



Litigation Authority

Invitation to Tender (ITT) Form

Part 1

**Provision of a Quality Assurance Service for
Behavioural Assessments on behalf of the
National Clinical Assessment Service**

Tender Number NHSLA/ITT04_16

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Introduction

The NHS Litigation Authority (NHS LA) is a not-for-profit organisation working for healthcare providers to resolve claims fairly and to share learning across the NHS and beyond. The National Clinical Assessment Service (NCAS) was set up in 2001 and became an operating division of the NHS LA in April 2013.

NCAS is an advisory service which calls on a large resource of expertise and works across the country providing specialist advice, assessment and other interventions to help health and social care organisations identify, manage and resolve concerns about the practice of individual dentists, doctors and pharmacists. We support Responsible Officers and their designated bodies in meeting their statutory duties for responding to concerns and in turn help to improve the safety of patients. We provide expert confidential advice, workplace-based performance assessments, remediation services and education to the NHS and other healthcare partners.

For further information about our services, including the assessment process, please visit our website: <http://www.ncas.nhs.uk/>

Purpose of Contract

NCAS provides a confidential service to the health and social care service resolving concerns about the performance of practitioners. Our aim is to work with all parties to clarify the concerns, understand what may be leading to them, and to develop and deliver effective interventions to help healthcare providers ensure practitioners continue to deliver a high-quality and safe service for patients. A proportion of the cases referred to NCAS require performance assessments or other interventions.

This contract will support NCAS to quality assure behavioural assessment reports produced by our contracted behavioural assessors. It will also provide assurance that NCAS' approach to behavioural assessments is fit for purpose, that it represents current best practice and assist NCAS to explore areas for further development.

The requirements specification for the quality assurance of behavioural assessments service can be found at Part 1 in the Appendices.

Contract Period

The contract period will be from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017, with an option to extend the contract for a further term of 12 months.

Response Deadline

It is requested that information is received electronically by 17:00 on 3 February 2016. Proposals should be submitted to contract.queries@nhsla.com.

Proposals received after this date and time will not be considered.

Following receipt of proposals, the NHS LA will send a confirmation of receipt to the supplier by email.

Response Content

The intent of this ITT is to establish a common basis for evaluating proposals. For that purpose, it is important that the tenderers give written answers to the questions in this document.

Suppliers are invited to include the following within their proposal:

- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Provide a clear indication of their understanding of NCAS' requirements
- The approach to meet deliverables, including the methodology and criteria to assess quality assurance. Any assumptions, dependencies, issues, risks and constraints should also be detailed.
- The proposed engagement with NHS LA in the lead up to and during the delivery of the service

- The proposed approach to quality assurance and a demonstration of up to date expertise and knowledge of the latest research in this field
- The proposed approach to ensure equality and diversity issues are appropriately considered
- Provide details of any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest that may be relevant to the award of this contract and outline in detail (if appropriate) the safeguards that would be put in place to mitigate this risk
- Information to demonstrate financial stability, which should include details as to what percentage of your organisation's current turnover this bid would constitute, based on your most recent financial statements. Please also include copies of your last three years financial statements or statements for each year of trading if less than three years (for the relevant company looking to contract with the NHS LA, not the entire group) and also a copy of your current certificates of insurance for public liability and professional indemnity as appropriate
- The proposed cost of the service in terms of a daily and an hourly rate. The budget is dependent upon the precise product service delivered, but as a guide, NCAS would expect to compensate suppliers for this service between £500 and £1,200 per day and that it is likely that a maximum of 12 days per annum will be required.

Reasonable travel expenses incurred by suppliers when delivering contracted services shall be reimbursed in accordance with the NHS LA Expenses policy (see Part 3).

In addition to the above, potential suppliers are asked to complete the following forms:

1. Invitation to Tender Application Form (see Part 2)
2. Information Security Measures (see Part 2)

Responses must be detailed and complete and should be submitted in electronic copy only (in Microsoft Word or in PDF format).

Timetable

The timetable for this tender is set out below. NCAS reserves the right to alter stages and dates as appropriate.

