

Preparing Contract documents: Specification writing

The tender document

- Instructions to tenderers
- Form of tender*
- Form of bid bond*
- Contract documents
 - Contract*
 - Form of performance security*
 - Technical specifications
 - Bill of quantities
 - Drawings

Technical specifications

- Preliminaries
 - Description of the project
 - Provision, content and use of documents
 - Timeframes and programme
 - Cost control
 - Quality control and assurance
 - Security, safety and protection
 - Facilities and services, temporary works
- Specification clauses

Specification sections

- NBS Common arrangement of work sections (CAWS)
- Referencing system common between specs, BOQ items (when SMM7 is used) and references on the drawings

A: preliminaries

B: Prefabrication

C: Demolition/ repair/ alterations

D: Excavation and filling

E: Concrete

F: Masonry

G: Steel and timber

H: Cladding

J: Damp proofing and membrane

K: Partitions and linings

Etc.....

Typical specification section

- Different types and occurrences
 - Eg:
 - C30 concrete for foundations
 - C20 concrete for screeds
 - C15 concrete for paved areas
- Material properties
- Workmanship
- Sampling and testing

Purpose of a specification

A specification exists so that a client or designer can state exactly what is required, otherwise it is completely useless

Of three types:

Performance specification

Method specification

End-product specification

Deciding what is required

- Reference to the project brief and project requirements
- Cost implications
- Client preferences

Requirements are rarely defined precisely
There is a lot of decision making involved

Taking decisions

- Requirements
- Technical investigation
- Familiarity with the relevant reference documents – refer to blue pages in NBS

Sometimes our role consists of helping the client to decide – in this case the different alternatives are researched, analysed and presented

Decisions not taken during specification writing will normally need to be taken on site in what are generally less favourable circumstances

Wording the specification

- Purpose is to communicate detailed information
- Should be clear
- Should be decisive
- Up to date with current technology and standards
- Well formatted

Specifications do not make easy reading!

They are easily ignored if too complex or unclear

NBS

- Organised according to CAWS
- Every section is organised as follows:
 - Scope
 - Reference documents (relevant standards and texts)
 - General guidance (background technical information)
 - Guidance notes and Specification clauses

Delete as appropriate and do not over-specify:

Lengthy and complex specifications are rarely read.

Formatting

- Necessary for proof reading and for clarity
- Kindly use format developed by Adrian and Frederick
- Attention to headers and footers
- Attention to **outline levels** – these make the spec much easier to organise, navigate and process
- All references to approvals, queries and submittals to be addressed to “PROJECT MANAGER”

Instructions to tenderers

- Compile submissions list as specification is being written: presented in the form of a table indicating the following:
 - Work section
 - Clause number
 - Requirement
 - Submission date (eg. With tender, 15 days after signing contract, etc)
- This will be very useful for adjudication and during the duration of the contract