**Provision of Item Writing Services – Skills Literacy Call-Off Contract**

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| **Item Writing Framework Agreement – STA 0128** |
| **Call-Off Contract No: STA-0128/10** |
| **Title: Provision of Item Writing Services for Skills Tests Literacy Work Package 1** |
| **Supplier: National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER)** |

**Pursuant to the terms of the Item Writing Test Framework Agreement (STA 0128):**

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| **Service Commencement Date:** | 26 April 2017 |
| **Call-Off Contract End Date:** | 31 October 2017 |
| **Call-Off Contract Value:** | £51,521 |
| **Relationship Manager for Department for Education:** |  |
| **Contract Manager for the Department for Education:** |  |
| **Relationship Manager for the Supplier:** |  |

1. **Background**

This call-off contract is for the provision of item writing services for Skills Tests Literacy Work Package 1, including the drafting of potential items and their mark schemes, ready for formal trialling.

1. **Functional Requirements**

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| **Functional Requirements** | |
| **Assessment type** | Professional Skills Tests for prospective teachers |
| **Item development and design** | The number of marks stated for each work package outlined below is the total number of marks which must be provided at final handover. Suppliers will need to ensure sufficient items are created to allow for any losses during the process, for example following the interim review meeting.  Audio files are NOT required for any items. STA will produce audio files once items have been accepted for further use. |
| **Item writing requirements for literacy** | **4.5.1 Literacy**  The items are intended to cover the range of topic areas and question types detailed within the test specification, to ensure an even distribution of coverage across the given areas.  **Test format for live test**  Four sections:   * Spelling (10 marks) * Punctuation (15 marks) * Grammar (8-12 marks) * Comprehension (8-12 marks)   Please refer to the test specification (Annex A) for more detail on test format and composition.  **Work package requirements**  In each of work packages 1 and 2 STA requires 234 marks of skills questions.   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Topic** | **Number of questions** | **Marks per question** | **Total marks** | | Spelling | 30 | 1 | 30 marks | | Punctuation | 3 | 20 | 60 marks | | Grammar | 8 | 8 | 64 marks | | Comprehension | 4 passages with 4-8 questions per passage | 20 marks overall | 80 marks |   Please note that there is a text selection meeting for the literacy tests. Suppliers are asked to provide 166% of passages required for punctuation, 150% of passages required for grammar and 200% of the passages required for comprehension in advance of this meeting, from which the final 100% will be chosen.  Additional detail regarding item types and marks per question are provided below.  ***Spelling***  All questions to be based on the following item types:   1. Sentence with ‘fill in the blank’. 2. Sentence with drag and drop multiple choice options for Hearing Impaired.   Note: Both standard and hearing impaired versions of spelling questions will use the same sentence.  For each work package the supplier must provide:   * 4 alternatives for each spelling for the Hearing Impaired version to include likely common errors.   Details of the types of spellings have been expanded and the new specification provides details. Spellings and sentences should not be obscure or very specific to a specialist area. Sentences must not be unnecessarily complex.  They must broadly reflect the lexicon of general professional writing. More detail will be provided at the Start-Up Meeting including a list of between 10 and 15 target spellings we wish to be tested.  A total of 30 marks are to be provided, including the words supplied by STA.  ***Punctuation***  All questions to be based on the following item type:   1. a ‘passage proof-read’ question type where candidates add missing punctuation into a passage of text to ensure unambiguous meaning and consistency of style.   For each work package the supplier must provide:   * 3 separate passages of text, each of which will include 20 instances of missing punctuation; 1 mark per missing piece of punctuation.   A total of 60 marks will be provided.  Punctuation of varying difficulty levels should be missing from each passage. Care must be taken to avoid obvious errors such as adding the missing half of paired pieces of punctuation e.g. one bracket or one quotation mark where there is little or no ambiguity about the placement of the missing punctuation.  All stylistic non-essential punctuation that is not being tested must be included to avoid ambiguity for candidates.  The Punctuation section should be handed over in the form of the punctuation scoring template provided, alongside the punctuation word template provided in Annex B.  ***Grammar***  All questions to be based on the following item type:   1. single mark multiple choice drag and drop item questions where the candidate has to select the most appropriate option for a given sentence. This can include whole sentences and complex phrases from lists, as well as grammatical selections within sentences.   For each work package the supplier must provide:   * 8 passages with 8 items per passage; * Each item will be worth 1 mark; * Each item always has 4 answer options.   A total of 64 marks will be provided.  ***Comprehension***  All questions to be based on the following item types:   1. Drag and drop items including:    1. Drag and drop one answer option (tick/number/words/letters) to the correct statement.    2. Drag and drop multiple answer options (ticks/numbers/words/letters) to the correct statements.   Each correctly completed option within a question is worth 1 mark. Item selection can be grouped to give a maximum of 5 marks for any one question.  For each work package the supplier must provide:   * 4 passages with 4 or more to a maximum of 8 questions per passage and up to 5 items (and marks) per question to give a total of 20 marks per passage; * Each item will be worth 1 mark. A total of 80 marks in total will be provided. |
