CNC Supplier Qualification Checklist

Five sections and 30+ questions to ask any machining supplier before you order. Tick each item — any section with more than two blanks is a conversation you have not finished. FSCPRECISION · ataimeisen.com

1 · Capability

- ■ Can they hold the tightest tolerance on my drawing on the process they quoted (milling, turning, 5-axis, mill-turn)?
- ■ Do they stock or routinely machine my material (aluminium grade, stainless grade, brass, titanium, plastic)?
- ■ What is the largest and smallest part envelope they handle, and does mine fit comfortably?
- ■ Can they do the secondary work my part needs — threading, drilling, surface finish, assembly?
- ■ What is their real minimum order — one piece for a prototype, or a batch minimum I cannot meet?

2 · Quality System

- ■ Is there a documented quality process (ISO 9001-aligned or certified), not just a claim on the website?
- ■ Can they show inspection evidence — CMM reports, first-article, material certs to EN 10204 3.1?
- ■ What is 100% inspected versus sampled, and on which dimensions?
- ■ For regulated work, do they hold the certificate my program requires (IATF 16949, AS9100, ISO 13485)?
- ■ How are non-conformances recorded and fed back — a system, or a phone call after the fact?

3 · Quoting & Communication

- ■ Does the quote break out material, machine time, setup, finishing and inspection separately?
- ■ Are the assumptions stated — quantity, tolerance, surface finish, delivery terms?
- ■ How fast is the first response, and is it from an engineer or a bot?
- ■ Will they return DFM feedback, or just a price on exactly what was drawn?
- ■ If the drawing is incomplete, do they flag it or quote around it and add risk later?

4 · IP Protection

- ■ Will they sign a mutual NDA before receiving the drawing?
- ■ How are my files stored and who can access them — and are they deleted on request?
- ■ Do they subcontract any work, and if so, is my IP covered downstream?
- ■ Have they published my part, photo or print without permission before?

5 · Logistics & Lead Time

- ■ What is the realistic lead time for my quantity — prototype vs production stated separately?
- ■ What Incoterms and freight do they quote (EXW, DAP, DDP) and who owns customs?
- ■ What is the rework or reject handling if parts miss tolerance at incoming inspection?
- ■ Is there a reference customer or part in my industry they can point to?

Red Flags

- ■ No NDA or reluctance to sign one.
- ■ Vague answers on inspection, traceability or materials.
- ■ A single lump-sum quote with no breakdown and no stated assumptions.
- ■ A price far below the others with no explanation of how.
- ■ Pressure to skip the drawing review or rush the order.
- ■ No reference parts, customers or photos they can show.

One red flag is worth a question. Three or more together is a reason to keep looking. This list is a sourcing aid, not a procurement standard — adapt it to your program. Source: ataimeisen.com/supplier-qualification-checklist.html