

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

Addendum 1 and Amendment 1 to
Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Request For Proposals (RFP):
SBAC RFP-09

Note to potential respondents:

- This Addendum is intended to revise, clarify and become part of the *SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium Request for Test Blueprint and Computer Adaptive Test Specifications* (SBAC RFP-09), issued October 25, 2011.
- **All amendments, addendums, and notifications will be posted on the OSPI Web site and released via the Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) Web site.**

Addendum 1: Includes nine pages of responses to vendor questions.

Amendment 1: Amend language associated with the Annual Contractor Meetings and adjust the posting date of the Final Questions and Answers.

Addendum 1 SBAC RFP-09
Test Blueprint and CAT
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Information, Questions & Answers

PROJECT TITLE: SMARTER Balanced Assessment CONSORTIUM Test Blueprint and CAT

Section A	INTRODUCTION 4. Objective and Scope of Work 1. Develop summative specifications and blueprints a. and b.	pg. 7
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Q1. There is reference to ‘developing a statement of purpose for each collection of evidence by proposing a set of statements and conducting sessions for review and discussion’. Can the consortium provide examples of representative models for collections of evidence?

Answer: The representative models will consist of scores from the adaptive portion and information from the performance tasks. The score reporting categories will be guided by the SBAC Content Specifications when they have been finalized.

Q2. Are there any available examples of representative performance tests/tasks? What are SBAC’s content specifications?

Answer: There are no examples of SBAC performance tasks other than those that were included in the grant proposal as these are under development. SBAC content specifications have not been finalized.

Section A	INTRODUCTION 4. Objective and Scope of Work 2. Develop pilot and field test specifications	pg. 8
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Q3. Please clarify if the pilot and field tests to be specified in Task 2 are the same pilot tests described in SBAC RFP-05?

Answer: Yes.

Section A	INTRODUCTION 4. Objective and Scope of Work 4. Identify the role of Performance Assessments in the overall assignment of students to achievement category. a.	pg. 9
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Q4. What are the intended criteria for performance tasks? Through demonstration, writing, design, or is some other model/approach intended?

Answer: Yes, all of the above are possible approaches.

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Section B **GENERAL INFORMATION FOR CONSULTANTS** **pg. 13**
4. Submission of Proposals

Q5. The RFP states “sixteen (20) copies are to be provided electronically...” Please clarify whether proposers should provide sixteen (16) electronic copies or twenty (20) electronic copies of their proposal.
Answer: One (1) copy must be hardcopy with original signatures, as noted in Section C, while the remaining twenty (20) copies are to be provided electronically on compact discs (CD) or flash drives.

Section C **PROPOSAL CONTENTS** **pg. 17**

Q6. The RFP indicates that the page limit for the main proposals is 100 pages, double spaced, excluding appendices and resumes. Does the 100 page limit apply only to Section 2. Technical Proposal, or does it also include the other sections (1. Letter of Submittal, 3. Management Proposal, 4. Cost Proposal)?
Answer: Yes, 100 pages is inclusive of all sections.

Section C **PROPOSAL CONTENTS** **pg. 18**
2. Technical Proposal
A. Project Approach/Methodology
Component 1.b.

Q7. Please clarify what is meant by “...a summative student test event...”
Answer: A summative event is the specific test taken by an examinee, including both items delivered by the CAT and performance tasks.

Section C **PROPOSAL CONTENTS** **pg. 20**
2. Technical Proposal
Expected Work Statement

Q8. The RFP states, “Summative assessments consist of the adaptive test and a set of performance tasks delivered during Consortium-defined testing windows.” This statement implies that SBAC summative assessments will not be standalone assessments, but composite assessments composed of multiple test instruments, including CAT and performance-task-based assessments. Is this understanding correct? If not, please clarify.
Answer: The SBAC assessment consists of two parts: a CAT portion and a performance assessment.

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Q9. Will adaptive tests and the administration of performance tasks be mandatory or voluntary for students and schools?

Answer: The summative CAT and the summative performance events will be mandatory; the interim and formative components are optional.

