

To ensure full transparency and fairness during the tendering process we provide all potential bidders with responses to queries we have received. Please find below responses to all queries that have been submitted by bidder so far.

Q: Would organizations based in Uzbekistan be eligible to apply for this tender?

A: All bidders must be based in Kazakhstan to be eligible to submit a tender application.

Q: Is this the first time this programme has been commissioned by the FCDO?

A: No, this is not the first time this type of programme has been commissioned in the region.

Q: Has a similar programme previously been delivered in Central Asia, and if so, by which organisation(s)?

A: The programme was previously implemented by a Government Department working out of the British Embassy in Astana.

Q: Can bidders submit independent proposals but include the rival bidder as a member of their team in the event they are successful?

A: Yes, this is acceptable and would not breach tendering rules.

Q: The ToR states that the contract starts on 1 October 2026. Could you please confirm whether the training itself is also expected to begin on 1 October, or does the project officially start on that date while training begins later?

A: The training is expected to commence on 1 October. However, the contract is planned to be signed in August to allow sufficient time for curriculum development, workplan preparation, and other pre-delivery activities. Changes can be made to the start date with the agreement of both parties.

Q: The ToR includes 35 days for the Inception phase and 35 days for the Mobilisation phase. This represents approximately 70 days after the contract start date. At the same time, the ToR indicates that training will commence following mobilisation, but no specific training start date is provided.

A: The programme envisages signing of the contract in early August and provides up to two months for preparation. The training and mentorship will start on 1 Oct.

Q: Is training expected to begin only after inception and mobilisation phases are completed?

A: Yes, the programme envisages signing of contract in early August and provides two months for preparatory work. Dates can be amended once the preferred bidder is selected, however we expect all bidder to be ready to implement services beginning 1st Oct.

Q: Are preparation of activities and training delivery expected to run in parallel?

A: No, Preparation for activities should be conducted prior the commencement of training.

Q: The ToR presents annual delivery targets, while the initial contract covers only the first six months.

A: The initial contract is for a six-month period with potential to be extended. If extended the annual delivery targets will come into effect.

Q: Should the supplier achieve the full annual targets during the first six-month contract, or will these targets be proportionally divided between the first and second six-month contract periods?

A: Yes, the targets will be proportionally divided between the first and second six-month contract periods

Q: Who will be responsible for conducting the placement tests? Is this expected to be part of the supplier's responsibilities?

A: Placement tests will be part of the supplier's responsibilities.

Q: Could you please provide information about the expected entry level of participants in each country?

A: In Kazakhstan, participants entry level will vary between basic English level and Elementary. In Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, it is highly likely that participants will have no prior knowledge of English language.

Q: Are participants expected to begin at A1, A2 or mixed levels?

A: Depends on country, participants in Kazakhstan are expected to begin at A1 level, whilst in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan participants are expected to start at A0 level.

Q: Is there a minimum language requirement before joining the programme?

A: There are no requirements for joining this programme. Given that the audience is military officers who will be seconded specifically for this programme as part of their peacekeeping pre-deployment training.

Q: The KPI states that 70% of participants should achieve CEFR B1. Could you please clarify whether this KPI applies to the first six-month contract, full twelve-month delivery period or to the overall three-year programme?

A: Yes, this KPI applies to the first six months in Kazakhstan. It is expected that it will be different for Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as their requirements are lower. Hence the lessons regularity is different, please refer to TOR.

Q: how will this KPI be interpreted if participants start at different proficiency levels (for example, A1 rather than A2)?

A: Given the difference in starting level, it was calculated that not 100%, but 70% of all participants reach the CEFR B1 level, regardless of their starting level. While this is the expected absolute outcome for CELTA teachers, it is assumed that this figure may vary due to circumstances beyond the control of the program's teachers, due to the specific nature of the audience.

Q: Are we expected to deliver General English, or should the programme be designed as English for Specific Purposes (ESP) tailored to defence and security contexts?

A: The programme should not be considered a fully specialised ESP course; rather, it should be a General English programme contextualised for military personnel, making extensive use of defence-related vocabulary and professional communication tasks relevant to peacekeeping contingent in UN missions using the materials previously developed for this programme.