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| **Marking guidance** | Marking guidance must be provided for all items. This should be included in the completed template for each question.  The marking guidance must include details of all correct answers.  Please refer to the item writing guidance document (Annex B) for more details. For the fill in the blank spelling questions there is normally only one correct spelling to be listed, the only exception is words ending with the suffix –ise or –ize. |
| **Item design** | All items and their associated marking guidance must be submitted in Microsoft Word 2010 (or compatible, subject to prior agreement) at Final Handover using the question templates provided.  Please refer to the item writing guidance documents (Annex B) for further details on how items should be presented within the item writing templates.  For each test section, a single word and pdf file should be provided which combines all items being submitted for that test section. These combined documents should be provided both at interim handover and final handover. |
| **Texts and other external materials** | **Test item texts**  Texts must take account of the context in which they will be used. They must comply with the STA guidance for text selection which is included at Annex A.  Where texts have been commissioned, please include the original material, contact details for the creator of the material, and a statement confirming assignment of the intellectual property rights (‘IPR’) in the material from the creator to DfE. The formal assignment of the relevant IPR in the commissioned work must be completed by the Final Handover Date.. The document in Annex G (Transfer of IPR to DfE Template) must be used when handing over texts, artwork or data that has been commissioned.  Where there is a third party owner of any materials, it should be referenced as described below.  **Referencing source materials**  Any materials using externally sourced **texts** need to be fully referenced; including title, name of copyright owner, name of the author/editor/creator, details of the edition, publisher and page/location of the material within the source. If sourced from the web, a print out of the original website, showing the text must also be included. |
| **Item classification** | The Supplier must classify all items according to the fields on the item classification spreadsheet, and present the item information on the spreadsheet template supplied. The spreadsheet is provided in Annex B. This spreadsheet should be included with the materials presented at Interim and Final Handovers. For literacy, the IWA item audit template provided in Annex B should also be completed.  Further guidance on classification of literacy items is included within the literacy item writing guidance document. |
| **Interim Handover** | *Interim Handover must occur no later than 28 July 2017.*  The following materials must be sent to STA:   * 100% of items to be provided in Microsoft Word 2010 (or compatible subject to prior agreement), using the item templates, which will be provided at the start up meeting. * All attribute fields on the template must be completed for each item, including curriculum reference and marking key. * Item classification spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel 2010 (or compatible). * Completed IWA item classification sheet included within Annex B. * For each test section, a single word file should be provided which combines all items being submitted for that test section.   STA and the contracted agencies will review the supplied materials at the Interim Review meeting (w/c 7/8/17). The Supplier will then make any revisions or amendments as necessary as a result of the discussions at that meeting. |
| **Final Handover** | *Final Handover part 1 must occur on or before1/9/17.*  The Final Handover Meeting Part 1, w/c 11/9/17 where any amends needed are discussed and/or the project is reviewed then Final Handover Part 2 occurs with any changes on 20/9/17.  Should STA decide that a final handover meeting is not needed, they may request at the interim handover meeting that parts 1 and 2 of the final handover process be combined to require electronic and hardcopy handover be provided to the part 1 dates.  **Part 1** – Electronic Handover of files prior to Final Handover Meeting.  **Final Handover Meeting** – the purpose of the Final Handover meeting (if required) is to discuss the items and the rationale for all amends made. The meeting will be chaired by STA and either take place in STA offices in London or by telephone (to be decided by STA). Following the Handover Meeting the agreed changes must to be made prior to handover Part 2.  **Part 2** – Updated Electronic Handover of files and final Hardcopy Handover following changes discussed and agreed in the Final Handover Meeting.  *Electronic handover (parts 1 and 2)*   * 100% of items to be provided in Microsoft Word 2010  (or compatible subject to prior agreement), using the item templates included within Annex B. * A reference document that details the source of any text used in the test items. * The updated item classification spreadsheet(s). * Completed item classification sheet included within Annex B.   For each test section, single pdf and word file should be provided which combines all items being submitted for that test section. Assignments and/or licences of IPR in the commissioned works (Appendix E)to be completed by the Final Handover Date – as stated in this ITQ and the Contract, and all documentation relating to IPR.  Electronic handover will take place either via the STA portal (preferred) or by encrypted memory stick (provided by STA); approach to be agreed at the Start-up Meeting.  *Hardcopy Handover* – Supplier to hand over hardcopies of the literacy items, including marking guidance and item classification spreadsheet. Up to 20 hard copies of all items, to be collated into 20 separate, individually numbered packs. Exact number to be agreed at the Interim Handover Meeting. |
| **Acceptance of Final Handover** | Following Final Handover, STA will check the provided materials. If any errors are found, all materials will be returned to the Supplier for a full check and for amendments to be carried out. An error free set of materials should be returned to STA no later than one week after the Final Handover date. |

