**THE SPECIFICATION**

**Potential Providers will be asked questions on each of these sections within Document 6: The Award Criteria.**

**SECTION A**

1. **Vision of the programme- Overall vision**
   1. Tenders should describe the overall vision for the delivery of the programme. You will need to explain how the programme will operate for the duration of the contract to introduce and embed the teaching of Mandarin and ensure that the Government’s priority of increasing the number of Mandarin pupils, on their way to a high level of fluency within 6 years of starting the programme will continue to be met.
   2. Potential Providers should provide detail in respect of the activities to manage and deliver the programme. This will include how they plan to maintain the number of institutions offering, and the number of students studying, Mandarin to a high level of fluency. Proposals should make clear how Potential Providers propose to work with schools to develop and embed effective, sustainable teaching practices, disseminate exemplar practices and overcome issues and barriers to the successful implementation of the programme.

**SECTION B**

1. **Provision of Mandarin by schools** 
   1. The bid should detail how you propose to maintain and encourage the readiness of schools to continue to deliver Mandarin teaching from September 2021. Proposals should demonstrate how Potential Providers will achieve the following:
      1. establish exactly how the current group of 75 schools will be engaged and supported to ensure their provision to the levels required to offer the proposed programme of study;
      2. ensure that teachers are equipped to deliver the programme confidently and are supported by their school leadership teams;
      3. develop and deliver a programme to support school leaders to successfully maintain and in some cases introduce Mandarin in their schools;
      4. the programme must include 8 hours of intensive learning per week;
      5. accumulate and disseminate case studies from the early adopters and pupils from the initial Mandarin Excellence Programme to maximise benefits to all schools and colleges wishing to teach Mandarin. Examples of available teaching resources can be provided upon request that have been previously developed. All documents which are owned by Crown Copyright will be made available to the winning bidder.
      6. ensure that resources are hosted on a platform accessible by teachers, pupils and parents which has been developed in line with the Security and IT standards listed in Attachment 2. Potential Providers will be required to host resources previously created under the current contract, as well as developing new resources to further support Mandarin learning, which will be maintained, reviewed and adapted as required to meet teaching needs. All documents which are owned by Crown Copyright will be made available to the winning bidder. Please note that within year 1 of the contract, the Department will be taking a decision as to whether resources will move to be hosted on www. gov.uk.
      7. encourage and support an intensive programme of delivery that is made up of a combination of class-time teaching, after school teaching and self- study through a blended approach and online delivery. The Potential Providers would be expected to set the content for the hurdle tests so that content is standardised across all cohorts
      8. retain existing schools and recruit schools to join the programme and retain them; and
      9. transition of more than 6,500 pupils from the existing programme and manage the natural churn or drop out of pupils and still achieve at least 9,000 pupils on track to a high level of fluency by 2023/24.
2. **Building demand and increasing up-take of Mandarin** 
   1. The bid should detail how you propose to stimulate demand for Mandarin amongst key stakeholders. Proposals should demonstrate how the Potential Providers will achieve the following:
      1. help stimulate demand for Mandarin amongst the most able students and those who influence student choices, building the case for and exemplars of the importance and value of Mandarin for the individual and society;
      2. engage with headteachers and those who influence headteacher choices, building the case for Mandarin to be taught in their schools;
      3. engage with universities and employers to raise awareness and understanding of Mandarin and increase the explicit demand for pupils with Mandarin qualifications; and
      4. ensuring that demand for Mandarin is embedded and continues within schools beyond the life of the programme.

**SECTION C**

1. **Developing teaching capacity in the UK**
   1. The bid should detail how you propose to support the sector to deliver effective Mandarin teaching. Proposals should demonstrate how Potential Providers will achieve the following:
      1. develop and deliver a national, evidence based, professional development programme to enhance Mandarin teachers’ skills to teach Mandarin, taking full account of the range of different institutions in which Mandarin will be taught;
      2. recruit and train a sufficient number of teachers, 20 per academic year, preferably from within the UK, to deliver the full scope of the programme. Teachers are to be trained and employed by schools via Schools Direct Tuition Fee and/ or PGCE route or and salaried places in response to demand through the Mandarin Excellence hubs;
      3. support schools to prepare curricula and develop resources and good teaching materials with support from the project’s working group;
      4. quality assure and develop resources and materials to add to a bank of supporting materials which are freely available and accessible to all other schools;
      5. embed effective, sustainable teaching practices and build capacity in the teaching profession to lead on their own profession development in the future; and
      6. embed effective, sustainable teaching practices that will continue to increase the number of pupils studying Mandarin beyond the life of the programme.