DATE AND TIME (IF RELEVANT)	Stage
12 January	Publication of ITT
14 January	Clarification period starts (Questions Relating to the Invitation to Tender)
27 January	Clarification period ends
3 rd February	ITT closing date
4 rd February to 11 th February	Evaluation of ITT's followed by clarification of bids (if required)
16 th February	Selected suppliers to present proposals at NCAS' London office
22 nd February	Contract award
24 th February	Contract signing
2 nd March to 3 rd March	Induction, briefings and training if required
1 st April	Service to commence

General Points for Interested Parties

By responding, the tenderer understands and agrees:

- That they fully bear all costs for preparation of the response, and that the NHS LA will not be liable for any associated costs;
- That there is no contract or obligation, implied or otherwise, between the NHS LA and the tenderer;
- That the NHS LA may choose not to evaluate any response submitted after the response submission deadline;
- The NHS LA will not disclose to any supplier information relating to other responses received.

Right to Cancel or Vary the Procurement

The NHS LA reserves the right:

- to amend, clarify, add to or withdraw all or any part of the Invitation to Tender at any time during the procurement;
- to vary any timetable or deadlines set out in the Invitation to Tender;

- not to conclude a contract for some or all of the goods and/or services (as applicable) for which Tenders are invited; and
- cancel all or part of the Procurement at any stage at any time.

The Potential Provider accepts and acknowledges that by issuing the Invitation to Tender, the Crown Commercial Service is not bound to accept a Tender or obliged to conclude a contract with the Potential Provider at all.

The Potential Provider accepts and acknowledges that they are responsible for any and all costs incurred in their participation in this Invitation to Tender, regardless of whether a contract award is made.

Shortlist Criteria/Contract Award

The NHS LA will take into account the following major factors when deciding whether to award the contract:

- The supplier provides a solid understanding of the context of the quality assurance service required for behavioural assessments and the specific requirements of the proposed work. The supplier demonstrates an appropriate approach to service development and quality assurance.
 - Written submission articulates clear understanding of context and interpretation of NCAS' service requirements
 - Demonstration of appropriate service development and quality assurance processes
- Suitable qualifications of proposed personnel and their demonstrable success in publications, and provision of similar services.
 - Suitable qualifications and a track record of publication on the subject of occupational psychology in peer reviewed journals
 - Experience of developing systems and programmes to quality assure behavioural assessments or services
 - Testimonial evidence of success in delivering similar services
- Evaluation of the resources and costs involved in each tender and ability to meet the specified service levels.
 - Costs
 - Proposal shows sufficient planning and resources to deliver an efficient and effective service, including willingness to work with NCAS
- Meets the requirements of the NHS LA in relation to Information Security and provides evidence of appropriate organisational standards of information governance.
- Demonstrates up to date expertise and knowledge of the latest research in the field.

Suppliers should familiarise themselves with the detailed contract award criteria as outlined at Part 1 Appendices.

Questions relating to the Invitation to Tender

Suppliers may submit emailed questions only to the NHS LA related to this Invitation to Tender and the NHS LA will respond via email. All queries should be submitted to contract.queries@nhsla.com as soon as possible and **no later than 5 working days** before the deadline for tender submissions.

On no account should suppliers discuss the content of this ITT or your proposal with any other member of NHS LA staff or representative or any third party without the prior consent of the above contacts.

Standard Terms & Conditions

Please refer to Part 3 for the NHS LA conditions of contract for the supply of services.

Part 1 Appendices

**Requirements Specification for Quality Assurance
Service of NCAS Behavioural Assessments**

and

Shortlist Criteria

Requirements Specification for Quality Assurance Service of NCAS Behavioural Assessments

1. Background information

NCAS currently utilises behavioural assessment services in two assessment interventions:

- As a component of the full performance assessment
- As a standalone assessment.

We assess a practitioner's fitness for purpose rather than the Regulatory fitness to practise.

Full performance assessment

In an NCAS full performance assessment, findings from an occupational health and a behavioural assessment are considered alongside findings from workplace-based clinical assessments. Thereafter NCAS produces a report which cites evidence of satisfactory and poor practice, presenting conclusions based on the triangulation of evidence from across all three components of the assessment. This is subsequently shared with the practitioner and the referring organisation.