1. **Required Service Elements**

The table below sets out the Service Elements and Deliverables the Supplier shall provide under this Call-Off Contract.

| **No** | **Deliverables/Outputs** | **Acceptance Criteria** | **Due Date** |
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| **1** | **Start-Up Meetings**  Provide:   * Detailed plan for item development and scoring production for review and joint sign-off; * Detailed project risk and issue log (Risk Log) for review and joint sign-off. | Project Director / Project Manager (or equivalent) attend the Start-Up Meeting and provision of listed documents by agreed date. | 22-26 May 2017 |
| **2** | **Checkpoint Meetings and Management Information**  To attend two Checkpoint meetings. These meetings may be held as telephone conference calls, and may also be combined with other meetings if appropriate. Checkpoint reports to be submitted to STA one working day in advance of each Checkpoint meeting. | Project Manager (or equivalent) attends each Checkpoint Meeting on agreed date and submission of Checkpoint report one working day in advance of each Checkpoint Meeting. | **10/7/17 and 14/8/17** |
| **3** | **Text Selection Meeting**  provide 166% of passages required for punctuation, 150% of passages required for grammar and 200% of the passages comprehension sections from which the final texts will be selected for further development and item writing.  For grammar and comprehension texts, provide assurance that the texts submitted have the potential to generate sufficient items for coverage of the curriculum and with limited enemies. Texts should be highlighted and annotated to demonstrate which sections provide the potential for specific strands of the syllabus, to be submitted to STA at least one week in advance of the text selection meeting. | Project Director / Project Manager (or equivalent) attend the text selection meeting and provide texts and potential questions a week in advance for consideration. | **Text to be submitted no later than 9/6/17**  **Text selection meeting to be held on 20/6/17** |
| **4** | **Interim Handover – Critical Step**  Provide electronic copies of all draft item, marking guidance, draft item classification spreadsheet(s), a completed item audit template and details of copyright details for all items where this is relevant.  The Contractor must handover 100% of the items in Microsoft Word format at the interim handover stage, with all items to be recorded on the item classification spreadsheet and the IWA item audit template. The Contractor must also handover a single pdf file of all items for each subject area (i.e. four pdf files in total, one for spelling, one for punctuation, one for grammar and one for comprehension).  Templates for item writing, the item classification spreadsheet and the IWA item audit template are provided in Annex B. Please use the templates provided; guidance on how to use the item writing templates can be found in the item writing guidance document also provided in Annex B.  N.B. Should STA decide that a final handover meeting is not needed, they may request at the interim handover meeting that parts 1 and 2 of the final handover process be combined to require electronic and hardcopy handover be provided to the part 1 dates. | 100% of drafts of all materials required for completion of work package(s) received electronically, including completed handover form, by agreed date and to criteria specified in section 4.5. | **No later than   28/7/17** |
| **5** | **Interim Review Meeting**  Meeting with STA and item writers to review materials. | Project Manager / Lead Item Writer attend Interim Review Meeting on agreed date. | **week commencing 7/8/17** |