**SECTION D**

1. **Communications and engagement** 
   1. **Communications plan**
   2. The success of the programme is dependent on a significant cultural shift to improve students’ perceptions of Mandarin and the value of it to a wide range of future studies and careers. The bid should detail how you propose to encourage key stakeholders to understand and value learning Mandarin to a high level of fluency.
   3. Proposals should demonstrate how Potential Providers will achieve the following:
      1. develop and deliver strong, clear messages for students, and those who influence students, about the value of learning Mandarin to a high level of fluency. You should make clear how targeting key audiences and messages will lead to increased take up of Mandarin amongst the target pupil group;
      2. recruit new schools that meet the Department’s criteria to join the programme; and
      3. drive up awareness of Mandarin amongst Higher Education institutions and employers and promote their value;
   4. Important information for Potential Providers on the government’s approach to communications:
      1. Potential Providers should be aware that, in line with the government’s commitment to efficiency controls, there are restrictions on all paid-for communications and marketing activities funded by the Department either delivered directly or indirectly via partner organisations in receipt of funding. The controls apply to most communications activity including printing and publications, events, PR and digital communications activity.
      2. exemptions may be granted for essential activities where cost effectiveness and return on investment can be evidenced and where all other no cost or low cost options have been exhausted. Potential Providers should consider proposed marketing and communications activity in this context and outline their communications plans fully.
      3. we will be looking for no cost and low cost approaches, with an emphasis on utilising all existing owned and earned communications channels; including social media.  Any paid-for activity will be subject to further approval via the marketing and advertising efficiency controls exemptions process.  In setting out communications plans, Potential Providers should indicate where paid-for activity has been proposed and be aware that paid- for activities may not receive funding.

