

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

FOR

**DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION:
Turing Scheme Year 6 Assessment Service**

1. EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

We are seeking information on the capability and capacity of organisations to provide the services detailed below.

The purpose of the EOI is to share the department's current thinking on the development of the 6th Year of the Turing Scheme (Academic Year 26/27); and the requirements for an independent, transparent and robust assessment service to assess applications against set criteria to allow the Department of Education to make funding decisions. We additionally want to seek expert views from the sector to inform its further development.

Through this Expression of Interest (EOI), suppliers are required to confirm whether they can meet the criteria and timescales to deliver the requirements set out at section 3 and 4. We would like to understand market interest and gather insight on our delivery approaches, and your responses will inform a potential future procurement activity planned for Q3 2025/2026.

Please note the Department for Education (DfE) reserves the right to only invite those that have submitted an EOI to any future mini competition.

Please advise a) if you are interested in bidding for this opportunity

b) If you are not interested in bidding and your reason(s).

The DfE propose to compete via the [CSS Framework RM6322](#) for any future ITT. Suppliers are encouraged to register on the CCS [Fund Administration and Disbursement Services](#) Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) as soon as possible. Note the onboarding process can take at least two weeks. To register on the DPS, please follow the CCS guidance for [becoming a supplier on a DPS](#).

Our indicative timeframe should progress to ITT, is likely to be mid to late October 2025, and will be via our e-sourcing system Jaggaer. If you would like to respond to the ITT you will need to ensure you are registered on Jaggaer: [Register to use Jaggaer](#).

2. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

EOI publication date: 14th August 2025

EOI return date: 22nd August 2025 16:00

Suppliers wishing to be included in the potential mini competition should respond to

this EOI within the stipulated timescales

Next steps: DfE review responses to the EOI.

DfE make decision on whether progress to ITT.

Should the DfE decide to progress with a mini competition we will aim to have the contract in place mid January 2026.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REQUIREMENT

Customer organisation overview:

The DfE is responsible for children's services and education, including early years, schools, higher and further education, apprenticeships and wider skills in England. DfE is a ministerial department supported by 18 agencies and public bodies and non-ministerial departments.

Background:

The UK Government is committed to providing international education and training opportunities to students, learners and pupils. [The Turing Scheme](#) was formally announced by the Prime Minister in December 2020. The first funded activities under the Scheme took place during the 2021/2022 academic year with funding provided for over 40,000 students to undertake placements in over 150 countries. Grants have recently been awarded for the fifth year of the Scheme.

The DfE is seeking to outsource an independent assessment service with a lead provider, consortia or similar entity to ensure the independent and transparent assessment of applications for the sixth year of the scheme, which will include:

- Robust, fair and objective assessment and scoring of applications in line with agreed criteria, independent of the Department for Education
- Reviewing providers' proposed expenditure in certain cost categories to check that it is eligible against a set list provided by the Department for Education.
- Quality checking and moderation of applications once assessed
- Provision of bespoke qualitative feedback to enable applicants to improve their applications in future years.
- Further assessment of unsuccessful applications which are deemed eligible and subsequently submit an appeal on the outcome of the original application.

Specification of requirements:

The successful supplier will be required to adhere to the following indicative schedule:

The provisional timetable:

- Application period set by DfE
- Mid March 2026 - all applications will be submitted to DfE
- Mid March to April - DfE to assess the eligibility of all applications

- April to May 2026 - All eligible applications assessed within a six-week assessment window.

The dates above are indicative at this stage, and may be brought forward.

The supplier will be expected to:

- work with the DfE to advise on and refine the assessment criteria for each of the questions.
- be responsible for identifying, recruiting and training assessors prior to the closing of the application period at the end of March 2026.

The DfE anticipate up to 1000 applications will be submitted, with a typical application containing answers to approximately eight questions with up to 4500 words, in total, across all eight questions.

Assessments will also need to take account of value for money of the proposed project(s).

