Bettercoal Lead Assessor Allocation Procedures

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Working towards a global *responsible* coal supply chain

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction 3
1.1 Purpose 3
1.2 Principles 3
1.3 Assessor Roles and Responsibilities 3
1.4 Supporting References 3
1.5 Steps of the Bettercoal Assessment Process 4
2. Allocation Procedure 5
3. Proposal Guidelines 5
4. Proposal Selection Process 7
5. Payment 9

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This document sets out the procedures for allocating Bettercoal Approved Lead Assessors to specific Candidate Producer assessments. It outlines the Request for Proposal (RfP) process, proposal selection criteria, scoring methodology, and contracting terms. It does not cover the eligibility or approval of Lead Assessors, which is addressed in the Bettercoal Lead Assessor Approval Process & Criteria Document.

1.2 Principles

The allocation of Bettercoal Lead Assessors is guided by the principles of transparency, independence, competence, and fairness. The allocation process is designed to ensure that each assessment is led by qualified professionals with relevant regional and technical experience, and without conflicts of interest.

Bettercoal uses a competitive Request for Proposal (RfP) mechanism to ensure a fair and merit-based selection. Proposals are evaluated against clearly defined technical and commercial criteria as outlined in this document and the Bettercoal Assessment Manual (Section 3.3).

All selected Lead Assessors must be formally approved by Bettercoal and have completed the required training before being considered for allocation.

1.3 Assessor Roles and Responsibilities

Lead Assessors are responsible for:

- Managing and conducting Bettercoal Assessments
- Building competent, diverse, conflict-free assessment teams
- Ensuring timely, complete, and accurate delivery of all required outputs

Refer to the Bettercoal Assessment Manual for detailed expectations and procedural responsibilities.

1.4 Supporting References

The following documents which are publicly available on www.bettercoal.org and provide additional information to assist with the Bettercoal Code and Assessment Process:

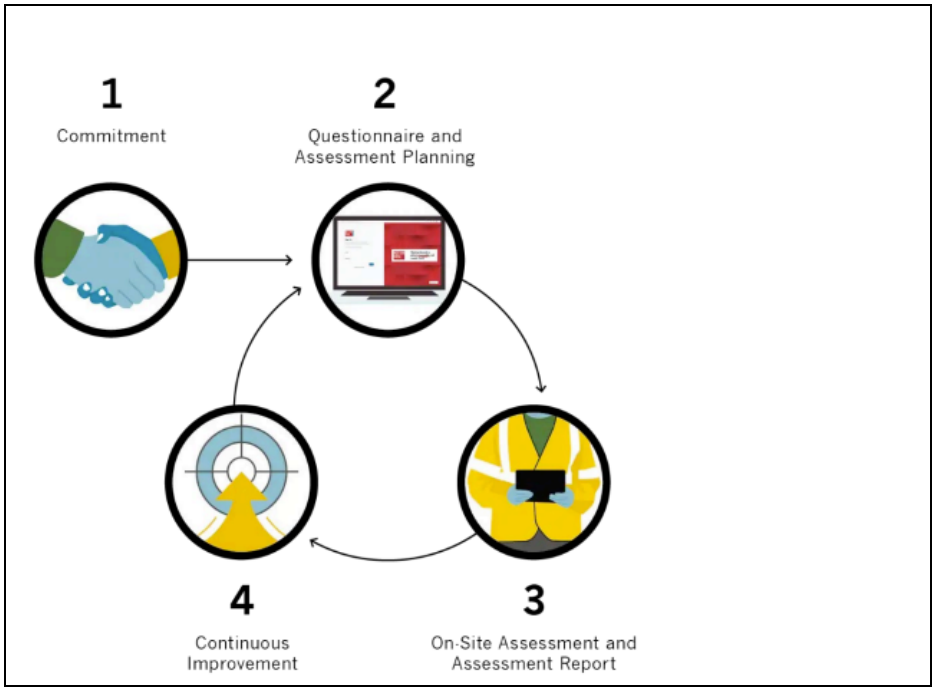
- Bettercoal Code Version 2.0
- Bettercoal Assessment Manual 2.0
- Bettercoal Claims Guide 2.0
- Bettercoal Grievance Mechanism

- Bettercoal Lead Assessor Application Form
- Bettercoal Lead Assessor Allocation Process

1.5 Steps of the Bettercoal Assessment Process

The Bettercoal Candidate Producer Assessment Process consists of four steps outlined in Image 1. A Bettercoal Approved Lead Assessor (Lead Assessor) will be allocated to a Bettercoal Candidate Producer during *Step 2: Questionnaire and Assessment Planning*. The process is described in full detail in the Bettercoal Assessment Manual, Section 3.1.

