Question	Answer
Phase 4 – Can I please check what additional information is requested from candidates? Passport ID/ sharing certificates etc?	The Additional Information stage is where some schemes (Analytical & Science & Engineering) check degree eligibility. Some schemes also request information from the candidate related to motivation or knowledge of the Profession to be used at the Final Selection Board assessment stage.
Phase 5 – Can I please confirm if the virtual AC phase is in scope as within the document since the document states that the management of the AC system is out of scope.	In scope in respect to assessment content and, if relevant, platform.
Although the activities for all schemes remain the same for phases 1-5, can you please confirm if the scoring or benchmarks varies across the schemes.	Yes, some variation in pass marks applied - relating mainly to vacancy numbers and candidate application levels for different schemes, with a minimum quality level applied.
Are the AC's segmented across schemes? i.e. candidates attend an AC which is for a specific scheme (even if the content is consistent across all AC's)	Not segmented.
At what point are candidates funnelled into a specific scheme or does this not happen until the offer stage?	Following the generic assessment centre - candidates would be funnelled to specific final selection boards (FSBs), according to their stated scheme preferences.
Is the recruitment process managed as a rolling process or are applicants progressed progress after fixed close dates?	It is a single recruitment process, commencing in the autumn of each year, through to spring the next year, rather than a rolling arrangement.
Are you able to provide any further details of candidate volumes at each phase of the process to help understand what the current sifting rates look like?	2022 volumes: Applications: 39,000; Online tests: 32,000; Work based scenarios: 13,000; Video Interview: 7,500; Assessment Centre: 3,200; Final selection boards: 1180; Offers: 1,093
The conversion rates at the AC appear to be quite low – are you looking to improve this achieving a 2:1 or 3:1 ratio for offers?	It is approximately 3:1, but yes, improvement could be sought. In addition, we have a near miss scheme (c.6-700 candidates) which reduces the ratio.
It's not clear from the document whether you're looking to remove the ATS from the solution if the supplier's platform can manage the process – would you be able to confirm if this is your objective?	We are flexible on this issue - according to the supplier proposal.
With regards to the assessment or AC activities, would your department develop the content once a process has been agreed, or looking for the provider to create the full solution?	We are flexible on this issue - according to the supplier proposal. We certainly have inhouse resource/capability to develop content.
Since candidates are able to apply to up to 4 schemes, how do you determine which scheme they are offered a role at if the scoring is consistent for all?	Scheme offer is based on the order of candidate scheme preference, assuming they meet the relevant pass mark for their first choice scheme (or second, third or fourth if they are not successful on their initial choices).
To enable suppliers to provide some indicative pricing, should we include platform usage as well as development of new assessments (across the board)?	Please separate the costing for the platform and the assessments themselves.
I understand if you are not able to respond to this, but could you please share what is working well with your current provider for these services, which you would be keen to maintain in any transition to a new provider? And what aspects are working less well that you would like to address / improve upon?	Based on evaluation analysis, pre-AC stages are working well in respect to strong diversity outcomes. The AC (FSAC) has given rise to some diversity issues (ethnicity and socio-economic), but this is largely removed when adding in FSB outcomes. Performance validation demonstrates however that the AC is the best predictor of workplace ratings.
Transitioning from a current provider of services of this scale involves a fair degree of time, resources and some uncertainty. What would need to be offered and guaranteed by a new provider in order to make you decide that the transition to a new provider would be worthwhile. What would your key decision criteria be?	Evidence of previous success around diversity, validity, time efficiency, positive candidate experience, as well as an indication of innovation/using cutting edge approaches.
How central must the provision of innovative technology be to the proposer's solution? Does the Cabinet Office have an incumbent technology provider, separate to the content provider, who would help to realise any highly creative multimedia proposals?	Yes, we have an able/experienced digital team who can support integration and may procure complimentary contracts to support the overall assessment process.
Who is your current Virtual AC platform provider?	An external software house who developed a bespoke AC platform: Cyber Duck
Would your greater preference be for a provider who can offer as many phases as possible as a 'one-stop-shop', or is your driver to diversify your supplier base in order to maximise breadth of thinking?	Either approach is acceptable.
How are the different phases of the process distributed between different providers currently?	An external online test development platform provider (to enable inhouse test design) for Phases 1 and 2, an external video interview platform provider (Phase 3), an external software house who developed a bespoke AC platform (Phase 5).
Do you currently use Off The Shelf (OTS) or bespoke assessments for Phases 1 and 2?	Bespoke assessments throughout.
Is your preference for OTS or bespoke tests in Phases 1 and 2?	Either approach is acceptable - though we are cautious regarding OTS in view of potential over-exposure of items - albeit that adaptive testing can mitigate this.

For the Assessment Centre. how many competencies are typically assessed per exercise? Would you require assessor training as part of our offering? And the provision of assessors?	Three are assessed per exercise. We would not require assessor training or assessors.
