



Home Access school aggregation rules and guidelines



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Glossary of terms

Term	Description
Administrative Contact	The nominated individual from the school who will be responsible for the day-to-day administration and operation of the aggregation scheme.*
Aggregated model	An operating model where the value of Home Access Grants can be aggregated and redeemed by a local authority, school or academy acting as an agent on behalf of a group of grant recipients.
Aggregation scheme	The administrative arrangements for the delivery of the aggregated model.
Aggregation Scheme Owner	The nominated individual from the school who will be responsible for the overall management and oversight of the aggregation scheme.*
Aggregating school/ academy	A school or academy which has successfully registered with Becta to operate an aggregation scheme.
Applicant	The learner or representative of a learner (e.g parent, guardian or carer) making an application for a Home Access Grant.
Approved supplier	A supplier which has been approved by Becta and is authorised to provide Home Access packages.
Grant recipient	Individual applicant whose application has been successful and who has been awarded a Home Access Grant.
Grant Redemption Manager	The nominated individual from the school who is responsible for ordering on behalf of the aggregation scheme. *if different person from Administrative Contact, then Grant Redemption Manager owns all purchase/fund transactions.
HAGAS	Home Access Grant Administration Service. Capita, a supplier appointed by Becta to deliver Home Access Grants.
Home Access Grant	Funding to purchase a Home Access package, awarded to applicants that meet Home Access eligibility criteria.
Home Access packages	Hardware and/or connectivity packages that are compliant with Becta set standards. Home Access packages are provided by approved suppliers only.
Means of payment	The chosen payment mechanism of the HAGAS.
MI	Management information.
Retail model	The core operating model under which grants are awarded to eligible individuals who then directly purchase a Home Access package from an approved supplier.
SKU	Stock Keeping Unit.
Terms and conditions	The school aggregation terms and conditions.



Preface

This document provides guidance to schools or academies (henceforth referred to collectively as 'schools') wishing to make aggregated purchases of Home Access packages on behalf of eligible learners/households. It sets out the key rules and requirements for offering and operating an aggregation scheme and provides schools with information to help them deliver this initiative and to maximise the benefits of Home Access. For ease of understanding aggregation is referred to in marketing materials as 'Group Ordering'.

In order to offer and operate an aggregation scheme involving Home Access funds, schools must obtain prior approval from Becta and the Home Access Grant Administration Service (HAGAS). To obtain approval they must apply for registration using the application form which is provided with this document.

It is likely schools will only be offered the opportunity to register an aggregation scheme from the 1 December 2009, prior to the commencement of the national rollout of the Home Access programme. The first tranche of application forms will be assessed until 28 February 2010 and it is therefore essential that any school wishing to offer an aggregation scheme returns the completed application form (with the supporting documents) to HAGAS in hard copy by this date.

Failure to submit the complete application on time will prevent a school from opting in to run an aggregation scheme. HAGAS will be under no obligation to consider any applications received from a school after the dates/times stated on the application form.

As set out in the terms and conditions, compliance with these rules and guidelines is a condition of Becta's / HAGAS's approval for a school to operate a Home Access aggregation scheme.

Further information on these rules and guidelines or on aggregation in general can be obtained from: aggregation@becta.org.uk

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1. Background

1.1 The Home Access programme

In September 2008 the Prime Minister announced details of the Home Access programme which aims to provide computers and connectivity to disadvantaged families with children to support their learning. The programme aims to assist those families who would otherwise not be able to gain access to technology and therefore be at risk of exclusion. The Home Access programme also aims to maximise the benefits of home access and increase the value parents see to support learning.

There is a growing body of evidence for the educational, economic and wider benefits of having home access to technology. It has been shown that home access can increase learner achievement, increase motivation and can improve parental engagement, which in turn can raise their child's attainment. However, there are still a substantial number of learners who lack access and evidence shows that socio-economically disadvantaged groups have historically been over-represented among those who are digitally excluded.

It is clear that cost is a major barrier to access and, whilst the costs of home access are falling, they will not do so quickly enough to prevent a large number of low-income families from being excluded from the benefits of home access.

Becta, the government agency leading the national drive to ensure the effective and innovative use of technology throughout learning, has been charged with the delivery of the Home Access programme.