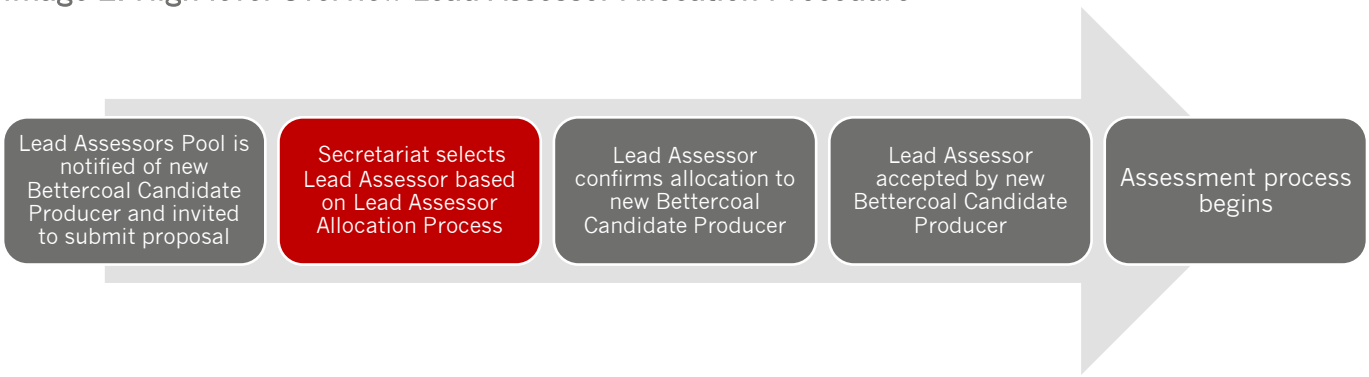
Image 1: Steps of the Bettercoal Assessment Process



2. Allocation Procedure

Once a Candidate Producer has submitted basic site information, the Secretariat will launch a **Request for Proposal** and **assign a Bettercoal Approved Assessor**[1] in line with the procedure outlined in this document.

Image 2: High-level Overview Lead Assessor Allocation Procedure



3. Proposal Guidelines

The Pool of approved Bettercoal Lead Assessors will be notified via email of a new Candidate Producer joining the Bettercoal Assessment Process through the Bettercoal Request for Proposal (RfP) process. Those interested in leading the Assessment will **submit a technical and commercial proposal within two weeks after the RfP publication.**

Table 1: Technical and Commercial Proposal Content Requirements

Technical proposal	
1.Specific experience of the Lead Assessor related to this Assessment	• Documented track record of completing Bettercoal or equivalent mining-sector ESG assessments of comparable scope and complexity. • Demonstrated familiarity with Bettercoal Code 2.0, its Guidance Notes and Continuous Improvement requirements (Bettercoal training completed). • Evidence of independence and absence of conflicts of interest in past engagements. Lead Assessors must not have provided consultancy services to the same Producer under the assessment scope within the last two years. • Successful leadership of multi-disciplinary audit teams in the last five years (include two recent references).

[1] For information on how to become a Bettercoal Approved Assessor, please refer to the Bettercoal Lead Assessor Approval Process.

2. Qualification and competence of the assessment team	• The assessment team can include topic experts. It should include at least two Assessors including the Lead Assessor. • Collective professional credentials covering the required disciplines (e.g., HSEC, labour & human rights, community relations, environmental engineering). • Balanced mix of seniority and diversity that supports robust stakeholder engagement and objective judgement.
3. Capacity and experience of the assessment team working in the country / region of the Assessment	• Number of comparable assessments undertaken in the country/region within the last three years. • Depth of understanding of local regulatory, cultural and operating contexts. • Fluency in relevant local language(s) and proven use of in-country interpreters where needed. • Established logistical footprint (e.g., visas, travel readiness) enabling mobilisation within stipulated timelines.
4. Approach and methodology	• Clear, risk-based assessment plan that aligns with the Bettercoal Assessment Manual and addresses identified red-flag issues. • Comprehensive document-review strategy and data-request list covering all Bettercoal Code provisions. • Robust sampling logic for site visits, including justification of selected facilities and interviewees, as aligned with the requirements in the Bettercoal Assessment Manual. • Stakeholder-engagement approach detailing how workers, contractors, community representatives and management will be consulted. • Realistic timeline and resource allocation, with contingency measures for potential delays.
Commercial proposal	
Lump sum fee in GBP for the Site Assessment	• Broken down by fees for desktop review, fees for Site Assessment, fees for report and high-level summary report writing and the overall average fee rate. • To cost the Site Assessment as accurately as possible, the Assessor should review the information provided by the Candidate producer.

