , and 3e.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.3

ELEMENT 3b

Quality Assurance and Compliance

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	EXPLANATORY NOTES
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
3b.1 effective and proportionate processes, policies and activities to monitor the quality of delivery and where appropriate, customer experience within the supply chain.	There is an effective supply chain management framework and strategies in place to review and monitor the quality of service delivery across the supply chain. Management can give examples of monitoring.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3d.6 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.1, 4a.2 and 4a.6
3b.2 how it utilises the findings of quality assurance activity to inform and improve delivery.	How they use the findings of monitoring the quality of delivery and where appropriate customer experience, to improve the delivery. Management can give examples of improvement.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3d.3, 3d.4 and 3e.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.5
3b.3 how it ensures access to and provision of effective information, advice and guidance.	How it provides impartial, effective and timely information, advice and guidance to its Supply Chain Partners before, during and after contract award and how, where appropriate, it then monitors the effectiveness of information, advice and guidance delivered by Supply Chain Partners to their customer groups.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.2 and 1a.3 Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.3 and 2b.3
3b.4 the implementation of policies and processes to ensure and maintain the security of all data and assets within the supply chain.	How it ensures Supply Chain Partners implement the policies and processes to protect all data and assets, which will range from data protection, confidentiality and through to staff safety.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.1 Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2b.1 and 2b.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4, 3c.4 and 3d.2
3b.5 a healthy and safe work environment is maintained by all Supply Chain Partners.	Appropriate policies and procedures ensure that health and safety practices and procedures provide a safe and healthy environment. Health and safety checks have been carried out by the Organisation at defined regular intervals.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2b.1 and 2b.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4, 3c.4 and 3d.2
3b.6 policies and practices in place to assure the safeguarding of people at risk supported by the supply chain.	Where appropriate, policies and procedures are in place to ensure all individuals at risk are kept safe. Relevant Disclosure and Barring Service checks, risk assessments, are completed in a timely manner and meet appropriate legislation.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2b.1 and 2b.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4, 3c.4 and 3d.2
3b.7 policies and processes are in place to ensure environmental sustainability is embedded and monitored throughout the supply chain.	There is an effective policy and targets in place. Legislative requirements are met and that the supply chain has appropriate targets, training and awareness and understands the impact of environmental sustainability.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2b.1 and 2b.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4, 3c.4 and 3d.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.3 and 4a.6
3b.8 how excellent / good practice is proactively identified, shared and monitored within the supply chain.	How the Organisation works collaboratively with its supply chain to identify what is excellent/good practice. How this is documented, shared (where appropriate) and monitored for effectiveness.	Principle 2 , particularly Criterion 2a.2 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3d.1 and 3d.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criterion 4a.5

ELEMENT 3c

Honouring Commitments

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	EXPLANATORY NOTES
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
3c.1 how pre and post contract negotiations are clear and open and that post-contract finance and contracting arrangements reflect pre-contract agreements and that any changes have full explanation and agreement.	How they negotiated with Supply Chain Partners pre / post contract award, examples can be given of the types of activities that took place and any changes are reflected in contract variations that have been agreed by the Supply Chain Partners.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.1 Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.1 and 2c.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3c.4
3c.2 that it is open to challenges through its dispute resolution processes where a Supply Chain Partner feels that commitments have not been honoured.	They have a robust dispute resolution process in place and can show how they ensure their Supply Chain Partners understand the process, can access the process documentation, are aware of any appropriate and agreed Merlin mediation services, for example as delivered by the Independent Case Examiner, and would feel comfortable using the process if needed.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.4, 2a.5 and 2c.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.1 and 3d.2
3c.3 that it will respect decisions from an appropriate and agreed Merlin mediation service (1) when it is deemed to have not acted in accordance with the principles of the Merlin Standard.	How through its code of conduct, behaviours and business principles/ standards it ensures it will respect any decision of any appropriate agreed Merlin mediation services. Where applicable, they can give examples where Merlin mediation services have been used to resolve complaints.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.5 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.1
3c.4 processes to ensure that at every level within supply chains, all parties are aware of each other's expectations, before, during and after contract award and throughout the life of the contract.	That all expectations have been discussed, agreed and understood throughout the supply chain before, during and after contract award and that they can give examples of the activities undertaken.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.1, 2c.1, 2c.3, 2c.6 and 2c.8 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4 and 3d.3

(1) Merlin Mediation Service – or similar as agreed by the procurer / Commissioner

ELEMENT 3d

Performance

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
3d.1 how the supply chain has been designed and is encouraged to work collaboratively to support and promote the performance of the entire network.	That the design of the supply chain encourages collaborative working and that this is proactively driven by the Organisation. Managers can give examples where collaboration has improved performance	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.1 Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.3 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.1 and 4a.6
3d.2 clear channels available for regular performance review, including recognising and supporting innovation, raising issues and discussing concerns, including regarding commissioning and/or procurement.	How performance review is undertaken, and by whom. What innovation has been identified through these activities and how it has been used to improve performance? How performance is reviewed on an individual basis and across the network.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.5 and 2c.5 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.1 and 3c.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.3 and 4a.5
3d.3 that performance expectations are clearly defined for and understood by all parties.	The framework/strategies and activities used to manage the supply chain clearly define performance expectations and that Supply Chain Partners understand these.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.4 , 2c.3 and 2c.5 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.3 , 3c.1 and 3c.4
3d.4 robust Management Information systems that produce consistent, accurate and appropriate performance information that is shared across the supply chain.	The rationale behind the systems used. How management information is collected and shared appropriately across the supply chain. How it is used to identify under/over performance. They can give examples of how data is used to inform senior management, the supply chain and the Commissioner/procurer.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.2 , 4a.5 and 4a.6
3d.5 value for money across the contracts held.	How value for money is identified. How resources are used across the contracts and that there are examples of Value for Money (VFM) activities that have a positive impact on the supply chain and customers where appropriate.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2b.2 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.1 , 3b.2 and 3b.8 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.2
3d.6 established processes to measure and encourage demonstrable outcomes/performance improvement by organisations engaged within the supply chain (such as distance travelled by customers).	The processes used to measure performance improvement by organisations within the supply chain (including where appropriate customer satisfaction and the customer journey).	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.3 and 2b.2 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.1 and 3b.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.5 and 4a.6