1.2 The Home Access Taskforce

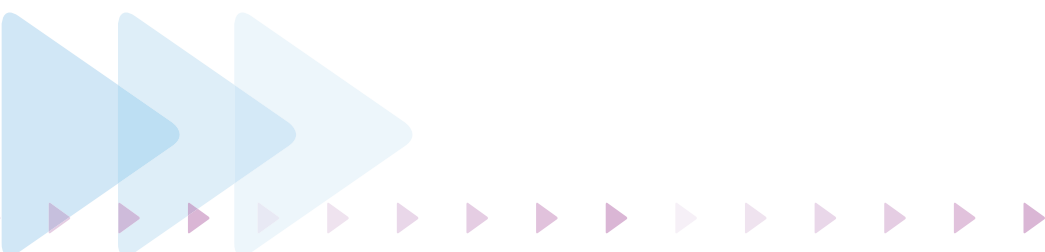
The Home Access programme has been developed from the recommendations of the Home Access Taskforce, headed by Jim Knight, then Minister of State for Schools and Learners. It comprised of representatives from across government, the private sector and third sector organisations. The Home Access Taskforce, which submitted its final report in June 2008, found evidence of market failure and the clear business case for government investment in support of widening opportunities to home access.

1.3 Home Access pilot

A pilot of the programme was launched in February 2009 in Oldham and Suffolk Schools. Low-income families who met certain eligibility criteria applied for a Home Access Grant to purchase a compliant computer, internet connectivity and support package from an approved supplier.

The pilot was designed to test eligibility criteria, purchasing logistics and operational models prior to national rollout. The pilot proved to be an overwhelming success, demonstrating that the process works and that there is a strong demand from parents for home access.

The lessons learnt from the pilot have been captured and have been fed into the national rollout of the programme.



1.4 National rollout

Following on from the pilot the Home Access programme will be rolled out nationally across England at the beginning of 2010. The key targets for the Home Access programme are as follows:

- reducing the barriers of cost for families with low incomes through government financial support
- maximising the benefits of home access to all eligible families with learners via a Home Access Grant
- increasing the perceived value of access to ICT for learning at home to all eligible families with learners via a Home Access Grant.

National rollout incorporates two operating models that offer alternative delivery routes to ensure that the varied needs of individual learners are best catered for and to provide the flexibility for local tailoring: these operating models are the Consumer model and the Aggregated model. Both models involve the provision of Home Access packages by approved suppliers, and Becta will be managing an accreditation process to deliver an approved supplier register for national rollout.

National rollout will be phased, beginning with a target group that broadly matches the eligible population to the available funds and then expanding if funds and demand permit. Eligibility in the first phase of the programme will be limited to learners in Years 3-9 inclusive, and provide a maximum of one Home Access Grant per household.

1.5 Main Home Access (Consumer) model

The parent or guardian of a qualifying learner can apply for a Home Access Grant and, if successful, receive a payment card to purchase a Home Access package from an approved supplier via a retail outlet, by telephone or via an online store.

This is the main operating model for national rollout and will be delivered by the service provider selected to provide the Home Access Grant Administration Service (HAGAS) and the approved suppliers. It is envisaged that most Home Access Grants will be redeemed by learners/households through this main model.

1.6 Aggregated model

This model sits alongside the main model as an alternative means of delivering the Home Access programme. It offers an opportunity for schools looking to actively participate in the adoption of Home Access within their areas of responsibilities to take a leading role in generating the demand for, and ordering of, Home Access packages. The aggregated model will be available to schools on an opt-in basis, with a requirement that they affiliate to the e-Learning Foundation before submitting an application.

The key features of the aggregated model are:

- A school must apply to HAGAS to operate an aggregation scheme.



- If the application is approved, the school acts as an agent for all grant recipients who have opted to participate in the aggregation scheme, making aggregated orders of Home Access packages on behalf of the schemes' participants.
- Schools may choose to add Home Access packages funded from other sources (e.g funds from an e-Learning Foundation grant, payments from learners/households not in receipt of Home Access Grants, or school funds) and include these within the aggregated purchases.

Becta and the Home Access programme will not contribute towards the direct or indirect costs of an aggregation scheme. All costs must be borne by the aggregating school and, therefore, should be taken account of when considering the benefits and risks of aggregation.