Q: Could you please confirm the expected delivery locations (cities) within Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan?

A: Almaty, Bishkek, Dushanbe

Q: How many monitoring visits are expected during the initial six-month contract; and what is the expected duration of each visit?

A: Monitoring is an essential part of the Peacekeeping Centre's instructors training programme and is expected to be conducted on a weekly basis. However, the Executor may submit their vision as part of mentoring and development plan for consideration.

Q: Recruiting instructors and methodologists, developing the curriculum, and allowing sufficient time for academic review and quality assurance all require careful planning. Would it be possible to begin preparatory work, such as curriculum development and recruitment, before the official contract start, assuming the supplier is selected?

A: Yes, but allocated days for preparatory work will be required prior to discussion and agreement with Programme Team as it will depend on budget availability.

Q: How many visits are expected during the initial six-month contract?

A: 3 times in 6 months where 1st time is to interview and hire a teacher. Though this can be done online it is an opportunity to meet a new teacher and partners. The rest 2 times on a quarter basis for overall evaluation of the progress and process.

Q: What is the expected duration of each visit?

A: 2 days excluding travel days.

Q: Would Defence Section be open to fully online delivery for the English language training and teacher mentoring components?

A: Whether online delivery would be feasible depends on the preferences of the programme beneficiaries and whether their institutions permit participation in virtual sessions. It is also important to consider that some participants may have limited or unreliable internet access. Furthermore, please note programme-partners do not accept recorded sessions as a substitute for live participation. It is envisioned that delivery will be in-person.

Q: Would online lesson observations and quality assurance be acceptable? This would allow us to monitor delivery effectively while reducing travel costs and access requirements.

A: Subject to approval by the partner institutions.

Q: Would Russian-speaking teachers be acceptable for delivery across the three countries, or is knowledge of Kazakh, Kyrgyz and/or Tajik required?

A: Knowledge of local languages is essential for effective programme delivery, as some participants may not speak Russian. Ideally, the teaching team should comprise local instructors.

Q: Would online/digital course materials be accepted? We could offer access to modern platforms and up-to-date learning materials, with student access usually available for 18-24 months depending on the selected coursebook/platform.

A: Subject to approval by the programme partners and subject to availability of technical equipment.

Q: Whether the materials listed in Annex C are expected to be used, or whether they are legacy materials from the previous programme.

A: Organisations are expected to utilise the materials contained in Annex C. Alternative materials may be used with prior agreement, provided that a follow-up assessment of participants' development outcomes is undertaken 1–2 months after delivery of the programme.

Q: What are the current English levels of the participants?

A: There is currently no confirmed information regarding participants' English language proficiency, as learners will be selected by the respective programme partners based on their operational requirements and personnel availability. Bidders should therefore assume that participants in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan may have little or no prior knowledge of English, while participants in Kazakhstan are expected to be at beginner to elementary level.

Q: Given the ToR includes a 35-day inception period and a 35-day mobilisation phase, there may be less than four months of actual teaching delivery before the end of March 2027. This may not be sufficient for all participants to reach B1 unless they are already close to that level. It would therefore be helpful to clarify whether B1 attainment is expected by March 2027, or whether Phase 1 should focus on mobilisation, baseline assessment, initial delivery and measurable progress towards B1.

A: The inception period is expected to commence in August 2026. Bidders should therefore assume that approximately two months (August–September 2026) will be available for inception activities and other preparatory actions.

Q: The ToR refers to KAZCENT instructor mentoring and development five days a week, seven hours per day. Could it be clarified whether this means full-time daily mentoring during one week only during the contract period, or structured support such as observations, lesson planning and feedback can be planned based on our recommendation and devlired within the working hours of the KAZCENT instructors?

A: Structured support would be preferable.

Q: Is a formal end-of-course assessment required? If so, it would be useful to know whether any specific assessment is required, such as Aptis, IELTS or another CEFR-aligned test. We would then factor test familiarisation and assessment preparation into the course design.