Behavioural assessments are normally carried out prior to the clinical assessment but after an occupational health assessment. The behavioural assessment aims to:

- identify underlying behavioural traits that may affect a practitioner's performance
- consider the extent to which concerns about performance might be explained by personality or behaviour
- provide a view about the implications of the findings for remediation, and
- indicate approaches to address any behavioural factors identified.

A standalone assessment of behavioural concerns

Behavioural assessments may also be carried out as a standalone intervention where concerns about the practitioner appear solely related to the conduct or behaviour of the practitioner. The assessment of behavioural concerns aims to:

- provide an independent view on any behavioural factors about the practitioner which are causing concern
- identify other factors that may be contributing to these concerns

The assessment is not intended to identify or clarify concerns about the practitioner's clinical practice nor other areas falling outside the scope of this assessment, for example team functioning or organisational issues.

2. Quality Assurance of Behavioural Assessments - Service Requirements

NCAS is looking to work with an independent expert to quality assure reports produced by NCAS' behavioural assessors. As part of the quality assurance review, the expert would be expected to review a sample of reports and the psychometric interpretation undertaken by behavioural assessors as part of the behavioural assessment. The reports should be reviewed for accuracy, relevance, style and overall fitness for purpose. The expert may also be required to observe behavioural assessors undertaking a behavioural assessment interview (interviews usually take between five and six hours to complete and are normally held at NCAS offices in London). Following the quality

assurance review, NCAS would expect to receive a written report of the review within ten working days. The expert will also provide individual written feedback to all behavioural assessors within ten working days of the review and provide NCAS a copy of the same. The expert should inform NCAS immediately if they are aware of any potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest in relation to any of the behavioural assessors that they will be working with.

NCAS would expect the quality assurance expert to provide assurance and evidence that NCAS' approach to behavioural assessments is fit for purpose, represents current best practice, is valid, reliable and evidence-based. The quality assurance expert should discuss and explore areas for development; this includes the psychometric questionnaires that are used in the NCAS behavioural assessment framework.

The expert will also be required to attend, contribute and support the NCAS Lead Assessment & Intervention Adviser at Quality Assurance and Development meetings, which are usually held at NCAS' offices in London.

3. The process for Behavioural Assessments

NCAS behavioural assessments currently require the practitioner undergoing the assessment to complete (and the behavioural assessors to administer, analyse and interpret) the following psychometric questionnaires:

- Revised NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PIR)
- Hogan Development Survey (HDS).

NCAS may replace and or introduce other psychometric questionnaires if it is agreed that they provide further evidence of factors which may be contributing to behaviours that impact performance.

NCAS would expect the quality assurance expert to demonstrate and share with NCAS their up to date expertise and knowledge of the latest research in relation to psychometric testing to ensure that NCAS continues to utilise the most relevant tools available.

The behavioural assessors will, as part of their assessment of the practitioner, undertake an in-depth interview, ask appropriate questions and provide appropriate feedback to enable reflection as part of the assessment. The interview will normally take place at NCAS offices in London.

The in-depth interview, which normally last approximately five or six hours, will explore aspects of the practitioner's performance and behaviour at work. It will typically cover the following areas:

- Empathy and sensitivity
- Communication and influencing
- Personal organisation and administrative skills
- Coping with pressure
- Leading and managing others
- Team working
- Openness, learning and self-awareness
- Decision-making
- Organisational engagement.

NCAS behavioural assessors also give oral feedback on the outcome of the psychometric questionnaires and interview, to provide to the practitioner:

- Personal awareness
- Identification of strength to build on
- Identification of development needs
- Identification of learning style and developmental preferences to aid action planning following the assessment (where appropriate)
- Comments on likely personal motivational factors which may contribute to remediability (where appropriate).

As previously stated, NCAS may require the quality assurance expert to observe this component of the assessment as part of their quality assurance service.

On occasion, NCAS may require service providers to support other activities associated with the delivery of behavioural assessments.