**SECTION E**

1. **Project Management: management of the project and supply chain including risks and issues**
   1. Bids should include a statement to describe the supply chain arrangements for the management of the project, including the legal and contractual relationship between the members of any proposed consortium (if applicable) and the lead tenderer and how you will report to and work with the Department.
   2. This statement must also include:
      1. confirmation of DUNs number for each Potential Providers and definition of their company status- for example, are they an SME by definition[[1]](#footnote-1);
      2. which element of the programme is delivered by each member of the supply chain;
      3. how values of the Mandarin Excellence Programme will be embedded across the supply chain;
      4. what due diligence has been conducted on the supply chain to ensure that social values are embedded within the supply chain;
      5. evidence of a risk assessment on the supply chain.
   3. Where a significant portion of the programme is delivered by the supply chain, the Department reserves the right to ask all members of the supply chain to complete Document 5- Selection Questionnaire.
   4. The contractor will keep the Department notified of any Supply chain changes as part of regular contract management reviews.
   5. Please include a signed letter of support from each member of your consortium (if applicable).
   6. Proposals should detail the following:
      1. a project plan outlining key activities and milestones. Identification of the key operational and strategic posts from within your organisation or from within your consortium where applicable, the rationale for these posts and the skills required to undertake those functions. (Please include the names and CVs of any individuals you have already identified to fill these posts)
      2. demonstrate the flexibility of your management structure and its ability to adapt over time, including how the programme will be effectively managed (financial and administrative management) and how performance will be monitored. The winning bidder will be required as part of their contractual responsibilities to produce and agree with the Department a contract exit plan/strategy
      3. how you will track the pupils participating in the programme, the full extent of their engagement and the progress that they have made.
   7. The contractor will also be expected to attend regular monthly project management meetings and quarterly meetings with the senior responsible officer (SRO) as agreed with the Department, providing regular management information, progress reports, risks and issue reports in advance of the meeting. These meetings can be by telephone or video conferencing (e.g. via Microsoft Teams).
   8. Project management meetings will:
      1. identify new risks and issues, and routinely review live risk and issue management arrangements and (where required) contingency plans;
      2. highlight those risks and issues that have changed their Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status; and
      3. where necessary, identify those risks and/or issues requiring escalation within the Department and/or the contractor’s organisation.
   9. The winning bidder must demonstrate project management, risk and governance in line with recognised project management methodology; for example, PRINCE2 or APM.
   10. The winning bidder must hold, and permit DfE open access to, detail relating to all activities undertaken in delivering the contract. Contractors must comply with any reasonable requests for information from DfE.
   11. The winning bidder must complete a fraud risk assessment and actively monitor school spend to mitigate against the risk of fraud.
   12. Monitoring of the use of grant funding with schools in line with due diligence and counter fraud measures, and provide management information to the Department as requested.
   13. The winning bidder must recruit and retain in post for the duration of the contract suitably qualified and experienced staff (or develop and then deploy plans to secure these resources as and when required).
   14. Skills and qualifications of identified key personnel should cover all major aspects of the contract including commercial management, project management, specialist and other technical skills and general management. The Potential Providers must agree with DfE which posts are considered as key posts, where knowledge, skills or experience are deemed critical to success. The Potential Providers must also identify whether Disclosure Barring Service or security baseline checks are required for posts and include this detail within their risk log.
   15. The winning bidder must develop an exit strategy within 3 months of contract award and this will be annually refreshed. The exit strategy must include the development and maintenance of suitable succession plans for key personnel, IPR and asset lists. In addition, the contractor must make advance notification to DfE of any proposed changes in key personnel. Replacement personnel should have equivalent skills, experience and qualifications, and DfE reserves the right to refuse proposed replacements.
   16. Lessons learnt meetings: during the various stages of contract and service delivery the contractor will attend joint lessons learnt review meetings, such to inform the next stages of delivery. These will occur annually. In addition, the contractor will also attend a lessons learnt meeting towards the end of the contract period, contribute to a constructive evaluation of the contract and identify areas for improvement and innovation in the future.
2. **Grant administration of school funding**
   * 1. The Potential Providers will act as grant administrators and are asked to provide a proposal as to how grant funding allocated from within the total contract value, of up to £3,300,000 per year should be spent to support pupil participation, intensive learning, minimising barriers to pupil participation and achievement of Mandarin fluency on the programme. Any proposals will be subject to agreement by the Department, who reserves the right to review and amend the allocation of grant funding to schools in line with government spending restrictions.
     2. Included within the budget of £3,300,000, each school on the programme will receive grant funding of £20,000 at the start of the academic year. This provides schools with funding to support their participation in the programme. Schools are permitted to spend this funding on whichever resource supports their participation, but usually this is spent on teaching staff. Grant funding is to be used only on the Mandarin Excellence Programme and is subject to [DfE Grant Funding Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/grant-funding-agreement-terms-and-conditions).
     3. The proposal on grant funding allocation must be both affordable and sustainable within the budget of the programme, and can demonstrate a clear link to supporting the objectives of the programme as below: Grant funding payments to schools must be allocated according to evidenced need from schools, and with the purpose of:
   * enabling pupil participation,
   * pupils achieving a high level of fluency
   * ensuring pupils are progressing towards success in formal qualifications.

Currently the programme provides payments to schools based on continued participation of pupils throughout the programme and for participation in intensive study visits. Potential Providers should demonstrate the level of funding to be allocated to each pupil on a per person basis based on their delivery proposal. Potential Providers may offer alternative models if they can be clearly evidenced to support the objectives outlined above.

