

# Expression of interest

# Title: Basic Digital Skills – Standards development

**Project reference: DFERPPU 2018/005**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: 5pm, Monday 12th February 2018**

## Summary

Expressions of interest are sought from contractors to research and develop basic digital skills standards across entry levels 1, 2, 3 and levels 1 and 2. This will form part of the wider delivery of the basic digital skills entitlement which will be introduced from 2020.

## Background

The Digital Economy Act 2017 made primary legislation for a statutory entitlement for adults aged 19 and over to access fully funded training for specified qualifications in basic digital skills as part of their adult education offer. This will mirror the current approach for literacy and numeracy.

Current ICT standards provide a framework across five skills levels – entry levels 1, 2, 3 and levels 1 and 2. These standards are in place to ensure that every learner has the opportunity to develop their skills to a level appropriate to their abilities.

However, existing basic digital skills qualifications, funded through the Adult Education Budget, are based on standards, in some cases, dating from 2005/6 (Skills for Life), 2009 (National Occupation Standards) or 2011 (Functional Skills), and need to be updated. The [Review of publicly funded digital skills qualifications](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/499031/Review_of_Publicly_Funded_Digital_Skills_Qualifications_2016_FINAL.pdf) set out the issues with the current suite of qualifications and called for the setting of clear standards.

## Research aims

The aim of the project is to research and develop a set of basic digital skills standards across entry levels 1, 2, 3 and levels 1 and 2.

* These basic digital skills standards should build upon existing national standards.
* The standards will use the [‘Get Digital’ basic skills framework](https://www.thetechpartnership.com/globalassets/pdfs/basic-digital-skills-standards/basic_digital_skills_framework.pdf) as the basis for development. The Tech Partnership in conjunction with Lloyds Bank are currently updating this framework.
* The skills standards will need strong employer and sector buy-in, including digital stakeholders and learner representatives, and will be subject to consultation.
* It is intended that the updated basic digital skills standards would be adopted as national standards. Once the new standards are in place, Government will ask awarding organisations to update their qualifications to reflect them.

## Methodology

In order to identify thebasic digital skills requirements needed to operate effectively in day-to-day life and in the majority of jobs, the methodology should include:

* Desk research to work through the literature and assess the specific skills to sit within the high level framework, setting out which skills sit at entry levels 1, 2, 3, and levels 1 and 2.
* Online surveys to gather expert opinion.
* Telephone interviews (20-30 stakeholders including providers, sector experts, employers, charities and organisations).
* Workshops (2 – 4 events across England), 2 – 3 webinars, social media discussions and subsequent analysis.

We require applicants to set out a methodology that will ensure balanced engagement with a wide range of stakeholders including employers, practitioners, subject specialists and digital inclusion charities and organisations.

We encourage applicants to suggest any alternative or additional methods which they believe will contribute to successfully delivering the required project outputs, such as reflecting on basic digital skills standards in other countries.

## Timing

The deadline for EOIs is 5pm on Monday 12 February 2018.

Proposed timescales are as follows:

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| w/c 19 Feb | Issue ITT |
| 12 March | Deadline for responses |
| 13 – 16 March | Interviews (if required) |
| w/c 19 March | Contractor in place |
| April to end of Aug | Contractor engages stakeholders and develops standards |
| w/c 10 September | Contractor submits draft standards to DfE (from EL1 – L2) |
| Oct – Dec | DfE leads on consultation on draft standards |
| Jan – end Feb 19 | Contractor works with DfE to finalise standards |

## Assessment criteria

Contractors will be assessed against the following assessment criteria, and if successful will receive a further invitation to tender:

* + Suitability to carry out work e.g. skills and experience 35%
	+ Ability to engage a range of stakeholders quickly and effectively 30%
	+ Experience of designing or working on educational standards development, preferably in post-16 education 35%

| **Closing date for EOIs: 5pm on Monday 12 February 2018.****Send your EOI form to: Elizabeth.Perry@education.gov.uk** |
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## How to submit an expression of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the NEW EOI Form which can be found under attachments. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

All contracts are let on the basis of the [Department’s Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eoi-guide). You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.

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