A: Yes, a formal end-of-course assessment is required. There is no requirement for specific assessment, the supplier may design and administer the assessment using its own assessment tools and evaluation forms with prior agreement of Programme Officer.

Q: Would a single hourly rate for delivery acceptable rather than detailed line-by-line reporting of underlying costs? A single rate would cover direct online delivery, preparation, materials, reporting, online quality assurance and academic management.

A: Yes, single hourly rate would be acceptable

Q: If the Procurement organisation be comfortable with online delivery and online quality assurance, would travel still be required?

A: Yes, travel will still be required for overall evaluation of the progress and process on the ground. Delivery in-person is preferred.

Q: Whether the contracting authority for this tender is FCDO, UK MOD, or a joint arrangement.

A: It's the UK government initiative.

Q: Which department's standard terms and conditions, contracting procedures, and reporting lines will apply to the resulting contract.

A: The resulting contract will be based on the requirements, governance arrangements, and reporting structure set out in the Tender Pack/Invitation to the Tender.

Q: ITT Covering Letter requests a separate Annex of CVs for the proposed personnel, whereas Volume 1 (Format Requirements) states that the proposed methodology and CVs should be submitted within 2–3 pages, including CVs. Could you please confirm which format should be followed

A: As stated in ITT invitation letter, provide a two-side company profile, a two-side methodology, and the CVs of company staff. Keep CVs short but ensure to highlight requirements listed in ITT Instructions (page 7).

Q: Volume 1 (Section 24 – GDPR) requires suppliers to answer Question 1 and provide a written statement in response to Question 2. However, this is not listed among the submission documents in the ITT Covering Letter. Could you please confirm whether the GDPR statement should be included in the tender submission and, if so, whether it should form part of the Technical Tender PDF?

A: Yes, GDPR must be included in the tender submission and be a part of document

Q: Please confirm whether the intended direct English-language contact hours per learner for the 30-person KAZCENT peacekeeping-contingent cohort within the six-month contract term.

A: Yes.

Q: Please confirm whether, against that contact-hour allocation, the Authority considers the 70% B1 attainment target realistic and achievable within this initial six-month period, or whether the Authority would welcome bidders proposing an alternative or interim success metric (for example, demonstrable measured progression rather than full B1 attainment) for this initial contract period.

A: 70% B1 attainment target has been set for participants based in KAZCENT. This metric does not apply for participants in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan during the first phase of programme. Yes, we can consider bidder's alternative success metric.

Q: Please confirm whether UK MOD and/or FCDO have their own supplier or personnel security clearance requirements (for example, security clearance levels, List X or equivalent supplier status, or IT/data handling accreditation)

subcontracted instructors would need to meet in order to deliver this contract?

A: No requirement for security clearance or any of the listed above.

Q: For each of the four beneficiary locations/organisations, whether supplier personnel and/or subcontracted local instructors will separately be required to undergo any local security vetting or clearance process before being granted access to deliver training or mentoring (and if so, by whom this is administered, and the typical process and timeframe)

A: Approval requirements may vary depending on the partner institution and the proposed delivery model. International organisations that are not registered in Kazakhstan may be required to establish a local legal presence at their own expense in accordance with applicable national requirements. Partner institutions may have their own procedures for approving supplier personnel or subcontractors to deliver training or mentoring services for non-local personnel. These requirements, if applicable, would be determined by the relevant partner institution and may include administrative reviews or security-related checks. As specific arrangements may differ between organisations and are subject to partner-nation procedures, the Authority is unable to provide a standard approval process or indicative timeframe at this stage. Bidders should factor potential approval and onboarding requirements into their mobilisation planning.

Q: Whether the Ministry of Defence (General Staff and Main Office) and National Guard in Tajikistan have separate or shared security/access arrangements, or whether a single vetted provider could reasonably service both?

A: Each organisation has separate security arrangements.

Q: Whether there are any restrictions on electronic devices, materials, or documentation that supplier personnel or subcontracted instructors would need to observe when delivering training on-site at any of the four locations?

