**THE DELIVERY FOR THE ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION SYSTEM FOR CHILD AND FAMILY SOCIAL WORKERS**

**Department for Education**

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**Additional Information available from:**

Public consultation - <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/social-work-national-assessment-and-accreditation-system>

Knowledge and skills statements for child and family social work- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knowledge-and-skills-statements-for-child-and-family-social-work>

Report for social work assessment and accreditation system proof of concept - <https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/609172/Report_for_social_work_assessment_and_accreditation_system_proof_of_concept_proof_of.pdf>

**Main address:** https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education

**Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted to:** An electronic copy of your tender must be received by email to NAAS.DELIVERYTENDER@education.gov.uk no later than 5 pm on the 13 October 2017. Late tenders will not be considered.

**Description**

The contract will seek contractor(s) to set up an operational system for the assessment and accreditation of child and family social workers in England. They will need to create a clear framework and delivery structure to ensure assessment rollout for approximately 1,200–2,300 social workers between Jan 2018 - Jan 2020. A range of elements will need to be delivered including, but not limited to:

Assessment centres within the local areas

Recruitment and training of assessors and observers

Recruitment and training of actors for simulated observation

Preparing and expanding a pre-existing digital platform to be ready for roll out.

Design and implement a system for result feedback to employers and individuals including a database for securely storing results

Design and implementation of a system for dealing with retakes, concerns, queries and appeals

Work alongside an independent researcher partner and the DfE to understand and action change requirements where required over the contract period.

The focus of the National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) is to increase emphasis on practice and workforce development within local authorities, with assessment and accreditation as a benchmark of that practice.

The Department developed a rigorous system based on the Knowledge and Skills Statements (KSS) to test social workers in order to gain accreditation as frontline child and family practitioners and practice supervisors. This assessment process was tested with 954 social workers between December 2015 and February 2016 through the ‘Proof of Concept Phase.’

The analysis of the assessment with the social workers confirmed that we have a robust four-stage assessment system that can be rolled out nationally. NAAS will include four stages of assessment:

• Stage 1: direct practice observation by the employer - in the workplace over a period of time leading to the practice endorsement;

• Stage 2: an assessment of knowledge;

• Stage 3: an observed interactive practice simulation in a controlled environment with independent examiners;

• Stage 4: a written assessment linked to the simulated observation but assessed separately to the observation sessions.

The Department has revisited plans in light of the public consultation that ended in March this year, and has decided to operate an Alpha and Beta-style approach before progressing with a full national rollout. This phased approach will be supported by in-depth analysis and evaluation.

The assessments that take place in Alpha and Beta will need to be indisputable, high quality assessments, and while we wish to look at some delivery questions in this phase it is not a pilot or a trial run. The Delivery Partner will be delivering the beginning of what will become national roll out.

We intend to begin with a small-scale ‘Alpha’ phase with around six local authorities, already chosen from volunteer local authorities, in order to answer key delivery and workforce impact questions. Within this phase, we expect to assess around 550 social workers.

Subject to successful completion of the Alpha phase, a subsequent ‘Beta’ phase with approximately 12 -15 local authorities is then planned with the assessment of a minimum of 900 social workers. We will also be looking at the potential of extending a test centre in the Alpha location to continue assessments with the remaining Alpha workforce during the Beta phase.

Therefore, we envisage a total of between 1,200 – 2,300 social workers assessed in the contract period

The contract will be complex and will need to include a combination of technical and logistical expertise as well as experts with a social work background. It will be an iterative process and will require strong partnership links between the DfE, the local authorities, a Research Partner and the Delivery Partner. Therefore we are would expect any delivery partner to work within an Agile context for delivery. The successful delivery of Alpha/Beta will require the completion of a range of milestones.

We understand that it may not be possible for one contractor to provide all of the requirements in this contract, due to the complexities of the planned activities, and we welcome bids from consortiums as well as individual organisation bids.

**Estimated total value:** The award for this contract is up to £3.5 million (Inc. VAT). The total award amount will be reliant on final throughput of expected social worker numbers.

To procure a contractor to meet agreed milestones within a contracted period. We will be using Agile contracting approaches within this contract.

**Duration of the contract:**

We expect the delivery contract to begin in January 2018 and run until January 2020. However, we will allow, through the agile contracting process, additional contract length to be available to complete all the expected milestones if required.

**Information about a particular profession:**

Social workers work with individuals and families to help improve outcomes in their lives. Social workers have to operate within legal frameworks for protecting and supporting vulnerable people. They can work in a variety of organisations. Many work for local authorities in departments that provide services for children or adults.

To be a practicing social worker they must have a social work degree (either an undergraduate or a postgraduate qualification in social work) and they must be registered with the Health and Care Professions Council

The social work profession has c.35,000 registered child and family social workers in England

**Form of procedure:** This will be an open competitive tender exercise.

**Main features of the award procedure**:

Selection criteria as stated in the procurement documents

Organisations will be considered for award if they score above the required threshold at the selection stage.

**Previous publications concerning this procedure**

Prior information notice - <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/Notice/0754181f-1ac5-4efd-a58d-0a88cc1ac613?p=@T0=NjJNT08=UFQxUlRRP>

**Time limit for receipt of tenders**

**Date:** 13 October 2017

**Local time:** 17:00

**Additional information:**

A copy of the tender document can be obtained by formally emailing a request to NAAS.DELIVERYTENDER@education.gov.uk