

Service Definition Document

Operational Readiness Testing Services





Operational Readiness Testing Services

Opencast provides *Operational Readiness Testing* services under the G-Cloud framework (Lot 3: Cloud Support Services), tailored to meet the needs of highly regulated public sector environments, including central government and health and social care organisations.

Our approach combines advisory, delivery, and embedding of proven readiness testing methodologies, practices, and tooling.

Opencast's Operational Readiness Testing services support organisational objectives:

- Cloud First Strategy: Ensuring systems and teams are ready for live operations.
- One Government Cloud Approach: Standardising readiness testing practices across departments where applicable.
- Value for Money: Demonstrating measurable improvements in reliability and risk reduction.
- Digital Transformation: Incorporating readiness validation into all deployment decisions.
- Capability Building: Upskilling aligned to DDaT frameworks through readiness testing training and knowledge transfer.

Service Features:

- Validate infrastructure stability before production deployment begins.
- Ensure application functionality meets operational requirements.
- Confirm monitoring tools and alerting systems are configured correctly.
- Test incident response procedures for rapid issue resolution.
- Verify backup and recovery processes for business continuity.
- Assess operational documentation for completeness and accuracy.
- Check resource availability for sustained performance under load.
- Evaluate security controls for compliance and risk mitigation.
- Simulate real-world scenarios to identify operational gaps.
- Provide readiness certification for go-live confidence.

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Service Benefits:

- Reduces risk of failures during production deployment.
- Ensures smooth transition from development to live environment.
- Improves system reliability and operational stability.
- Validates disaster recovery and backup readiness.
- Enhances compliance with security and regulatory standards.
- Identifies gaps in processes before go-live.
- Boosts confidence for stakeholders and delivery teams.
- Minimises downtime through proactive issue detection.
- Supports efficient resource utilisation and capacity planning.
- Strengthens incident response and operational resilience.

Opencast's Operational Readiness Testing services provide public sector organisations with the methodologies, tools, expertise and experience needed to manage operational risk and ensure successful go-live.

By combining technical validation with robust governance, we help departments deliver better services for citizens while ensuring strategic alignment and value.

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Service Offering: GDS Assessment Readiness

Overview

Opencast's GDS Assessment Readiness service helps government teams prepare for and successfully pass Government Service Standard (GDS) assessments. We draw on extensive experience delivering digital services across diverse government departments, from the UK's largest (HMRC, DWP, MoJ, Home Office) to smaller arm's length bodies and agencies (Legal Aid Agency, Valuation Office Agency, The Pensions Regulator). We leverage trained GDS assessors, assessment playbooks and structured coaching, to prepare teams for GDS Assessments from Discovery through to Live to embed best practice early and avoid any last-minute issues in the run-up or at assessment stage.

Key Features

- **Early Engagement & Lifecycle Integration:** Assessment readiness embedded from Discovery onwards.
- **Structured Preparation Framework:** Evidence mapping, narrative creation, rehearsal and Q&A prep.
- **Cross-Disciplinary Expert Review:** Senior specialists provide detailed critique across domains.
- **Multi-department Experience:** Success across DfE, DWP, HMRC, NHSBSA and others.
- **Recovery Support:** Helping teams address failures and implement recommendations.

Service Benefits

- **Higher Assessment Success Rates:** Our end-to-end readiness planning, aligned to the 14-point Service Standard, and supported by coaching from trained GDS assessors – increases the likelihood of passing first time.
- **Reduced Risk & Rework:** Early RAD checks, expert multi-disciplinary reviews (UCD, design, architecture, accessibility) and reusable assets help teams identify issues sooner, preventing last-minute issues and rework.
- **Evidence-Backed Storytelling:** Mock assessments, proven evidence libraries and cross-government insight (including GDS experience) help teams build clear, user-centred narratives grounded in service evolution.
- **Long-Term Capability Building:** Through pairing, coaching and access to proven patterns and playbooks, teams develop sustainable capability that strengthens delivery beyond a single assessment cycle.

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About Opencast

Who we are

Opencast is an independently owned full-service UK technology consultancy specialising in designing, building, and running human-focused digital and technology solutions.

Opencast works at the heart of UK government, healthcare and innovative business to develop solutions that include support for critical systems and services and help for millions of people. Opencast delivers improved digital experiences, better operational performance, responsible emerging tech and innovation, and enhanced insights through data.