A: There are no limitations on the materials, books, or documentation that suppliers may bring when accessing locations. However, electronic devices (including smart watches) are not permitted under any circumstances. This restriction applies to all locations.

Q: The Scope and Delivery Targets section describes KAZCENT's model as mentoring up to 10 English Language Instructors, who in turn train up to 30 peacekeeping-contingent personnel. Your response of 10 July confirmed the 70% B1 KPI applies to Kazakhstan in the first six months. Could you confirm whether this KPI applies to the 30-person learner cohort (trained indirectly, via KAZCENT's own instructors) or to the 10 instructors mentored directly by the

Supplier? If the former, how is Supplier accountability for an indirectly-delivered outcome intended to be assessed?

A: 70% B1 KPI will apply to the 30-person learner cohort trained by the supplier. Whether instructors would indirectly train the cohort or not would depend on their level. Should the instructors not be fit to teach, then they will be allowed to conduct indirect training to the next cohort of participants.

In Kazakhstan, the Supplier's primary role is to mentor, develop, and support KAZCENT instructors, who are then responsible for delivering training to the peacekeeping-contingent personnel. Accordingly, performance against the B1 attainment KPI will not be assessed on a purely mechanistic basis. The Authority will consider the broader contribution made by the Supplier to learner outcomes through the quality of instructor mentoring, curriculum support, assessment processes, teaching resources, monitoring arrangements, and evidence of instructor capability development.

Q: The Terms of Reference state that monthly payments are "subject to satisfactory performance and reports," while Annex B describes a quarterly RAG review process with improvement plans for Red-rated KPIs and potential financial penalties "if specified in contract." Could you confirm how KPI performance (particularly the B1 attainment KPI) directly affects monthly payment release, as distinct from the quarterly RAG review process? We would also welcome sight of the draft contract terms and conditions, including any specified financial penalty provisions, ahead of submission, as none have been provided with the tender documentation.

A: The intention is that the monthly payment process and the quarterly KPI review process serve different purposes. Monthly payments are linked primarily to the Supplier's delivery of the contracted services and the submission of satisfactory monthly reports and associated deliverables, as outlined in the TOR. The Authority will assess whether services have been delivered in accordance with the agreed workplan, whether reporting requirements have been met, and whether there are any material performance concerns that would justify withholding payment.

The quarterly RAG review process is a broader performance management mechanism used to assess overall programme delivery against the agreed KPI framework. Its purpose is to identify areas of underperformance, monitor trends, and agree corrective actions where necessary. A Red rating against a KPI would normally trigger an improvement plan and enhanced monitoring rather than an automatic withholding of monthly payments.

The wording in Annex B regarding contractual remedies and financial penalties is included as a standard provision to preserve flexibility for the final contract. No specific financial penalty regime has yet been defined for this procurement. Should

contractual remedies relating to KPI performance be included in the final contract, these will be clearly specified and communicated to the successful bidder during contract finalisation.

Regarding the draft contract terms and conditions, these are currently being finalised and therefore are not being issued as part of the tender pack.

Q: We note the Terms of Reference do not appear to include a force majeure provision, nor a mechanism to exclude or adjust for learners withdrawn from the programme by the Authority or partner institution for reasons outside the Supplier's control (for example, operational deployment, transfer, discipline, or medical reasons). Could the Authority confirm whether such a provision exists or is intended, given that KPIs such as B1 attainment, attendance, and dropout rate would otherwise be measured against a denominator the Supplier cannot control?

A: Where learner withdrawals or absences arise from factors outside the Supplier's control, the Authority would expect these to be clearly documented and reported through the agreed monitoring and evaluation processes. Such circumstances would be taken into account when assessing performance against relevant KPIs, including B1 attainment (LO1), attendance (AE1), dropout rate (AE2), and course completion rate (TD2). KPI results would therefore not be considered in isolation but would be reviewed alongside supporting evidence, contextual factors, and the Supplier's efforts to mitigate any impact.

