



## Becta's ICT Advice services for teachers

Becta's ICT Advice service is an integrated provision of support and advice to schools. It offers timely, free and impartial advice on the implementation of ICT through a range of different services.

To keep up to date with Becta's ICT Advice service, register for the ICT Alert, a monthly email newsletter [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/newsletters>].

### The ICT Advice website [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk>]

The ICT Advice website is the 'core' of Becta's advice and support to schools. It is the place to access online content and services and to find out more about the events and opportunities offered by Becta's ICT Advice service for schools.

Aimed at classroom teachers, subject co-ordinators, ICT co-ordinators and special needs co-ordinators, the website is where you will be able to access all of the advice and support relevant to your professional needs.

The ICT Advice service consists of the following key features:

### Direct access to national experts through the 'Ask an Expert' service [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/experts>]

The Ask an Expert service offers support and advice to enable practitioners to make appropriate decisions about ICT-related issues or problems. You are able to pose questions directly to national experts through the ICT Advice site. Each month the site hosts two topical themes which focus on curriculum and pedagogy. The themes are advertised in advance through the site and our newsletters.

### Developing ICT skills and confidence through the 'New2Computers' service [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/new2computers>]

New2Computers is for those teachers who are just starting out with computers. The service offers direct online advice from friendly mentors via tutorials, a chat room and an email forum. If you are totally new2computers, you can join the 'newts' area, which offers sample missions to support the development of ICT skills.

### Sharing good practice in the use of ICT in your subject through a programme of face-to-face national conferences [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/ictadviceevents>]

Events at venues all over the country will be happening over the next year to support the use of ICT in subject teaching. Becta's ICT Advice services will be offering advice and support events, with additional subject specialisms being provided by the relevant subject associations.

### Supporting continuing professional development in the use and implementation of ICT through online events and insets [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/ictadviceevents>]

The online events and insets provide lesson resources, ideas and advice. Users are able to log on in advance, view and try out materials, and then ask for support from the content authors at a pre-arranged time.

### Keeping up to date with the latest news and sharing good practice through online and offline newsletters [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/newsletters>]

Find out the latest ideas and learn more about integrating ICT into your subject through our online and offline, termly and monthly newsletters.

### Exchange information and talk to other practitioners through online discussion forums [<http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/talk>]

The 'Talk' area of the ICT Advice website is where you will find a wide range of discussion forums on different aspects of ICT. By joining a forum, you can exchange views, ask questions, provide answers and just generally share classroom experiences with other teachers.

### Supporting the use of ICT in schools through offline publications

In addition to providing online advice, a range of print publications is available free of charge. You can order any of our publications, leaflets and CD-ROMs from the Becta website [<http://www.becta.org.uk/corporate/publications>].

### About Becta

Becta is the Government's lead agency for ICT in education. It supports the UK Government, national organisations, schools and colleges in the use and development of ICT in education to raise standards, widen access, improve skills and encourage effective management.

While every care has been taken in the compilation of this information to ensure that it is accurate at the time of publication, Becta cannot be held responsible for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of any error or inaccuracy within these pages. Although all references to external sources (including any websites linked to the Becta website) are checked both at the time of compilation and on a regular basis, Becta does not accept any responsibility for, or otherwise endorse, any information contained in these pages, including any sources cited.