* + 1. Included within the £3,300,000 allocation outlined above, Potential Providers will be required to set aside up to £50,000 of grant funding within a Hardship Fund to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, who may require additional financial support to participate in intensive study visits. Eligibility to apply for funding will be agreed with the Department within the first year of the contract, and schools will be responsible for applying for additional funding on behalf of pupils.
    2. As grant administrators. Potential Providers must comply with the Government Functional Standards.
    3. Potential Providers will be expected to carry out the following activities in their role as grant administrators:
    4. Develop a grant funding agreement, to be agreed with the Department, based on existing departmental Grant Funding Agreements. This will be shared with all MEP schools on the programme; setting out their roles as MEP hub schools and the allocation of funding on an annual basis.
    5. To set out and monitor the formula for allocation of additional funding for pupils participating in intensive study visits and retention payments for pupils.
    6. In line with Government Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), Potential Providers will be responsible for the receipt, processing, filing/retrieval and retention/disposal of all records and information associated with their administration of a grant or programme on behalf of the Department.
    7. The Potential Provider will be expected to keep all grant funding for schools separate to the overall contract value and have funding for schools kept within an ESCROW agreement that they will be responsible for arranging.
    8. Monitor and report back to the Department on the progress of activities towards agreed milestones for schools on the programme and any payments to schools as a result of these. Schools are expected to provide evidence of spend and requirements to the grant administrator, in order to claim against their grant funding allocation. For example, participation in intensive study visits.
    9. Monitoring the use of grant funding with schools in line with due diligence and counter fraud measures.
    10. Support with troubleshooting for schools.
    11. Have a financial assurance process in place to allocate funds to schools on time and in full.
    12. Complete a fraud risk assessment and actively monitor school spend to mitigate against the risk of fraud.
    13. Investigate any alleged or confirmed fraud, using appropriately experienced investigators and report findings back to the Buyer
    14. The winning bidder must hold, and permit DfE open access to, detail relating to all activities undertaken in delivering the contract. Contractors must comply with any reasonable requests for information from DfE.

1. **Risks and Issues** 
   1. The bid should consider what are the specific risks and issues that are foreseen in delivering the solution and think about what contingencies and countermeasures might be put in place to mitigate the risks.Typical areas of risk for this type of programme might include staffing, resource constraints, data access, timing, management, communications and operational issues, but this is not an exhaustive list. A template has been provided for Potential Providers to use for this purpose (Template 1- Risk assessment tool).
2. **Key Performance Indicators** 
   1. The success of the programme will be measured against the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) throughout the life of the contract and form part of the contractual relationship. These are indicative and the supplier’s progress against these will be measured on a monthly basis. The DfE reserves the right to revise these on an annual basis. Payment by results against KPIs will also be reviewed on an annual basis by the Department.

| **KPI** | **Measurement Period** | **Performance Measure** | **Monitoring method** | **Proportion of annual contract fee** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Recruitment of 1800 additional participating students per Year 7 cohort from 2021-2024. | At the start of each academic year | Number of students per year 7 cohort each year | Measured by Unique Pupil Number (UPN) tracking throughout the entire contract. The Potential Provider would be responsible for establishing UPN numbers and tracking the data year on year. | 2% |
| 1. Retention of 75 schools and their pupils throughout the lifecycle of the programme. | Monthly, reporting by the Potential Provider to DfE on status of all schools. | Number of schools retained on the programme per year | Each pupil is measured by Unique Pupil Number (UPN) tracking. The Potential Provider would be responsible for establishing UPN numbers for each pupil on the programme and tracking the data year on year. We as the Department will hold current tracking UPNs for all those pupils who have participated in the programme. | 2% |
| 1. 90% of participating schools report that they are more confident in delivering a rigorous model for teaching Mandarin. | Annually | Feedback from participating schools | Measured by annual independent evaluation commissioned by the Potential Provider. | 1% |
| 1. 80% of participating schools report that pupils enjoy being part of the programme and learning Mandarin. | Annually | Feedback from pupils and schools on the programme | Measured by annual independent evaluation commissioned by the Potential Provider. | 1% |
| 1. The programme receives positive media coverage to increase awareness of the Mandarin Excellence Programme and encourage take up from schools. | Monthly | 5 pieces of media coverage and one million active followers on social media. | MI reporting on social media and evidence of publication of media coverage. | 0% |
| 1. Compliance with the implementation plan for the delivery of a programme of intensive language study activities (including China). | Monthly | Delivery according to the implementation plan.  The Department will advise by 31st January of each year as to whether China will go ahead in the July of each year. This KPI will be updated with alternative experiences that can provide the same or increased level of intensive learning where travel is not permitted by government guidelines. | Pupil satisfaction as reported in the independent evaluation report | 1% |
| 1. Pupils to have a high level of fluency in Mandarin. | Annually linked to Hurdle tests and/ or other relevant assessments | 80% of pupils achieve a good grade in the following results at annual tests, HSK, GCSE, and A levels | A good grade is to be determined by the suppliers with agreement from the Department. | 1.5% |
| 1. Ensure a means of providing a sufficient supply of qualified Mandarin teachers through appropriate ITT routes (PGCE and Schools Direct). | Annually | Train and supply at least 20 trainee teacher trainees per academic year. | Management reporting evidencing number of teachers | 1% |
| 1. Increase access to learning Mandarin to pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds. | Annually | Fulfil implementation plan based on winning supplier’s solution. The target for this to be agreed prior to contract award, in line with the supplier’s solution.  Improvement of participation of pupils in groups which are considered to be from disadvantaged backgrounds. | Each pupil is measured by Unique Pupil Number (UPN) tracking. The Potential Provider would be responsible for establishing UPN numbers for each pupil on the programme and tracking the data year on year. We as the Department will hold current tracking UPNs for all those pupils who have participated in the programme.  This must also be captured within annual independent evaluation reporting. | 0.5% |
|  |  |  |  | Total: 10% |