1.7 Assistive technology and aggregation

The Home Access programme addresses the needs of individuals with a range of special needs or learning difficulties. In addition to serving learners with no assistive technology needs, the programme is also designed to serve learners with assistive technology requirements. It achieves this by:

- Providing a suite of assistive technology software in all Home Access packages.
- Allowing learners/households whose assistive technology needs include non-standard input devices to specify their requirements on their Home Access Grant application forms and have these devices provided separately by a Becta-appointed supplier.

Aggregation schemes will provide the same level of support for their learners whose assistive technology needs can be met by the above basic assistive technology (i.e. the Home Access packages purchased will include the specified assistive technology software and applicants opting in to aggregation schemes will be able to request alternative input devices where appropriate).

Learners whose assistive technology needs cannot be met by the above options will not be able to participate in an aggregation scheme. If they are eligible for a Home Access Grant they will be routed through a separate process, where their individual needs will be assessed and, if required, they will be provided with an individually-tailored package of assistive technologies, which will be available from April 2010. If, following assessment, they do not require assistive technology they will be routed through the consumer model and awarded an individual Home Access Grant.

1.8 Benefits of aggregation

The aggregated model has been developed to deliver the following benefits:

Learners/households:

- Potential for greater integration between Home Access packages and school systems (e.g access to municipal Wi-Fi cloud or specific learning platforms).
- Potential for greater support from schools, through the process of raising awareness of benefits and facilitating the completion of applications for Home Access Grants, thus making individual applications easier.
- Potential for greater integration with e-learning initiatives, improving educational and parental engagement outcomes, including general use and e-safety.



- Groups which are unlikely to take up the offer promoted by Becta may be more likely to do so when it is perceived to be championed and administered by their school, which may also lead to enhanced engagement where the offer is taken up.
- Learners who are in genuine need but who do not qualify for the Home Access Grant, such as those who receive working tax credit, may benefit through additional Home Access packages being made available as a result of group ordering.

Schools/Academies:

- Greater ability to align adoption or rollout of e-learning or parental engagement initiatives (e.g learning platforms) with a known rise in (or a more confidently predicted level of) home access.
- Alignment with recent or planned initiatives or strategies (e.g CfP, Home Access targeted funding, Regeneration Excellent Cluster etc).
- Potential financial or in-kind benefits from aggregation (in accordance with appendix A: aggregated purchasing benefits policy).
- Enhanced relationship with the parental body and community if schools and academies are perceived as the conduit for Home Access funding.
- An opportunity to customise and tailor communications to more effectively reach target groups.
- Gives academies and schools a rationale and incentive to engage more effectively with hard to reach groups.
- Consistent with and aligned to Becta's strategic aims for schools (e.g parental engagement objectives, use of Self-Review Framework).

1.9 Risks of aggregation

The risks associated with offering and operating an aggregation scheme are likely to include:

Learners/households:

- A longer delay between submission of the Home Access Grant application and receipt of the Home Access package than would be the case under the consumer model.
- A more limited choice of Home Access packages (when compared to the consumer model), as participants in aggregation schemes are likely to be offered a more limited set of options from which to choose.

Schools/Academies:

- Potential for significant direct and indirect costs involved in operating an aggregation scheme.
- The scheme may fail to produce the intended benefits for learners/households.
- The costs of resources and skills necessary to set up, administer, deliver and to close down its aggregation scheme.
- That learners/households will continue to seek, or expect that the school will provide, ongoing support services to grant recipients.
- The Home Access programme may be brought to an earlier end than planned resulting in an early closure of the aggregation scheme and the risk that applicants will not receive a Home Access Grant.



Before applying to opt-in to aggregation, schools should therefore carefully consider:

- Whether the expected benefits and the projected level of households' and learners' participation justify the likely cost and the level of resources necessary to operate the scheme.
- Whether supporting the Home Access programme through other local initiatives specifically designed to increase take-up through the consumer model might be more cost-effective and/or realise similar benefits particularly for learners/households.

1.10 Clustering

Schools can cluster in their promotion, ordering and administration of the grants, however they must all be e-Learning Foundation affiliated and must register to aggregate individually.