Q10. Are fixed-form summative tests a part of the planned SBAC assessment system; and if so, what are the relationship to SBAC CAT and performance-task-based systems?

Answer: For the first three years of administration, there will be equated fixed-form paper/pencil versions of the summative assessment that are the consistent with the blueprint for the CAT and performance tasks.

Section C	PROPOSAL CONTENTS 2. Technical Proposal Summative and Interim Assessments – Second paragraph	pg. 22
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Q11. The RFP states, “The framework will include the interface that allows states and districts to create their own tests or connect interim tasks with local instructional units or curricula.” Please define and expand upon what is meant by “framework” and “interface.”

Answer: The framework is the required composition of the item bank and associated information necessary to address the intended test purposes. The interim assessment interface is the interactive applications that LEAs can use to choose from a set of tests or items. Details regarding the Interim Assessment design will be forthcoming.

Section C	PROPOSAL CONTENTS 2. Technical Proposal Annual Contractor Meeting	pg. 22
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Q12. “The contractor will be responsible for travel costs associated with one annual meeting supporting project-specific and cross-consortium contractor engagements. Vendors will be expected to allocate a reasonable sum of the proposed budget to support this task.”

Answer: IMPORTANT ADDITION FOR VENDORS -- Subsequent to the issuance of this RFP, the cross-contractor meetings have been increased from an annual meeting to two meetings per year. An amendment to the RFP will appear on the OSPI RFP website to address this change. Since the duration of this contract is slated for less than six months, this should not affect budgeting or travel plans associated with this solicitation for services.

Is the contractor responsible for travel costs for non-contractor personnel? If so, how many people, for how many days, and to which city?

Answer: For the cross-contractor meetings, contractors are responsible for travel for their personnel and sub-contractors only. They are not responsible for SBAC or state

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staff travel. The meetings are expected to be about three days in a city with good airline access.

Q13. How much should the Vendor budget for this travel?

Answer: The contractor should propose a travel budget for the meeting based on the information above.

Q14. Is the “one annual meeting” a pre-scheduled SBAC meeting scheduled during the 3-month contract period by SBAC that the Item Specifications vendor will report with other awarded vendors?

Answer: The twice annual cross-vendor meetings are pre-scheduled meetings. The initial cross-vendor meeting is tentatively scheduled for early February and will include all vendors currently under contract to the project.

Q15. Or, is this meeting a separate specific meeting for the Item Specifications work with the SBAC teams? If yes, how many SBAC members should the vendor include for travel?

Answer: This is not a separate meeting. As a reminder the contract for this procurement addresses the test blueprint for the SMARTER Balanced project and the associated CAT design. There is no item specification work with this contract.

Q16. Should Contractors assume a central Denver or Las Vegas location?

Answer: Though the locations suggested are viable options, the exact place and time of the meetings is yet to be determined, but will be held in cities with good airline access and reasonable food and lodging costs.

Section C	PROPOSAL CONTENTS Components of the Deliverables 2.1. Develop Summative Specifications and Blueprints Expected Outcome:	pg. 23
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Q17. Are the Content Specifications for ELA & Math posted on the SBAC’s website considered final?

Answer: No, they are still currently under development.

Section C	PROPOSAL CONTENTS Components of the Deliverables 2.1.1 Develop a statement of purpose for each set of evidence.	pg. 23
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Q18. Does this contract intend that the contractor also develop specifications for special needs and ELL populations? Or are these test specifications covered under a different contract?

Answer: It is expected that there will be one test blueprint that will apply to all but the 1% population.

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Q19. What exactly is this contractor’s responsibility regarding these groups?
Answer: See above. The original SBAC original proposal outlines overall plans for special populations.

Section C	PROPOSAL CONTENTS Components of the Deliverables 2.1.2 Develop content coverage specifications for adaptive student test events.	pg. 24
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Q20. The 1st bullet on the top of page 24 states, “Comprehensive recommendations and documentation describing test blueprints for a paper/pencil, fixed form of the assessment that ensures comparable content coverage and cognitive complexity and delivers scores on the same scale as adaptive test events.”