Regarding the following point: 'Cabinet Office/FSET will not enter into exclusive discussions regarding the requirements of this Request for Information with organisations', can I just confirm that it is therefore not possible for us to discuss the requirements in any more detail than is contained in this RFI with the commissioning parties in a meeting?	It is possible for you to have those conversations it this pertains to your proposals. We would, however only allow one session for all interested parties.
What is the RFP decision criteria and the associated weightings?	This is an informal information gathering exercise to inform the assessment methodology. Once complete, we will embark on a full, formal tender process.
What feedback have you had from recruiters and candidates on your current process?	We have sought candidate feedback regarding the AC (FSAC) stage - this has been positive (4.5 out of 5 approximately).
What challenges are you experiencing with your current process? Are there any pain points for recruiters and/or candidates?	Based on evaluation analysis, pre-AC stages are working well in respect to strong diversity outcomes. The AC (FSAC) has given rise to some diversity issues (ethnicity and socio-economic), but this is largely removed when adding in FSB outcomes. Performance validation demonstrates however that the AC is the best predictor of workplace ratings.
How many variations of assessment streams do you have to cater for the various business requirements? Can you provide us with some more information on these?	The process is generic through each stage - with the exception of the Final Selection Boards that review scheme specific aspects - such as motivation for the particular scheme.
You have detailed the behaviours you would like to assess, but please can you provide us with any other relevant information regarding your culture/values etc?	Key values are: Honesty, Integrity, Objectivity and Impartiality.
Are any of the online assessments in phases 1-2 (WSQ, MMSJT's, case studies, learning assessment) and 5 (assessment centre exercises) your own custom content/IP? If so, do you wish to utilise this content as is or do you envisage changes need to be made to it? Do you require the provider to host this content?	All in-house (FSET specific) content - although the numeracy test is a Civil Service wide tool. We are open to replacing these elements however.
For the video interview, will you provide interview questions and rating criteria to be uploaded to a platform or will you require the provider to support with the design of this content?	We are flexible on this - depending on your suggestions.
What type of feedback and reporting is currently provided to candidates and recruiters?	Automated online candidate feedback based on predetermined text, with the exception of the AC that is more bespoke (created by assessors), although drawing on/modifying pre-determined statements.
Have any validation studies been completed on your current process, and if so what were the findings?	That the AC is the most predictive of role performance - the pre-AC online stages show lower validity.
What are the key priority areas that you wish for the assessment solution to address/deliver on?	Diversity, validity, time efficiency, positive candidate experience, as well as an indication of innovation/using cutting edge approaches.
What are the key outcomes you are looking to achieve by potentially changing your assessment provider?	Something innovative/cutting edge, whilst still being psychometrically robust.
Please can you confirm that the submission is due COB 8th Feb (as opposed to COB 7th Feb)?	8th Feb please.
Please can you confirm where the query responses will be submitted?	Directly to you - by email.
What ATS platform are you currently using? Do you require part or all of the proposed phases to be integrated?	All parts would need integrating for scoring and candidate communications. We currently have a bespoke ATS for this purpose.
Will the competencies in Annex A require mapping to proposed solutions?	Yes
Do your require the content of assessments to be designed or are you looking to use off-the-shelf/tailored assessment content? Does the Cabinet Office have their own content they require hosting?	We do have our own content, however, we are seeking to refresh our approach and are therefore open to both new content and how it could be delivered/administered.
For the online video interview and Assessment Centres, Does the Cabinet Office require vendors to provide Assessors? Or provide assessor training to the Cabinet Office?	No, we provide our own.
Augmented video interviewing technology and gamified assessments may not meet the Accessibility standards mentioned, is there scope to use these technologies/assessments if they don't meet AA of WCAG 2?	No, all products must meet the accessibility standards mentioned.
If candidates do apply for multiple streams (up to 4 allowed, as specified) how do you intend on determining which stream to consider those candidates for should their application be strong enough?	Scheme offer is based on the order of candidate scheme preference, assuming they meet the relevant pass mark for their first choice scheme (or second, third or fourth if they are not successful on their initial choices).
Which ATS is in place for the recruitment programme?	A bespoke ATS developed by a contracted provider.
You state in relation to the ATS - 'integrates scores from assessment exercises (out of scope for this RFI)' and '5. Applicant Tracking System (ATS): ● Clarification should be provided regarding the relevant ATS - in particular whether the whole provision will be on your own platform and own tests or whether tests are considered stand alone and would need integration with an ATS solution to manage candidate workflow/bookings/passes.' Does this mean that a technology integration with your ATS will not be required?	All parts would need integrating for scoring and candidate communications. We currently have a bespoke ATS for this purpose but are open to alternate sugestions if they form part of your proposal.
We're aware that you are currently using an external assessment and content delivery platform to host internally developed assessment content, will this platform be used to host any newly created assessment content?	We are open to alternative options, according to your proposal.

| How many recruiters/employees work on the recruitment and selection process? | We work alongside a range of suppliers and Civil Service colleagues to deliver the end to end attraction, selection and onboarding process |