

NGfL 4 Help Sheet

What conditions do we have to satisfy to get NGfL funding this year?

- You must agree an ICT development plan with your LEA. Details of the areas that such plans should address, and sources of further guidance, can be found <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/standardsfund/ngflplan.html>.
- You must be signed up with an approved provider of New Opportunities Fund ICT training. This requirement refers to schools as institutions, rather than to all of their teachers.
- Wherever practical, ICT facilities should be made available for use by pupils and the local community out of school hours.

What can we spend our Category A NGfL allocation on?

Your allocation of Category A money is primarily for purchasing equipment to bring your school up to the required baseline of a ratio of 1:7 in secondary and special schools and 1:11 in primary by August 2002. For full details of permissible expenditure, please see the guidance at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/standardsfund/ngflsch.html>.

What sort of computer systems can we buy?

You can buy desktop systems, notebooks or laptops; or handhelds (eg Psion NetBooks or Palms / Handsprings etc.), along with appropriate software. However, any portable computers must be capable of being networked, and of running current versions of educational multimedia software and Internet/intranet applications.

We want to add systems to an existing network, what do we have to consider?

You should ensure that the new computers have the correct network cards and are completely compatible with your existing provision. Also, please remember that you will need to purchase network licenses and software licenses. You may also need to hire a technician to 'build' your new network stations and connect them to the network or contact the manufacturer or supplier to install them.

We need more cabling to connect new computers to the network. Where can we go to get this done?

You can contact a company such as Baxters (8761 0560) or Letss (8850 0100) to do the work for you.

We have some SchoolShare systems and an ILS network. Can we link it all together?

Yes, your system can be upgraded to a Window Box Connect network. Contact Satpal Biant of RM on 07733 003400 for a quote.

Can somebody from the LEA come into the school and give us some advice on what to buy?

Yes, this can be arranged but depending on the support required, a small charge may be incurred. Contact Chris Barnes (tel: 020 8926 9545) for information.

Can we network computers without wires?

Yes, there are a number of wireless solutions available. For example, the Apple iBook and the RM wireless Window Box Notebook.

Will an Apple iBook work with a PC network?

You can link iBooks into the network using the Airport Base Station over a protocol called TCP/IP. The iBooks will be able to network with each other and connect to the Internet.

We would like to buy some Psion NetBooks. Are they compatible with PCs or Macs?

Psion NetBooks can be linked to a desktop computer to synchronize calendars and share files such as those created by Word and Excel. Although the file structure is not compatible, files are converted when moved between Psion and the desktop. If you want to link a Psion to an iMac or iBook, you will probably need to buy a USB to serial converter.

Should I buy my computers from an NGfL approved supplier?

That is certainly the advice from the DfEE and BECTa. Suppliers on the approved list have gone through an extensive quality control process to gain certification for this scheme.

Should we buy Service plan support for our equipment?

If you have a network, then a network support contract is pretty essential. Various options are available. Please contact your vendor for details. Category A money can be used for technical support but remember that the baseline is the top priority.

What are the plans for connecting schools to broadband?

NGfL4 Category C is available this year, to begin to provide schools with access to faster Internet connections. If your school is interested in being part of this initiative this year, then please email Chris Davies (cdavies@lambeth.gov.uk) to confirm.

Further information about broadband and the London Grid for London will be available at the ICT Conference on 13 July 2001.

IMS – Information Management Systems

Category A money can also be used to extend your schools information management systems and link them to the Internet (contact a company such as LETSS 8850 0100 for a quotation). Further information and funding for this initiative is being made available by the DfEE - we shall be sending details to heads shortly.