Final contract will contain appropriate contractual provisions addressing circumstances beyond the reasonable control of either party. Bidders are encouraged to identify any assumptions, risks, and proposed mitigation measures relating to learner retention and attendance within their technical proposals. The Authority will work collaboratively with the successful Supplier and partner institutions to minimise avoidable learner attrition and support achievement of programme outcomes.

Q: The Terms of Reference name "limited access to partner institutions" as a risk category but do not describe a mechanism to re-baseline, pause, or adjust KPI measurement where Supplier access to learners is restricted for reasons outside the Supplier's control (for example, security lockdown, facility closure, or operational disruption). Could the Authority confirm whether such a mechanism exists or is intended?

A: Where access restrictions materially affect delivery, the Supplier should notify the Programme Officer at the earliest opportunity, document the circumstances and their impact, and propose appropriate mitigation measures. The Authority will review such cases on their individual merits and may, where justified, agree reasonable adjustments to delivery plans, timelines, targets, or performance assessments.

Bidders should identify any assumptions, dependencies, and proposed mitigation measures relating to access to partner institutions within their proposals, including any approaches to maintaining continuity of delivery through alternative or remote delivery methods where appropriate.

Q: Section 2 (Contract Objectives) states that developing sustainable, in-country English language instructional capacity is a programme-wide objective. However, the Scope and Delivery Targets section and Annex B KPIs (IS1–IS4) scope instructor-development activity to Kazakhstan/KAZCENT only. Should Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan also include an instructor-development component in this contract, or is direct learner training the intended full scope for those countries at this stage?

A: No, the instructor development component is not applicable in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. It is only required for the Kazakhstan element of the programme.

Q: The Terms of Reference specify KAZCENT's 35 hours/week allocation as instructor mentoring and development time. Could you confirm the intended direct English-language contact hours for the 30-person peacekeeping-contingent learner cohort, distinct from the instructor-mentoring allocation?

A: Yes

Q: Your response of 10 July confirmed participants in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are expected to start at A0 level, and that the 70% B1 KPI is Kazakhstan-specific with different (lower) requirements for Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Could you confirm the specific target outcome level or metric expected for these cohorts within the six-month contract term?

A: Should the assigned participants in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have A0 entry level, the expected target outcomes are A2 proficiency for participants in Kyrgyzstan and A1 proficiency for participants in Tajikistan by the end of the initial six-month contract period.

Q: The Roles and Responsibilities section states that UK MOD will "manage partner relationships." Could you confirm whether this means the Authority leads government-to-government or institutional relationship management with KAZCENT, Border Service, and the Tajikistan MoD/National Guard, or whether the Supplier is expected to independently establish and manage these relationships, with the Authority providing oversight only?

A: Yes, UK MOD will manage partner relationships implying UK MOD will lead communication on government level and with all programme-partners. The Supplier is not expected to manage communication with any of the listed parties and will be communicating with the Programme Officer only.

Q: Could the Authority confirm the current condition and functionality of the Annex C equipment, and the process and timeline for the Supplier to take physical receipt of items currently located in Dushanbe and Almaty?

A: All listed equipment is in good and working condition. Items should be collected by supplier till mid-September.

Q: The Flexibility and Adaptation section states that delivery will be reviewed "at the end of Q2." Could you confirm whether this refers to the second quarter of the six-month contract term (approximately January–March 2027) or a UK Government fiscal quarter?

A: UK Government fiscal quarter

Q: Could you please confirm the indicative or maximum budget for the initial six-month contract and whether a pricing/budget template will be provided?

A: The Authority is not intending to publish an indicative or maximum budget for this procurement. Bidders are requested to submit their most competitive and realistic pricing based on the scope, requirements, and delivery targets set out in the Terms of Reference. Budget template provided [here](#)

Q: Could you share the evaluation criteria and required submission documents (e.g., technical proposal, financial proposal, organisational documents, CVs, references, financial statements)?