2. Timetable

The key dates set out below are provisional and may be subject to change

2.1 Registration of scheme

1 December 2009 Registration for school aggregation schemes opens

28 February 2010 Registration period closes

Registration forms will be assessed on a weekly basis, once they are granted aggregator status they may start preparing for national roll-out commencing on 7th January. It is from this point individual grant applications can be assessed.

2.2 Key operational milestones

7 January 2010 Home Access operations commence in full

7 January 2010 School aggregation schemes open to applicants



3. Legal overview

3.1 Introduction

This section highlights some key legal issues relating to the aggregated model that must be considered by schools wishing to operate an aggregation scheme. Neither the identification of issues nor the information provided herein is exhaustive, and schools wishing to operate an aggregation scheme should obtain their own legal advice, where they feel this is necessary, in order to satisfy themselves that they are able to operate the scheme as set out in these rules and guidelines and in the terms and conditions.

3.2 The agent's role

As Home Access programme funding is provided as a grant to the individual learner/household, the aggregated model requires that learners/households appoint the school as their agent to carry out the ordering on their behalf. As a result of this agency approach, the aggregated model falls outside of the EU procurement rules and ownership of devices rests with individual learners/households.

3.3 Other considerations

There are a number of other legal considerations (including state aid and competition rules) that have been taken into account in the development of the Home Access programme. As a result, there are additional requirements that:

- Schools shall do nothing to restrict competition between approved suppliers;
- Schools operating an aggregation scheme shall not favour any particular approved supplier or Home Access package without clear and objective justification;
- Schools shall document all devices purchased against each learner/household;
- Aggregated purchases shall be made from approved suppliers and shall consist of Home Access packages as a minimum; in the event that additional goods or services are provided, it shall be made clear to all parties concerned that these additional elements are not part of a Becta-approved Home Access package.



4. Applying for registration

4.1 Requirement to register

In order to operate an aggregation scheme involving Home Access funds, schools must obtain prior approval from HAGAS. To obtain approval they must apply for registration using the application form provided.

Schools will only be offered the opportunity to register an aggregation scheme in line with the tranche dates mentioned previously. It is therefore essential that any school wishing to offer an aggregation scheme returns the completed application form (with the supporting documents) to HAGAS by the due date. HAGAS shall be under no obligation to consider any applications received from a school after the dates/times stated on the application form.

Aggregation schemes will initially cover learners in Years 3-9 inclusive. If eligibility is subsequently extended to other groups, aggregating schools may elect to extend their schemes to cover these additional learners.

4.2 Preparation for completing the application form

Before applying to register an aggregation scheme, schools should satisfy themselves that:

- There would be genuine benefits from aggregating purchases.
- They have the resource, capacity and capability to effectively and efficiently operate an aggregation scheme.
- There is likely to be a level of learner/household participation sufficient to realise the intended benefits and to justify the costs involved in operating the scheme.
- They have sought appropriate legal advice and have secured the appropriate internal sign-offs to operate the aggregation scheme.

4.3 Completing the application form

Aggregation scheme nominated roles (section 1)

Each school applying to operate an aggregation scheme must provide the details of personnel who will undertake the three specific roles identified on the application form and as described below.

- **Aggregation Scheme Owner:** a senior member of staff who will act as the scheme owner and be responsible for the overall management and oversight of the scheme's operation. The Aggregation Scheme Owner will be the principal contact with HAGAS / Becta.
- **Grant Redemption Manager:** responsible for managing and controlling the aggregation fund and in whose name the HAGAS will issue the means of payment for Home Access funds. He/she will also be responsible for managing all orders, refunds and any subsequent re-purchases on behalf of the aggregation scheme. A school may nominate the Aggregation Scheme Owner as the Grant Redemption Manager.
- **Administrative Contact:** responsible for the day-to-day operation and administration of the aggregation scheme. He/she will be the HAGAS's day to day contact. A school may nominate the Aggregation Scheme Owner or the Grant Redemption Manager as the Administrative Contact. There should however, be two individuals involved in running the scheme.

Should an aggregating school need to change the nominated person for any of the above roles, it shall inform the HAGAS as soon as practicable.