An adaptive test is a dynamic assessment where items are presented to the student based on the student’s response to previous test items. A paper/pencil test is typically a static assessment where the student responds to all items in the test.

Is the expectation stated above limited to having two different testing approaches that produce scores using a common scale?

Answer: Yes. The two different testing approaches should yield comparable scores based a common scale.

Section C	PROPOSAL CONTENTS Components of the Deliverables 2.2.1 Develop Pilot Test Specifications	pg. 24
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Q21. Is this a requirement for developing test specifications, actual test forms, or both?
Answer: Test specifications only. Selection of items for adaptive or fixed pools is part of a separate Psychometric Services contract.

Q22. Will the electronic versions of pilot tests be fixed-form?
Answer: The pilot test will not be adaptive.

Q23. Can the Vendor assume that items will already be coded for linguistic difficulty level?
Answer: Items are to be coded for text complexity.

Q24. Is linguistic difficulty level an element of item specifications?
Answer: Item specifications have a text complexity element.

Section C	PROPOSAL CONTENTS Components of the Deliverables 2.2.2 Develop Field Test Specifications Bullets and sub-bullets	pg. 24-25
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- Q25. Is this a requirement for developing test specifications, actual test forms, or both?
Answer: Test specifications only.
- Q26. Is there a requirement to develop specifications for multiple sets of field tests?
Answer: Proposal for the design and deployment of field test pools is part of this contract such that SBAC will be able to subsequently implement a field test that is sufficiently comprehensive to create a robust scale and item bank.
- Q27. The sub-bullet 4 seems to imply the contractor will develop actual forms – is that correct?
Answer: No.
- Q28. Will field tests be administered in a series of generations? If so, (approximately) how many?
Answer: Proposal for the design and deployment of field test pools is part of this contract. An iterative process for deployment may be proposed, but would need to have an explicit associated rationale and clear benefits that meet the timeline and objectives of the field test.
- Q29. Will there be a paper/pencil administration of the field tests in addition to an online administration?
Answer: No.
- Q30. If so, what proportion of field tests will be online v. paper/pencil?
Answer: See Q29.
- Q31. In the last bullet, what kinds of accommodations will be covered under this requirement?
Answer: It will depend on the results of research on accommodations. Most accommodations will be done through adaptive testing, but fixed forms may be needed for some accommodations where item availability is limited. This contractor will need to work closely with the Accessibility & Accommodations Work Group and with the contractors for RFP 6 and RFP 4 which can be found at the sites below:
http://www.k12.wa.us/RFP/pubdocs/SBAC_RFP-06.pdf
<http://www.k12.wa.us/RFP/pubdocs/SBAC-RFPNo04.pdf>

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Section C **PROPOSAL CONTENTS** **pg. 25**
Components of the Deliverables
2.3 Develop CAT Specifications and Conduct Initial CAT Simulation Studies
Expected Outcomes

Q32. Given the timing of the required simulation work (Feb – Apr 2012) relative to the Pilot (Mar –Apr 2013), the simulations required to finalize design specifications will need to be based on hypothesized items, parameters and pools. Does this assumption agree with SBAC’s plans?

Answer: Yes. The purpose of simulation at this stage is to find out how well the algorithm performs with the proposed blueprint and to establish optimal pool sizes and distributions.

Q33. Can you elaborate on “all intended reporting levels”?

Answer: These would be the achievement level categories.

Q34. Will the operational CAT engine be adaptive at the level of the total score only or will it also need to adapt to obtain sufficient accuracy for each level of a content and/or process variable as well?

Answer: Working with the Psychometric Services vendor, the criteria for overall and subscore accuracy will be defined. One of the purposes of simulation at this stage is to find out the properties of item pools required to support that level of accuracy when using the algorithm that best minimizes error.

Section C **PROPOSAL CONTENTS** **pg. 27**
Components of the Deliverables
2.4.2 Identify the scores or ratings performance tasks will deliver and how they will correspond to Score Reporting Categories and Content specifications.

Q35. Does the reference to “Score Reporting Categories” come from the Content Specifications?