A:

Main Criteria	Weighting
Technical Evaluation Criteria – Scored	
Quality of Personnel	30
Methodology (Demonstrates an understanding and adherence of ToR in relation to programme delivery, clear rationale for effective delivery of outputs, effective use of inputs to ensure Value for Money)	20
Relevant experience in similar contracts (in the type of learning and region)	20
Technical Score	70
Commercial Evaluation Criteria – Scored	
Total Cost	20

Value for Money (Balance between cost and quality or benefits (not just lowest bid))	10
Commercial Score	30
Overall Total	100

Q: Are universities eligible to participate as the lead supplier? Are consortium or joint bids permitted, and is it necessary to have subcontractors in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan identified at the proposal stage?

A: Universities are eligible to participate as the lead supplier. Consortium and joint bids are also permitted. Where a consortium or joint bid is submitted, bidders should clearly describe the proposed structure, the roles and responsibilities of each organisation, and the lead entity that will be responsible for contract management and performance.

While it is not mandatory for bidders to have subcontractors in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan formally contracted at the proposal stage, bidders should clearly explain their proposed approach to in-country delivery, including any planned subcontracting arrangements, local partnerships, or recruitment strategy.

Q: Are there any mandatory qualification or security requirements for instructors and project personnel?

A: Yes, requirements to personnel and instructors identified in the ITT pack.

Q: Could you clarify the expected entry-level English proficiency of participants and whether placement testing should be conducted by the Supplier?

A: There is currently no confirmed information regarding participants' English language proficiency, as learners will be selected by the respective programme partners based on their operational requirements and personnel availability. Bidders should therefore assume that participants in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan may have little or no prior knowledge of English, while participants in Kazakhstan are expected to be at beginner to elementary level. Yes, supplier must conduct placement test at the beginning of programme.

Q: Will there be an opportunity to submit clarification questions or attend a pre-bid Q&A session before the submission deadline?

A: Due to time constraints and the procurement timetable, the Authority will not be able to facilitate a live Q&A session. However, interested parties are invited to submit clarification questions.

Q: We have currently received only the TOR document. Could you please confirm whether there are additional formal tender documents, such as an Invitation to Tender (ITT) or Request for Proposal (RFP), that we should also refer to?

A: Yes, additional tender documents have been uploaded [here](#)

Q: Kindly advise on the complete list of documents required for the proposal submission. We anticipate this may include, but is not limited to:

- **Technical Proposal**
- **Commercial / Pricing Proposal**
- **Company qualification documents (Certificate of Incorporation, business licence, etc.)**
- **Financial capability evidence (financial statements or a bank reference letter)**
- **Relevant industry certifications and accreditations**
- **Past experience and case studies of similar projects**
- **CVs and qualification certificates of key personnel**
- **Other compliance documents (e.g., Modern Slavery statement, insurance certificates, etc.)**

A: Please find complete list of necessary documents [here](#)

Q: Could you please confirm whether pricing should be submitted using a specific template or format (such as the DEFFORM series) and whether there is a prescribed financial breakdown structure to follow?

A: Please use the Commercial Proforma template provided as part of the Invitation to Tender pack. No need for DEFFORM.

Q: Section 15 of the TOR references various cross-cutting compliance requirements. We would appreciate clarification on whether there are any mandatory certifications required, such as Cyber Essentials or defence-related accreditations.

A: No other certifications beyond mentioned in the TOR and ITT pack required.

Q: Please advise on the submission requirements, including:

- **Number of electronic and hard copies required**
- **File format specifications (e.g., compatibility with Microsoft Office Word 2010)**
- **Signature and seal requirements (e.g., whether standard forms such as DEFFORM 47ST are required)**
- **Submission channel (email address / online portal / postal address)**

A: Include a maximum one/two-sided company profile, including experience of previous similar contracts (maximum two sides), A one/two-sided methodology of how you will deliver services outlined in the Terms of Reference (maximum two sides), And an Annex of CVs of company staff who will work on the programme in pdf formats. No need for signature and seal requirements. You can find additional

information on the tender website [English-language training programme – Central Asia: invitation to tender - GOV.UK](#)

Your Tender must be submitted to John Kennedy John.Kennedy1@fcdo.gov.uk
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madina.myngaiymbek@fcdo.gov.uk