ELEMENT 3e

Promoting Diversity and Equality

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
3e.1 that in agreeing Supply Chain Partnership arrangements it has ensured that processes are in place and in alignment with their own commitment to Diversity and Equality.	That the Supply Chain Partners have processes in place which are aligned to the Organisation's own Diversity and Equality strategy.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.4 , 2c.3 , 2b.5 and 2b.6 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4 , 3c.2 and 3c.4 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.3 , 4a.5 and 4a.6
3e.2 that effective processes are in place to monitor and promote Diversity and Equality throughout the supply chain.	How they promote Diversity and Equality throughout the supply chain and can give examples of activities that take place and how this is monitored and measured. How the supply chain promote Diversity and Equality and how this is monitored and measured.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2b.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3a.4 , 3b.1 , 3b.2 , 3b.5 , 3b.6 and 3d.2 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.2 and 4a.3
3e.3 the way in which Equal Opportunities data is collected, analysed and used within the supply chain.	How it identifies relevant information to be collected. How it analyses and uses Equality of Opportunity information to inform improvements and supply chain design. How it aligns their Equality of Opportunity requirements to the wider policy/objectives of the commissioner/procurer. The systems used, how often it is analysed and how it is used in performance management.	Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3d.4 Principle 4 , particularly Criteria 4a.5



Review

Excellent supply chains will deliver the best results for customers and have the most positive impact on the wider community.

Commissioning/procurement affects the way Organisation led supply chains function and the approach adopted by the Organisation to the management of the Supply Chain Partners. Healthy and high performing supply chains impact directly on the experience of the customer and the society in which supply chains operates. Supply Chain Partners should expect to be valued for their contribution to meeting quality of service and performance objectives.

ELEMENT 4a Supply Chain Review

CRITERIA	EXPLANATORY NOTES	
The Organisation can demonstrate and Supply Chain Partners can validate:	What Does This Mean? - the Organisation can demonstrate:	Links To Other Areas Within The Standard
4a.1 how it actively seeks and uses feedback from all stakeholder groups, including that provided through external auditing and assessment activities to inform and improve practices.	How they use a range of activities to gain feedback, for example, questionnaires, focus groups, complaints, compliments and comments and use the information to make changes to the supply chain design and improvements. See also 2a.3 and 2a.5.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.1 Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.2 and 2a.5 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.1 , 3b.2 and 3b.3
4a.2 an effective and inclusive process for generating an annual continuous improvement plan and resultant action planning and continuous improvement activity.	There is a robust continuous improvement process in place and that all stakeholders are given the opportunity to input into the process. They ensure their Supply Chain Partners understand the importance of self-assessment to inform improvement.	Principle 2 particularly Criteria 2a.2 Principle 3 particularly Criteria 3b.1 , 3b.2 , 3d.2 and 3d.4
4a.3 how it keeps supply chains informed of wider policy and strategy information and that the activities of supply chains are strategically aligned with the wider social objectives of the commissioner/procurer.	There are mechanisms in place to ensure the supply chain is kept informed on wider policy and strategy information, e.g. industry developments/stakeholder requirements. The Organisation can identify activities have been strategically aligned with wider social objectives of the commissioner/procurer and stakeholders.	Principle 2 , particularly Criteria 2a.2 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.3 , 3b.7 , 3d.2 and 3e.1
4a.4 that supply chains have a measurable impact on the wider social objectives/policy intent of the commissioner/procurer.	How the Supply Chain Partners meet the wider social objectives of the commissioner/procurer and stakeholders and what measures are in place to assess this.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.1
4a.5 how review and improvement strategies ensure that supply chains continue to evolve and improve to meet the changing needs of customers of all types, service users, and the Commissioner/procurer.	That the review and improvement strategies contribute to the future development and design of the supply chain ensuring it meets the changing needs of the different stakeholders.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.1 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.1 and 3b.2
4a.6 through the design and activities of supply chains, that there is a positive impact on external stakeholders, encouraging people/employee well-being, and improving environmental sustainability.	How thoughtful design and activities undertaken by Supply Chain Partners allows for customers/employees/people to develop themselves and their wellbeing in the widest possible sense.	Principle 1 , particularly Criteria 1a.3 Principle 3 , particularly Criteria 3b.1 , 3b.7 , 3d.1 and 3d.2

Contact

We hope that you find this publication has been helpful, however if you do have any queries or want to engage in any of the support that is available, please visit the Merlin Standard website:

www.merlinstandard.co.uk

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