| **6** | **Final Handover**  **Part 1** – Electronic Handover of files prior to Final Handover Meeting.  **Final Handover Meeting** – meeting to discuss amends to items. This will be held in all cases, irrespective of the number of changes required at interim handover.  **Part 2** – Updated Electronic Handover of files and final Hardcopy Handover following changes discussed and agreed in the Final Handover Meeting.  *Electronic handover* – Supplier to hand over a Word file for each item with all sections populated as detailed in the item writing guidance document. Also to be provided:   * a single pdf file of all items for each subject area (i.e. four pdf files in total, one for spelling, one for punctuation, one for grammar and one for comprehension) * a single word file containing all of the spelling templates * source references and one hard copy for all comprehension items * details of the copyright statement for the source materials (where applicable) * completed IWA item audit template * completed item classification spreadsheet. * signed copy of assignment/licences of IPR for DfE’s benefit   The preferred method of electronic handover is via the STA secure portal. The Contractor must also handover a single pdf file of all items for each subject area.  *Hardcopy Handover* – Supplier to hand over hard copies of the literacy items. | 100% of specified materials received at STA by agreed date, including completed handover form, and materials are of appropriate quality as listed under Performance Requirements. | **Part 1 – 1/9/17**  **Final Handover Meeting – w/c 11/9/17**  **Part 2 – 20/9/17** |
| **7** | **Acceptance of Final Handover materials – Critical Step**  If any errors are found following Final Handover or the materials are not compliant with this specification, all materials will be returned to the supplier for full checking and correction. Final payment will be withheld until this is completed. Fully checked and corrected materials should be returned no later than one week after the Final Handover date. | 100% of specified of materials with STA no later than one week after Final Handover Date, including completed handover form. All materials to be error free. | **No later than one week after Final Handover Date** |
| **8** | **Attendance (virtual acceptable) at Resolution meeting following ER1**  The item writing agency will be invited to attend the resolution meeting following ER 1 to allow them to engage with feedback from the expert review process and understand how the items were amended for trialling. | Attendance by at least 1 member of the IWA team | **26/10/17** |

1. **Key Milestones**

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| ID | **Description** | **Key Milestone Acceptance Criteria** | **Completion Date** | **Evidence Required** |
| 1 | Final acceptance | 100% of specified of materials with STA no later than one week after Final Handover Date. All materials to be error free. | w/c 27/09/2017 | Materials delivered on time and to standard. |

1. **Key Payment Milestones and Key Payment Milestones Dates**

Payment will follow the completion of the Key Milestones listed at section 4. Key Payment Milestones are:

[Redacted]

1. **Contract Management Arrangements**

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| The Supplier shall be fully engaged on an on-going basis in regular Contract Management Reviews relating to this Call-Off Contract and the overarching Framework Agreement. These reviews provide an opportunity for the Department and the Supplier to discuss the end-to-end delivery of the Services which shall include but not be limited to:  planning;  progress;  risk management;  issue management;  continuous improvement;  proposed changes;  lessons learnt;  exit management.  Reviews will be carried out with Senior Management on a six month basis where the Department and the Supplier will meet to discuss Supplier performance, lessons learnt, continuous improvement, value for money, exit management and any other issues considered relevant by the Department. |

1. **Supporting documentation**

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| The Literacy Skills tests ITQ document sets out the full specification of requirements including the project deliverables, functional requirements and performance requirements. The original Literacy Skills tests ITQ and the supplier’s response are appended to this contract document.  [Redacted] |

**In witness** whereof this Call-Off Contract has been duly executed.

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| Signed for and on behalf of the Department for Education: |
| Name and Title: |
| Date: |

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| Signed for and on behalf of the Supplier: |
| Name and Title: |
| Date: |