4. Key Performance Indicators

The following table is a summary of some high level key performance indicators which service providers will want to consider as part of this service they wish to provide to NCAS:

High level key performance indicators*	
Quality assurance reports are delivered in a format and style agreed with NCAS	All quality assurance reports
Provide, by secure email, quality assurance reports	Ten working days after the review date
Provide individual written feedback to all behavioural assessors and NCAS following each quality assurance review	Ten working days after each review
Quality assurance reports and written feedback to reflect up to date expertise and knowledge of the latest research in the field	All quality assurance reports and feedback
Attend and contribute at Quality Assurance and Development meetings	All quality assurance meetings
Provide evidence that NCAS' approach to behavioural assessments is fit for purpose, represents current best practice, is valid, reliable and evidence based. Explore areas for development with NCAS.	On going

* Other performance indicators may be agreed prior to the commencement of contract

5. Activity Levels

NCAS expects that there will be a requirement to complete two formal quality assurance reviews each year. NCAS would anticipate that each review will require between three and four days resource. This excludes any time that may be required to observe NCAS behavioural assessors undertaking interviews with practitioners.

Between one and two Quality Assurance and Development meetings will take place each year and these are likely to require attendance at NCAS' London office for one half day each. This excludes reading time or time required to prepare for the meeting.

The contract for this service will be funded on a call down basis.

6. Attributes of a Quality Assurance Expert for Behavioural Assessments

NCAS would expect the service provider to have the following attributes:

- considerable experience and expertise in the practice of occupational psychology
- a qualification as a Chartered Psychologist, or equivalent
- experience of developing systems and programmes to quality assure behavioural assessments or services
- up to date expertise and knowledge of the latest research in the field
- experience of quality assuring behavioural assessments
- a track record of publication on the subject of occupational psychology in peer reviewed journals
- the ability to work closely and flexibly with NCAS staff and other NCAS contractors, particularly behavioural assessors
- excellent listening skills, analytical skills, objectivity and empathy
- understanding of relevant equality and diversity issues
- excellent report writing and record keeping skills
- willingness to liaise, in a timely manner, with a range of clinical, non-clinical staff and stakeholders
- experience in the field of professional performance, and be able to demonstrate an understanding of performance assessment of doctors, dentists and pharmacists.

7. Information Security

NCAS requires the service provider to obtain informed consent from NCAS if they wish to use any data which may have been obtained as a result of the service provided to NCAS (or the results of any analysis of the same) for any purpose. Where consent has been given, all data must remain anonymised and NCAS would expect that the data source will be attributed appropriately. Additionally, suppliers should also reference NCAS when discussing their experience in this field, if the experience has been drawn from the service provided to NCAS.

The service provider shall utilise NHS mail when sending and receiving information regarding any NCAS work undertaken in order to transfer data securely. Where the use of NHS mail is not possible, the contractor shall ensure compliance with the contract Terms and Conditions by selecting a secure alternative method of transfer agreed with NCAS.

NCAS data held by the contractor may only be copied to encrypted portable devices i.e. USB sticks and laptop computers.

Please see Part 3 for the NHS LA conditions of contract for the supply of services.

Shortlist Criteria

Criteria	Weighting	Total Weighting
<p>1. The supplier provides a solid understanding of the context of the quality assurance service required for behavioural assessments and the specific requirements of the proposed work. The supplier demonstrates an appropriate approach to service development and quality assurance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written submission articulates clear understanding of context and interpretation of NCAS' service requirements Demonstration of appropriate service development and quality assurance processes 	<p>10%</p> <p>15%</p>	25%
<p>2. Suitable qualifications of proposed personnel and their demonstrable success in publications, and provision of similar services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suitable qualifications and a track record of publication on the subject of occupational psychology in peer reviewed journals Experience of developing systems and programmes to quality assure behavioural assessments or services Testimonial evidence of success in delivering similar services 	<p>10%</p> <p>15%</p> <p>10%</p>	35%
<p>3. Evaluation of the resources, costs and ability to meet the specified service levels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs Proposal shows sufficient planning and resources to deliver an efficient and effective service; including willingness to work with NCAS 	<p>7.5%</p> <p>7.5%</p>	15%
<p>4. Meets the requirements of the NHS LA in relation to Information Security and provides evidence of appropriate organisational standards of information governance.</p>		10%
<p>5. Demonstrates up to date expertise and knowledge of the latest research in the field.</p>		15%

The following matrix will be applied during shortlisting:

Score	Performance
5	Meets the standard exactly as specified
4	Meets the standard well, but not exactly
3	Meets standard in most aspects, fails in some
2	Fails standards in most aspects, meets it in some
1	Significantly fails to meet the standard