Answer: Yes, the finalized Content Specifications will guide those categories.

Section C **PROPOSAL CONTENTS** **pg. 27**
Components of the Deliverables
2.5.1 Develop specifications for the desired features of the interim system by facilitating discussions among SBAC stakeholders and providing a means for recording and organizing stakeholder input.

Q36. Will SBAC identify the stakeholders for us?

Answer: Yes.

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Exhibit F **Evaluation Criteria** **pg. 51**

Q37. The RFP cites, ‘a separate tech proposal for each component.’, please confirm it is acceptable to submit a proposal with the following structure:

- One Technical proposal, covering components 1 – 5 within section A – Project Approach/Methodology, then one inclusive narrative each or sections B through F. This would include a single Project Schedule covering all activity for components 1 – 5.

Answer:

- The technical proposal needs to clearly address each component. Elements B through F can be written as a single narrative, but where appropriate they must reference each part of Section A. This is also true of the Project Schedule. The component schedules can be integrated, but must clearly convey the relationship of activities to components.
- There should be one Management Proposal
- There should be one Cost Proposal with one set of combined costs covering components 1 – 5.

General Questions

Q38. **CONSULTANT ELIGIBILITY:** What does “Consultants that are available to work in Washington State mean?”

Answer: Consultants need to be able (eligible and licensed) to conduct business in the United States. This criterion will be updated in the amendment to the RFP.

Q39. “The CONTRACTOR will be responsible for facilitating a consensus process for the final product consistent with SBAC governance.”

Does SBAC have guidelines in place to help Contractors facilitate the consensus process? Otherwise, will SBAC work with the Contractor to develop and reinforce decision-making rules and deadlines?

Answer: Contractor will work within the SBAC governance and decision making structures. SBAC will provide instruction and guidance in these structures.

Q40. May Contractors use multiple modes of bringing groups together such as WebEx meetings, face-to-face, and online tools to help facilitate the Work Group consensus?

Answer: Yes.

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- Q41. Is it intended that this consensus process will result from physical meetings in a specific location?
Answer: No. Some face-to-face meetings are useful, but this is not required. Much of the process is likely to be conducted remotely. The vendor should propose what aspects of the consensus process need to be face to face.
- Q42. If so, where will they be held?
Answer: Refer to Q40. If face-to-face meetings are required, locations will be selected with good airport access.
- Q43. How many meetings are required per objective?
Answer: As many as needed; vendor is expected to propose a meeting schedule to allow for requirements gathering and achieving consensus.
- Q44. How many attendees are expected per meeting?
Answer: It will vary with the goals and expectations of the meeting. Vendor is expected to propose a comprehensive plan for meetings and consensus-building (including justification for plans and assumptions). Vendors will propose plans for meeting schedule and attendees with final numbers determined at time of negotiation.
- Q45. Will the contractor be responsible for paying expenses for all attendees?
Answer: If it's a face-to-face meeting, yes. Most meetings can be held via webinar or other electronic means.
- Q46. Approximately how many representatives are involved in the consensus processes?
Answer: This will depend on the nature of the design approved by SBAC as part of this contract. (refer to answer #44)
- Q47. Does SBAC governance require face-to-face meetings for facilitation or can the process be conducted remotely?
Answer: The process can be conducted remotely. The contractor may want to propose a few face-to-face meetings, but this is not required. See #41.
- Q48. Would SBAC be willing to reconsider its intent to award this scope of work to only one contractor? That is, could the Test Blueprint component be awarded separately from the CAT Specifications component, and therefore could bidders only submit a proposal for one of those areas rather than both? It is possible that the vendor best suited to deliver the services in one of these areas does not have the same level of expertise in the other area.
Answer: The contract will be awarded to a single contractor. That contractor may use subcontractors to carry out the work.
- Q49. Please confirm that the requirement to double space does NOT apply to tables that appear in the technical proposal.
Answer: So confirmed.

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Q50. Please confirm that the double spacing requirement does NOT apply to resumes.
Answer: So confirmed.

Q51. Is the Management Plan part of the 100 page limit?
Answer: Yes