1. **Management reporting**
   1. The winning bidder must provide DfE with the following management information (MI). Potential Providers should propose what other MI they will be able to provide as relevant to their assessment solution. DfE reserves the right to add to the MI requirements during the life of the contract.
   2. The winning bidder must hold, and permit DfE open access to, detail relating to all activities undertaken in delivering the contract. Contractors must comply with any reasonable requests for information from DfE.
   3. The Department also requests Open Booking Accounting be made available by the winning bidder.

| **Management Information** | **Frequency** | **Unit** | **Duration** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **DEVELOPMENT** | | | |
| 1. project status report; risk and issues report with mitigations | monthly and SRO quarterly | progress against project plan | for duration of development (if needed) |
| **DELIVERY** | | | |
| 2. project status report; risk and issues report | monthly | progress against project plan | for duration of delivery |
| 3. report on delivery against KPIs | monthly and SRO quarterly | progress against project plan | for duration of delivery |
| 4. report on trained PGCE teachers | annually | details of where PGCE students are placed | for duration of delivery |
| 5. an independent programme evaluation | annually and end of programme. |  | for duration of delivery |
| 6. financial report including details of grant awards | quarterly | progress against project plan | for duration of delivery |

1. **Exit Management**
   1. Within 3 months of contract award, the winning bidder will provide and maintain a detailed, fully resourced and costed exit and transition plan to ensure a smooth transition at the expiry or termination of the contract. The winning bidder will provide a detailed statement in the exit and transition plan of all its requirements for the support it requires from DfE to ensure a smooth transition at the expiry or termination of the contract.
   2. The winning bidder must provide, and maintain, a list and a succession plan of all assets, for example materials software, data, people, contracts and other agreements planned to be used in the delivery of the contract. The winning bidder must identify assets that it anticipates will be transferred to DfE on expiry or termination of the contract. The winning bidder must also document the arrangements for and handing over such materials to DfE.
2. **Data Protection**
   1. The Department reserves the right to make modifications to the terms and conditions in Annex 1 at contract signature stage to address the increased responsibilities on data processors imposed by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Bill.
   2. The winning bidder will be the data processor of any personal data relating to pupils or school staff and will act in accordance with the instructions of the DfE (being the data controller) in respect of such personal data.
3. **Arrangements if the one year extension is agreed**
   1. The Department may exercise its right to extend the contract for one further academic year until 31 August 2025 subject to funding availability and contract performance. An extension year will be permitted solely at the Department’s discretion. The Department will notify the contractor of its intention with at least 3 months’ notice.
   2. The extension year should be costed in advance as part of this bid process and should the extension be required by the Department, the costs for this extension will not exceed those listed in the costing schedule supplied by the winning bidder.