The questions will be centred around how students will benefit from Turing Scheme funding in the following areas:

- Enhancing transferrable skills
- Widening opportunity
- Driving value for money

The Supplier will need to score the applications in line with agreed criteria. scores will then be used by DfE to determine if the application will be funded.

The DfE will require the successful provider to provide a robust assessment, moderation and quality assurance service.

While the DfE is open to innovative approaches, these processes will need to be agreed with the authority. For example, we could advise that each application is to be double assessed, and in cases of discrepancies outside of agreed tolerances, these should be re-assessed by a third, senior assessor.

The supplier will need to provide bespoke, written feedback on each application for the DfE to share with applicants to help them improve applications in the future, or to help inform their appeal.

DfE will require the supplier to provide a further assessment for unsuccessful applicants who appeal the DfE's initial decision.

Applicants will have a defined window in which to appeal following notification of an unsuccessful outcome. These appeals will need to be reassessed within a two-week window. The appeal criteria will be defined by DfE and any appeals received will be assessed for eligibility by DfE before being sent to the supplier for further assessment.

The supplier will also ensure the progress of all assessments are made available, in real time, to the DfE delivery team.

The supplier and the assessors will be expected to use an IT portal, developed by the DfE to assess, score and provide feedback on the applications.

The supplier will need to ensure they comply with GDPR legislation and will be expected to enter into a data sharing agreement with the DfE to determine the use, storage and retention of any data that is shared.

The supplier will provide an end of service evaluation report to the DfE, recording the lessons learned during the provision and delivery of the assessment service.

Expectations of supplier:

Essential criteria

- To provide UK based assessors from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, with experience across the three education sectors; Schools, Further Education and Vocational Education and Training providers, and Higher Education providers.
- Assessors must have experience of: grant management, assessment, exams management, how to assess cost effectiveness, project management and an understanding of international educational mobilities.
- The outcome of the assessments and assessment process will need to be reported on and presented to the DfE and relevant parties.
- To provide independent assessments, within the timeline set out in the specification of requirements, which will uphold the following principles:
 - Fair and objective assessment and scoring of applications in line with agreed criteria, independent of the Department for Education
 - Quality checking of applications once assessed.
 - Provision of bespoke qualitative feedback to enable applicants to improve their applications in future years.
 - Further assessment of eligible appeals.

Contract start date: January 2026

Contract duration: Competition of Turing year 6 programme (approx. 8 months) + Potential to extend the contract for Turing year 7 programme (*subject to ministerial decision, funding and internal governance processes*)

Is there an incumbent supplier:

The assessment service for the Turing Scheme has been managed by a third-party supplier since the start of the scheme.

Budget per annum: £550,000 approximately

4. INFORMATION REQUIRED

Prospective suppliers submitting an Expression of Interest should set out:

Supplier interest:

1. What is your interest to bid? If you are not interested, what are the barriers to your organisation bidding?

Market Insights:

1. We envisage that up to 1000 applications will need to be assessed within a six week window, considering the above specifications;
 - a. What capacity do you have to deliver the programme?
 - b. Could your organisation reasonably exceed these expectations?
 - c. What risks have you identified?
 2. How would you manage assessment accuracy between assessors?
 3. How would you manage cases of discrepancies between assessors?
 4. Is there anything else we should be considering as part of this work?
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5. RIGHT TO CANCEL OR VARY THIS EOI

We reserve the right to amend, clarify or cancel any part of this EOI at any time. The posting of this EOI is not a guarantee of business, neither is participation in this exercise.

6. EOI CUSTOMER CONTACT

Prior to registration of Jaggaer any queries or responses to this EOI can be submitted via Core.Procurement@education.gov.uk using “**6th Year of the Turing Scheme (Academic Year 26/27)**” in the subject heading.

If already registered on Jaggaer, raise any queries via the Jaggaer messaging function and upload your EOI response via the Jaggaer messaging function on or before the deadline.