Travel expenses	• Broken down by Assessment Phase
	• Covering all expenses for all travel, meals and accommodation, for both out of country and in-country, with breakdown
	• Expenses must conform to Bettercoal guidelines, specifically
	  ○ Locally appropriate per diem
	  ○ Economy class tickets unless travel is over 5 hours
	  ○ Premium Economy over Business Class
	  ○ Local transport, if not provided by producer

VAT	• For UK-based assessors, include VAT.

Hourly rate and estimated time for post-assessment activities	• CIP monitoring, Lead Assessor evidence reviews and action update.

4. Proposal Selection Process

Technical and Commercial proposals will be evaluated by the Bettercoal Secretariat within two weeks of submission. The proposal with the highest overall score will be selected. The scoring methodology is as follows.

Table 2: Scoring Methodology

Technical Proposal Rating (70% of overall score):	Each technical criterion is scored on a scale from 1 to 4 (1 = poor, 4 = outstanding): • Specific experience of the Lead Assessor relevant to the assessment (weight: 30%) • Qualifications and competence of the assessment team (30%) • Experience and capacity of the team in the relevant country or region (20%) • Proposed approach and methodology (20%) The raw scores are normalised using the formula: T = (score / highest score) × weight (%) of criterion The total technical score is calculated by summing the weighted results for each criterion. If the technical score is 75% or higher, the commercial proposal will then be reviewed and scored.
Commercial Proposal Rating (30% of overall score):	The total commercial score is calculated using the formula: C = 100 × (lowest average rate / proposed average rate). All proposals will be evaluated based on value for money, and bidders are expected to provide clear justification for each cost element and minimise unnecessary expenses.
Overall Proposal Rating	The overall score is calculated using the formula: (Technical Score × 70%) + (Commercial Score × 30%). An illustrative example of the proposal scoring calculation is provided in Image 3 below.

Notification of Outcomes

Each Lead Assessor who submitted a proposal will be notified by the Secretariat of the outcome. Once the Lead Assessor has been confirmed, they will be put in touch with the Producer to begin the assessment process.

Rejection Due to Conflict of Interest

The Candidate Producer may only reject the allocated Assessors in case of a conflict of interest provided they can give just cause. In case a conflict of interest is identified, Bettercoal will select the Assessor who has scored the second highest in the selection process.

Table 3: Proposal Scoring Example

Technical Scoring (70%)	Proposal 1	Weighted scoring (score / highest score)*%	Proposal 2	Weighted Scoring	Proposal 3	Weighted scoring
Specific experience of the Lead Assessor related to this Assessment: • *ranked 1-4* • *30% of total score*	2	15	4	30	1	7.5
Qualification and competence of the assessment team • *ranked 1-4* • *30% of total score*	3	22.5	4	30	1	7.5
Capacity and experience of the assessment team working in the country / region of the Assessment • *ranked 1-4* • *20% of total score*	4	20	4	20	1	5
Approach and methodology • *ranked 1-4* • *20% of total score*	4	20	4	20	1	5
TOTAL TECHNICAL		77.5		100		25
Meet minimum technical score of 70 (Yes / No)		*Yes*		*Yes*		*No*

Commercial Scoring (30%)	Fee Rate (in £)	Fee Rate (in £)	Fee Rate (in £)
Fee rates proposed for Desktop Review work • *ranked from lowest*	1200	1100	*Commercial Proposal not reviewed as Technical Score is below 75%*
Fee rates proposed for in-country/Site-Assessment work • *ranked from lowest*	1500	1400	
Overall average fee rate	1300	1200	
TOTAL COMMERCIAL (=100*lowest average rate/proposed average rate)	92.30	100	
OVERALL SCORE • *(Technical x 70%) + (Commercial x 30%)*	81.94	100	

Selected Proposal: Proposal 2 with a score of 100

5. Payment

Bettercoal will settle fees and approved expenses through five milestone invoices, as shown in Table 4 (Payment Schedule). Invoices are issued strictly against the agreed deliverable deadlines - each payment is released only once the corresponding deliverable has been submitted (or formally rescheduled) and accepted.

All deadlines will be agreed with Bettercoal and aligned to the Candidate Producer Assessment Process (see Assessment Manual). If a Candidate Producer becomes unresponsive or fails to meet its document-review deadlines, Bettercoal will authorise the Lead Assessor's remuneration on an alternative date to be mutually agreed.

Table 4: Payment Schedule

Invoice	Trigger	% of Agreed Fees	Eligible Expense
1	Formal appointment / project mobilisation	15	
2	Completion of the Site Visit	25	* All expenses incurred to date
3	Submission of the Draft Assessment Report to the Producer	25	

4	Acceptance of the Final Assessment Report and Corrective Action Plan by Bettercoal and the Producer	25	
5	Submission of the High-Level Summary Report	10	

* Expenses must be pre-estimated in the proposal and remain consistent with the figures agreed during contracting. Any variance exceeding the agreed estimate requires Bettercoal's prior written approval.