**SECTION F**

1. **Independent evaluation** 
   1. The bid should detail your plans for an independent evaluation of the programme. It should set out the scope and focus of the evaluation and indicate which organisation (or type of organisation) will conduct the evaluation and how impartiality will be guaranteed. The Department must be invited to be involved in the selection of any independent evaluator and reserves the right to seek further clarification from Potential Providers as to how impartiality has been guaranteed. The Department reserves the right to request that an alternative independent evaluator is selected, should there be any concerns about their impartiality.

**SECTION G**

1. **Social Value: Removing barriers & providing equal opportunities**
   1. The bid should detail how you propose to remove barriers for schools who are not already teaching Mandarin. Proposals should demonstrate how the Potential Providers will achieve the following:
      1. include a plan to review why schools have stopped teaching Mandarin and what would remove those particular barriers;
      2. identify and overcome barriers which prevent schools from teaching Mandarin successfully;
      3. working with schools and offering support to remove as many barriers as possible;
      4. an innovative proposal to support disadvantaged students, where possible at no or little cost to the Department; and
      5. reflect the recommendations as appropriate, from the evaluation of the existing programme (Annex 3)
      6. The Department is committed to ensuring that no pupil should be prevented from taking part in a trip to China due to finances. Suppliers must allocate a minimum of £50,000 per year from within the total contract value to fund pupils who would otherwise not be able to travel due to finances. The Department will work with the successful contractor within the first year of the contract to agree the criteria for allocating funds to pupils.
2. **Costs and value for money**
   1. The Department expects to award a contract to run for three years, commencing 1 September 2021 and ending 31 August 2024, with the option to extend until 31 August 2025. The proposed budget for the programme will be a maximum of £16.4 million (ex VAT) for four years but will be subject to Spending Review outcomes. A minimum of 80% of the budget over the life of the contract (full 4 years) has been allocated as grant funding to support schools to participate with the programme. This includes grant funding of up to £3.3 million per year which will be allocated directly to schools. The £3.3 million consists of fixed grant payments to schools of £1.5m per year (£20,000 per school) and £1.8m of grant funding per year to be allocated based on a formula to be designed by the potential provider, in agreement with the Department.
   2. Due to Government spending restrictions, the Department is required to seek funding approvals from Treasury for proposed years 2 and 3 of the programme, as well as any potential extension year. Whilst this prevents us from having full approval for onward spend beyond Year 1, it is our intention to seek this approval during year 1 of the contract. Any awarded contract would need to take this into account.
   3. Subject to such approvals, the contract will run from 1st September 2021 until 31st August 2024, with the prospect of an extension until 31st August 2025.
   4. Cost schedules submitted by Potential Providers as part of the bid should therefore provide costs for all years, including a potential extension year. Please state clearly when submitting prices whether or not VAT will be charged.
   5. Funding is exclusive of VAT, and the Department reserves the right to exclude bids that exceed £16,400,00 (net of VAT) The Department will evaluate bids based on their costings exclusive of VAT, however potential providers must make clear where VAT will be charged and where this is recoverable.
   6. Where the contract price agreed between the Department and winning bidder is inclusive of any VAT, further amounts will not be paid by the Department should a vatable supply claim be made at any later stage. We would expect monthly reporting against spending. No additional costs will be charged to the Department unless agreed with the contract manager prior to expenditure. Payments of costs to the Potential Provider will be made quarterly by BACS transfer following receipt of a valid invoice.
   7. Where the overall contract price is exclusive of VAT, the Department will pay any VAT incurred at the prevailing rate (currently 20%). If the VAT rate changes the Department will pay any VAT incurred at the new rate.
   8. It is the responsibility of Potential Providers to check the VAT position with HMRC before submitting a bid.
   9. Potential Providers will need to demonstrate that proposed costs are based on efficient models of delivery and provide good value for public money. You must ensure that all estimated costs are real, auditable and can be justified. Be sure you separately identify and include all expenditure that you expect to incur in relation to proposed activities, i.e. costs associated with overheads e.g. premises/facilities/licences and staffing, e.g. management, delivery and administration.
   10. As explained earlier, there are restrictions on all paid for communications and marketing activities funded by the Department. You should set out any planned expenditure on these activities with supporting information on the nature of the planned activities up to £100k for the life of the contract. If your bid is accepted, a full business case and communications plan will need to be submitted and approved by Cabinet Office procedures to release this element of the funding. Potential Providers should be aware that costed activities may not receive approval from Cabinet Office procedures.
   11. Potential Providers must include costs of trips to China for pupils. It is not expected that every participating pupil will be able to go on a trip but we are looking to eliminate barriers that might prevent pupils from going if they wish. It may also only be appropriate to send pupils to China once they have learned enough Mandarin for the trip to be most effective. Schools will be expected to contribute to costs associated with pupil participation in the China trip eg fund raising, sponsorship. parental contribution.
   12. As part of your costings, please also include costs for an intensive experience that does not involve travel to China, in case government restrictions around Covid 19 impact foreign travel.
3. **Payment by results (PBR)**
   1. To support the Department’s intention to ensure that the tax payer’s money is being spent effectively and efficiently, we are using a Payment By Results mechanism for this contract. We have set a minimum requirement that at least 10% of the contract value (not including payments to schools) will be subject to payment by results. Potential Providers who recommend a higher proportion will attract greater marks at evaluation and we would expect bidders to increase this value on an annual basis.
   2. The Department will be looking for funding formulas that represent the best value for money for the Department and enable a sustainable operating model. It will be the contractor’s responsibility to ensure that this is affordable for the duration of the contract. We reserve the right to discuss and agree the final breakdown and application of the costing model, based on the accepted elements of your tender proposal, as part of formalising the contract with the preferred bidder.
   3. The Payment by Results mechanism will be subject to annual review and will be discussed at all contract management meetings. Payment will be dependent on successful performance against the KPIs that have been set out for this programme. The Department reserves the right to review and amend both the payment by results mechanism and KPIs on an annual basis. Please note that the Department will be looking for funding formulas that represent the best value for money for the Department and enable a sustainable operating model. The Department is able to stipulate proportionate payment by results on the accepted proposal.
4. **Costs and value for money**
   1. Potential Providers should detail a complete breakdown of all costs by academic years – 21/22, 22/23, 23/24 and 25/25 including payments to schools, clear costs for all overheads and what VAT will be charged. You must state in percentage terms what element of your overall bid cost will be subject to payment by results.
   2. Using the cost schedules provided **(**Attachment 2a- Mandarin Excellence Programme Pricing Schedule (with China) and Attachment 2a- Mandarin Excellence Programme Pricing Schedule (without China)