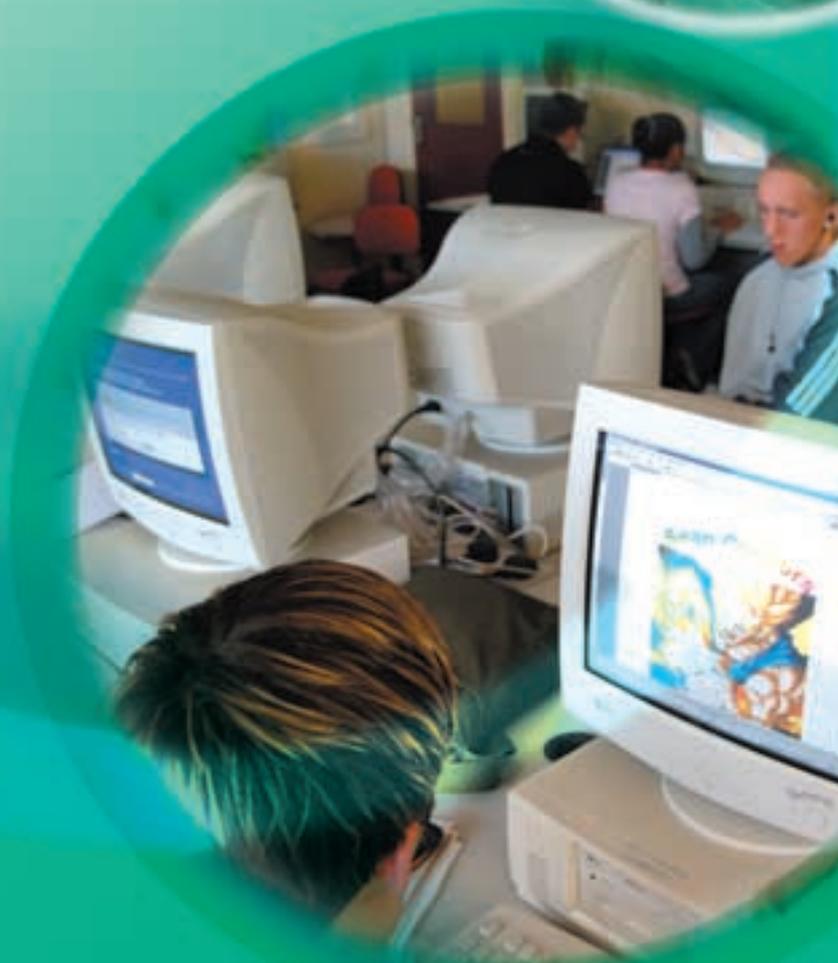


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curriculum online  
and electronic  
learning credits  
(eLCs)





## What is Curriculum Online?

Curriculum Online is central to the Government's drive to transform teaching and learning in schools by improving access to ICT and multimedia resources for all pupils.

To help achieve this aim, the Government has set aside substantial funds in the form of eLCs (electronic Learning Credits). This eLC money goes directly to individual schools, via their Local Education Authority (LEA), to spend on multimedia resources.

The Curriculum Online website [<http://www.curriculumonline.gov.uk>] exists to bring teaching professionals and multimedia resources together. The site allows for easy, pinpoint searching through the thousands of multimedia resources which schools can buy with their eLC money, as well as through resources that are free. All these resources are aligned with the curriculum of subjects taught in schools in England.

### What's new about the Curriculum Online website?

As of December 2003, the site has been redesigned to help teachers track down the right resource in as targeted and straightforward a way as possible. Teaching professionals can now search:

- by subject or title of resource
- by scope of resource (for example, from a single lesson to whole school year)
- by supplier (using the A-Z directory of suppliers).

It is also now possible to search for resources to meet a specific need such as:

- special educational needs (SEN)
- foundation/early years
- free resources
- interactive whiteboard resources.

The site has a number of additional features available to users who register on the site. When searching for the right resources to suit your needs, it is possible to keep a record of your choices or suggestions by using the 'wishlist' facility.

To make finding the right resource easier, many resources have been given

independent evaluations, star ratings and/or teacher reviews. All teachers are invited to add their own reviews of resources they have used.

### What is a 'multimedia resource'?

The term 'multimedia resource' refers to items of software that are specifically targeted to support the teaching of the curriculum in England through enriching lessons with the latest technology. Such products can be supplied in many different formats and at a wide range of prices. The resource may include items such as user manuals, technical support and the cost of distribution. Items of hardware are not allowed unless they cost only a small fraction of the cost of the software and are sold as a package.

### Is my school receiving funding?

Each LEA in England has been given money using Standards Fund Grant 618 for pupils in the following areas of maintained education:

- primary schools
- secondary schools
- nursery schools
- nursery places in independent nurseries
- special schools
- pupil referral units
- city technology colleges (CTCs).

