

Invitation to Tender – Digital Tools for Access to Finance

Appendix 1 – Software Specification

1 Promotion and payment

- Course Catalogue. Landing pages for each collection of courses and each individual course. Standardised format with flexible design (colours, images, branding). The content of each page can be a mix of content that is specific to the collection / course and content that is shared across collection/courses.
- Course Trailers. Video-based trailers hosted on each course page that provide an introduction to the course and the learning experience.
- Search and Merchandising. The ability for prospective students to search for and find courses, and the ability to promote courses to prospective students.
- Basket & Checkout. Support for credit card and PayPal payments, as well as gifting and promotional codes.

2 Classroom Allocator

- Define classroom size on a course by course basis. The ability to group together students into cohorts of any size. Cohorts should be able to take a course in parallel.
- Allocate students to classroom based on data, with manual override. The ability to decide which cohort an individual student should be allocated to based on a configurable set of parameters. These could be based on any data that is known about the student (e.g. location, sector, primary language) or data that can be derived from the platform (e.g. course start date). Automatic classroom allocation should be able to be overridden where required.

3 Classroom

- Classroom access rules. The ability to configure the length of time for which students have access to a course, whether a student is able to interact with the tutor and, if so, over what period.
- Lessons. The ability to have courses that comprise any number of lessons. Each lesson includes a description, video content, supporting notes and an assignment.
- Videos. High quality and engaging video-based lessons that can be played on any device with a browser. Videos can be watched on demand, at a time and place of each student's choosing and optimised to the user's device and available bandwidth.
- eBooks and supporting notes. Downloadable notes, workbooks, etc. to accompany each lesson.
- Assignments. Tasks to be undertaken by participants at the end of each lesson to reinforce and/or apply the knowledge and skills taught during that lesson. Assignment submissions to be text, file attachments, photos, audio files, videos or a combination. Assignments can be mandatory (must be completed prior to taking the following lesson) or optional. The time given to complete each assignment should be customisable

- Shared class timeline and discussion board. A shared timeline for each classroom which summarises the behaviour of each cohort in the classroom, so that fellow students can easily catch up with, follow and join in with activity that takes place while they are not online. This is a key element to enable both live real-time synchronous learning as well as asynchronous learning that is every bit as collaborative.
- Chat and direct messaging. A multimedia chat capability allowing both participants and tutors to chat with the entire group and to send private messages directly to each other.
- File sharing. The ability for participants to share files in a range of formats (including video and audio) with others in the classroom.

3 Management and reporting

- Retail management. Tools to manage the Course Catalogue, pricing and merchandising.
- Student management. The ability to create new student accounts, manage existing accounts, etc.
- Tutor and admin management. The ability to create new tutor accounts, allocate tutors to courses, give or remove permissions, etc.
- Curriculum development. Tools to support course development including review and approval of course content.
- Classroom moderation. Tools to enable moderation of classroom discussions, both to promote interactivity and debate and for trouble shooting. Ability to assign moderators to individual courses or across a number of courses.
- Content management. Tools to manage the library of learning resources.
- Classroom analytics. Analytics to provide insight into behaviours of both students and tutors within the classroom.
- Course analytics. Analytics to provide insight into course progress and completion.

4 Theming and customisation

- Ability to customise the appearance of the platform as required. Includes visual design (branding, colour scheme, fonts, imagery); standard content (header, footer, terms and conditions, classroom messages, etc.); and communications (email templates, etc.)
- Dedicated data store. Segregated storage of all data associated with each customer, with ability to limit geographical distribution if required.
- Feature customisation. Ability to tailor features to meet specific customer needs as required, whilst maintain the common core application and infrastructure.

5 Support

- Managed learner support, provided by the platform provider and accessible via chat functionality on the platform or via email. Initial response must be less than 24 hours but please state your SLA commitment in your response
- Tailored onboarding journey, designed to fit with the specific requirements of each customer.
- Knowledge base to help resolve common learner queries without the need for customer support intervention.

6 Tutor dashboard

- To do list that provides a prioritised list of actions that the tutor needs to take to mark assignments, respond to questions from learners, etc.
- Cohort progress overview. Graphical summary of the progress being made by each learner in every cohort for which a tutor is responsible, allowing tutors to target interventions for both cohorts and individual students.
- Assignment marking. Ability to quickly review and provide feedback on assignment submissions.
- One to one student chat, allowing tutors to engage individually with learners.

7 Production

- Curriculum and course design. Adapting existing curricula / courses for the online environment and/or to design new materials.
- Lesson production. Production planning, filming and editing of broadcast-quality educational video content.
- Supporting materials production. Design and creation of eBooks and supporting notes.
- Promotional materials production. Production of both video- and photo-based content for use in promotional campaigns.