Potential Providers should demonstrate how they will ensure value for money when delivering the programme. Potential Providers should clearly state what are fixed costs (including payment to schools) which will be payable by the Department and what costs will be subject to performance by results, with the associated target/payment trigger. Please note that for each year of the programme targets and associated payment by results may differ.

Due to current restrictions on travel guidelines, we have asked that Potential Providers provide two cost schedules so that costs for a delivery model that includes China can be clearly separated from an alternative delivery proposal where travel to China is not permitted, according to government advice on Covid. For example, should travel restrictions continue and travel to China is not permitted according to government advice.

Both cost schedules and a separate statement on your payment by results mechanism are, together, weighted at 25% of the overall evaluation score. The Department considers the opportunity to travel to China to be a key aspect of the Mandarin Excellence Programme and therefore where travel is permitted, would promote the opportunity for China to continue to be offered to pupils. Therefore the cost schedule involving China costs has a sub criteria weighting of 70%, with the cost schedule for the intensive learning experience being weighted at 30%.

**SECTION H**

1. **Previous experience- Track record**
   1. As part of Document 5- Declarations and Information Required from Tenderers, Potential Providers should detail all relevant previous experience requested and include information that the department can use to verify this where necessary.

1. An SME must be autonomous, an EU Company not owned or controlled by a non EU parent, and employ less than 250 staff and have sales below €50million (see: <http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/sme/files/sme_definition/sme_report_2009_en.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)