



Department  
for Education

# Joining the Associate Pool guidance

May 2016

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## Background

The Department for Education (DfE) uses high quality evidence and analysis to inform policy development and delivery to achieve our vision - to provide world-class education and care that allows every child and young person to reach his or her potential, regardless of background. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dfes-strategy-2015-to-2020-world-class-education-and-care>

Within the DfE there is an analytical community which comprises statisticians, economists, social and operational researchers. These specialists feed in analysis and research to strategy, policy development and delivery.

While much analysis is undertaken in-house and substantial projects are commissioned to external organisations, there is often a need to quickly commission small-scale projects.

We have therefore created a pool of Analytical Associates who can bring specific specialist expertise, knowledge and skills into the department to supplement and develop our internal analytical capability.

In June 2014 we invited applications from individuals to join the pool. We received an overwhelming response and, after evaluating the expertise of everyone who applied, we established the Analytical Associate Pool.

Over 160 independent academics and researchers are in the pool, and they can be commissioned to carry out small-scale data analysis, rapid literature reviews, primary research and peer review. They also provide training, quality assurance and expert advice on an ad-hoc basis. Most projects cost less than £15,000, and more than 80 projects have been commissioned since the pool opened in September 2014.

Over the last year there have been changes to our strategic priorities and we have new policy areas, such as Equalities, leading to some gaps in expertise. So we have made the decision to open up the pool to new members.

## How the Pool works

- A piece of work is specified by the DfE project manager. They will outline what work is required and what criteria will be used to assess the bids.
- The Project Manager will view the Associate Pool Database for associates with the appropriate expertise in both methodology and policy knowledge.
- The chosen associates will then be sent an invitation to quote.
- Should the associate be interested then they will be required to submit a mini-tender outlining how they will take the project forward.
- The tenders will then be assessed by the Project manager and colleagues and they will decide which bid to take forward. Feedback will be available to those who have to been unsuccessful.
- Once accepted a Project Contract will be drafted and signed by both parties.
- Once the contract has been signed by both parties the work can then commence and the named associate will working directly with the Project manager.

Please note that being a member of the Pool is no guarantee of work

# How to complete the application form

## Expertise

- Please tick the policy areas you have experience in
- Please tick the methodology expertise you have
- Please tick whether or not you have had any contracts terminated in the last 3 years

## Evidence

- For the methodologies you have ticked please provide more information. You will need to complete a separate summary statement for each area of methodological expertise that you apply for. You can demonstrate your policy area knowledge through your summary / summaries.

*Please see below the evaluation criteria for each of the methodologies*

## Dissemination

We are seeking individuals who can help distil the department's research, evidence and policy messages to a wide range of audiences.

### **Criteria:**

- Evidence of effective conference presentations and contributions to events (eg seminars, workshops)
- Evidence of ensuring research has impact
- Evidence of analysing findings and turning them into practice
- Evidence of innovative presentation of data/findings (eg infographics)

## Evaluation

We are seeking individuals who can provide insight on effective evaluation design to deliver high-quality outputs. This may include process and impact evaluations, RCTs and quasi-experimental approaches.

### **Criteria:**

- Evidence of expertise in designing evaluations (including process evaluations, RCTs, quasi-experimental approaches)
- Evidence of carrying out evaluations
- Evidence of analysing data outputs, data tables and/or report findings and summarising findings

## Literature Reviews/ Rapid Evidence Reviews

We are seeking individuals who can demonstrate the ability and have evidence of reviewing evidence and providing succinct summaries.

### **Criteria:**

- Evidence of carrying out systematic reviews and/or non-systematic reviews
- Evidence of interpreting research/data and effectively drawing out implications for policy makers and others

## Qualitative research

We are seeking individuals who can provide insight on effective qualitative research to deliver high-quality outputs. We may also require small scale qualitative research fieldwork.

### **Criteria:**

- Evidence of expertise in designing a range of qualitative research (including research tools )
- Evidence of carrying out a range of qualitative research
- Evidence of analysing qualitative research findings

## Quantitative research & secondary data analysis

We are seeking individuals who can design and analyse quantitative research and undertake secondary analysis of secondary data to deliver high-quality outputs.

### **Criteria:**

- Evidence of the design of quantitative research tools (including different surveys types; online, telephone, face-to-face)
- Evidence of experience in secondary analysis of data sets (bivariate and/or multivariate) on datasets such as the National Pupil Database, Understanding Society, Longitudinal Study of Young People in England, Millennium Cohort Study
- Evidence of data matching, modelling including statistical modelling and simulation, dynamic modelling
- Evidence of analysing data outputs, data tables and/or report findings and summarising findings
- Evidence of economic analysis and appraisals

## Publications

- Please provide details of any publications you think are relevant and provide a link to the publication.
- If you don't have any publication please tick **No** on the URL question.

### National Pupil Data (NPD) data security arrangements

- Please let us know if you have approval to extract information from the National Pupil Database (NPD)  
For more information - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-pupil-database-apply-for-a-data-extract>
- Please let us know the date the approval was obtain and which level of clearance you have

### Day Rates

- Please provide your day rate and the number of hours that includes

### References

- Please provide details for three references (these can include DfE)

### Address

- Please provide your address (either work or home)
- If you do not have a company number please leave this field blank

(For contracts – the contractor can be your organisation and you can involve others in your organisation to help you with groundwork but as a named associate you will responsible for all of the work produced including the final report)

### Your details

- Please completed your contact details
- Please tick the declaration boxes – (that you sign up to our terms and conditions and that all information provided is correct)

Should you have any queries please email – [Associate.Pool@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Associate.Pool@education.gsi.gov.uk)



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