Opencast believes in making life better through the power of people and technology. Its vision is to make a positive impact on society through solutions that are simpler, more sustainable and fairer for all.

Who we work with

Opencast specialises in developing end-to-end enterprise solutions for government, healthcare and innovative business. Our public sector experience includes working with:

- Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)
- Department for Education (DFE)
- Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)
- Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- Government Digital Service (GDS)
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC)
- Home Office (HO)
- Marine Management Organisation (MMO)
- Ministry of Justice (MOJ)
- Ministry of Defence (MOD)
- NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA)
- NHS England (NHSE)

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Our team

Our teams have an excellent delivery track record, bringing years of technology and digital experience to our clients. Our people display qualities and behaviours that underpin our values.

Our values:

- We build trust
- We enable people
- We work together
- We do the right thing
- We make a difference

In practice that means our people are hard-working, smart self-starters who think independently and use their intuition to deliver for our clients with confidence and transparency.

Our people also have a strong sense of team and always treat each other with respect. Our people have experience working in both full Opencast teams, as well as mixed client and supplier teams.

Our culture empowers independent-minded people in our mission to do the right thing for our clients, our team and wider society: good teamwork to make life better.

Client Partnership

Opencast appoints a Client Relationship Director (CRD) at the start of our engagements to manage the partnership between the client and Opencast. The named CRD will be available to attend calls or visits on-site and will act as a point of collaboration and escalation where required.

The CRD will be tasked with creating a true partnership with the client and to ensure that maximum value is gained by the client from the partnership.

Typically, we also involve our senior consultancy team including our Directors of Capability and Practice Leads. Drawing on decades of experience, they bring other viewpoints and ideas for consideration, not just within the project space, but also in other technologies, services, or business.

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People Management

Opencast takes its people care very seriously. Our aim is to provide committed people who care about the success of both Opencast and our clients.

In addition to the CRD, our consultants benefit from dedicated People Experience Partners (PEEPs) that provide pastoral care, as well as close links in with our Practice Leads that lead our capability development. These roles are supported by our wider People Experience Team, ensuring that our people are supported from all sides.

In the unlikely event that a personnel change is required, Opencast work closely with the client to ensure a smooth transition and an effective handover.

People Vetting

Our consultants provide references and background checks to meet the requirements of the client. We clear all employees to BPSS level as a minimum, and many of our consultants have or are eligible for SC clearance. Opencast typically cover the costs of obtaining standard checks and references and will inform the client if there are any issues or delays to the vetting process prior to consultants starting work with the client.

Pricing & Quality of People

Opencast is proud of its reputation for quality and delivery and take great care in selecting the right people for the right assignments.

We have a rigorous interview process, conducting both competency-based and values-based interviews and assessments as part of the recruitment process. Our employees are often people who are already known to us or have been passed on by personal recommendations and the vast majority are permanent employees.

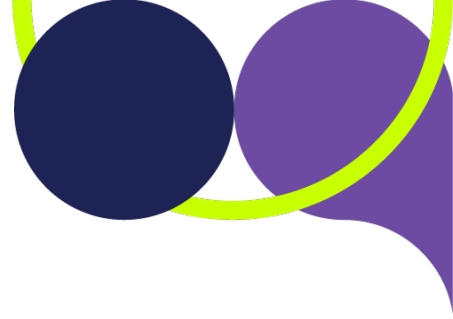
We can provide our services on either a Time & Materials (T&M) or Fixed Price basis to match your needs. For T&M services, please refer to our SFIA Rate Card.

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Value Adding Activities

Opencast recognise the strategic importance of our clients' projects, and to ensure the ongoing success of their services. We treat knowledge transfer and handover activities as first-class deliverables, setting up our clients for success.

Opencast work closely with its clients to:

- Provide additional ad-hoc project/delivery status updates as required
- Be available for advice and guidance for strategic or tactical next steps
- Provide information and collateral to facilitate stakeholder presentations
- Attend calls or assist directly with stakeholder meetings
- Provide guidance and opinions upon best practice
- Facilitate workshops or "brown bag" sessions to share experiences and knowledge and become active members of communities of practice
- Encourage networking between client sponsors and project staff to other trusted clients of Opencast for industry or technology sharing (i.e. other Government departments or health and social care organisations)

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