The money - known as electronic Learning Credits or eLCs - is paid as cash to LEAs. Each maintained school is entitled to £1,000 as a starting point plus nearly £10 for each pupil up to the age of 15. All other institutions who have maintained places will not receive the £1,000 baseline figure but may still get nearly £10 for each maintained pupil up to the age of 15.

These maintained places include places in independent nurseries. In order for an independent nursery to be considered it must:

- be included in the Education Authorities' Directory of all non-maintained nursery providers on 1 April 2003
- have been registered and inspected by Ofsted and have had its provision assessed as being satisfactory or better at 1 April 2003
- have eligible four-year-olds in receipt of the Nursery Education Grant who are eligible for free nursery education from the start of the 2003 summer term.

If an independent nursery fulfils all these conditions, the LEA will consider whether an allocation is appropriate, depending on the number of places that will benefit and whether appropriate hardware is already in place.

### How much money will my school get and how is it distributed?

In total, the DfES is giving out £330m in the following batches:

| Amount | Issue date      | To be spent                      |
|--------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| £30m   | 7 Nov 2002      | By 31 Aug 2003                   |
| £100m  | 30 May 2003     | By 31 Aug 2004                   |
| £100m  | From April 2004 | Date of issue to end of Aug 2005 |
| £100m  | From April 2005 | Date of issue to end of Aug 2006 |



LEAs must either give out the money to their schools or hold the money centrally, with the schools' agreement, to make bulk purchases. Likewise, schools may combine eLC allocations for larger purchases.

To find out if your school has received its eLC allocation, you should first check with your school's eLC budget holder (for example, your head, head of department, bursar or ICT co-ordinator). Then, if necessary, talk to your LEA and speak to the individual or team who distributes Standards Fund money. If you still cannot find the answer, contact the team at the DfES by completing an enquiry form (see the Helpdesk area of the Curriculum Online website) or by calling 0870 000 2288.

#### How do I buy a multimedia resource?

No transactions take place directly through the site. To buy a resource using eLCs, you just need the approval of your eLC budget-holder. You then order direct from a supplier, informing them that you are using eLCs. The process – from searching to purchasing - is as follows:

On the homepage you can do any of the following:

- select a subject and click on 'Go' to access a search page for each subject
- find resources for pupils with SEN
- find resources for early learning/ foundation stage
- find whole-school resources such as reference materials
- use the A-Z index of suppliers to look for a particular supplier and their resources
- search for a title of a resource.

On each subject search page you can:

- search by key stages and school years
- select the scope of the resource you want
- enter key words and additional search options to make your search more specific
- browse resources based on the programmes of study/schemes of work.

The search results give details of each resource and link(s) to the websites of supplier(s). Follow the link to the supplier's website to find out how to order the resource. If the resource is priced, please tell the supplier if you are using your eLC money to buy it. Using eLC money to pay for resources does not alter the supplier's ordering, distribution or invoicing system, nor does it prevent suppliers from offering discounts to customers.

When you have received the resource, the supplier will invoice your school directly. The invoice should be paid using your existing procedures and the expenditure recorded in your school's accounts under Standards Fund Grant 618.

If the resource is available free of charge, details of how to obtain it will be displayed on either the resource information page and/or the supplier's site.

#### When do we have to spend our eLCs?

All Standards Fund grants must be spent by the end of the academic year to ensure their effective use. If the money has not been spent by the deadline, the DfES will reclaim the money from LEAs so it can be redistributed to other areas.

#### Why can't we buy hardware?

Curriculum Online is aimed at raising standards in curriculum subjects by giving teachers software that will help them teach in the classroom. Allowing eLC money to be spent on other items might undermine this aim. If your school needs hardware or any other item, talk to your LEA to see if other budgets are available.

#### How can I find out more?

Visit the Curriculum Online website. If you are unable to find an answer to your query from the information above or from the site, you can either contact the support team by completing an enquiry form (accessed from the Helpdesk area of the site) or by phoning the DfES Public Enquiry Unit on 0870 000 2288. The team is available 09:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday, excluding English Bank Holidays.