4.4 Assessment of applications

In assessing a school's application to operate an aggregation scheme, HAGAS will:

- Ensure that the school has confirmed its acceptance of the terms and conditions and has correctly completed all declarations on the application form;
- Review the estimates of expected scheme participation provided in part 2 of the application form;
- Evaluate the delivery plan (as described in part 3 of the application form); and
- Review the school's performance history with respect to CfP, Access to Technology at Home and Home Access to ICT for Targeted Groups.

Becta may also consult with DCSF and other agencies in order to form a view of the school's compliance with monitoring and reporting requirements against other programmes in reaching a conclusion on whether to approve a school's aggregation scheme application.

4.5 Notification of outcome

On completion of the assessment process HAGAS will inform schools of the outcome of their applications. Successful schools will be issued with an aggregation scheme registration number and an aggregation toolkit that will provide more detailed guidance on operating the aggregation scheme. An unsuccessful school will be able to request a review of its application review if it believes that the application was not assessed correctly.



5. Rules for operating a scheme

5.1 Demand generation

The aggregating school shall be responsible for generating the demand for participation in its aggregation scheme. It shall also be responsible for assisting learners and households to understand the aggregation scheme, for answering their questions, providing application assistance and other support including post purchase support where appropriate.

5.1.1 Communications

When undertaking demand generation activities, the aggregating school shall:

- Ensure that its role as agent is accurately described.
- Ensure that all communications are clear, balanced and accurate, using standard wording provided by Becta where possible, and where such standard wording is not appropriate ensure that communications comply with the additional rules below and with the Home Access marketing and communications policy (summarised in appendix D).
- Clearly and accurately communicate the benefits and drawbacks of participation in the aggregation scheme, including details of any intended added-value to be obtained from participation and the anticipated timescales for delivery of Home Access packages.
- Ensure that demand generation activities are consistent with the Home Access inclusion policy (summarised in appendix C) and comply with any further inclusion and equal opportunities guidance issued by Becta.
- Not give preference to any approved suppliers or particular device types/models in driving scheme participation and shall at all times comply with the aggregated purchasing Home Access package choice policy set out in Appendix G.

5.1.2 Assistance with Home Access Grant applications

The aggregating school may assist learners/households to complete Home Access Grant applications. The aggregating school should note that:

- Applications will only be accepted on official Home Access application forms.
- Overall management of demand is the responsibility of the HAGAS, and that HAGAS is not required to supply Home Access application forms for use in local scheme participation activities (although application forms will not be unreasonably withheld).
- Applications must show a clear intention to participate in a nominated aggregation scheme and must contain a valid aggregation scheme registration number. Any which do not will be processed by the HAGAS according to the consumer model.
- Applicants will not be permitted to retrospectively opt in to or out of an aggregation scheme.
- Applicants participating in the scheme must consent to the school acting as their agent and there will be a declaration to this effect included on every Home Access Grant application form. For aggregation scheme participants not in receipt of Home Access Grant funds, the school must obtain equivalent consent for the school to act as their agent.



5.1.3 Additional funds

In addition to promoting participation by learners/households entitled to Home Access Grants, aggregating schools may decide to promote additional parental contributions and/or apply other funds (e.g. eLF funded purchases, school funds etc) to an aggregated purchase. In such cases:

- These alternative funds and additional contributions shall be the exclusive responsibility of the aggregating school to manage and to account for and will be treated as external to the Home Access programme. As such, they should be subject to the school's normal procurement rules.
- Should such schemes be promoted, it shall be made clear that a potential applicant is not required to participate in such schemes as a prerequisite to applying for a Home Access Grant.

5.2 Enquiries, complaints and incidents

The aggregating school must promptly address and resolve enquiries, complaints and incidents within the scope of the aggregation scheme and to redirect any outstanding items to the appropriate points of contact in the HAGAS or in Becta. In particular, the aggregating school shall:

- Put in place a customer service operation to handle any complaints and customer service issues arising from the operation of the aggregation scheme. Ensure that the customer service provided operates within defined and agreed minimum levels of service, consistent with existing school operations.
- Ensure that prospective applicants, learners or grant recipients participating in the aggregation scheme are made fully aware of the complaints and escalation processes.
- Provide a designated contact that will be responsible for the timely management and resolution of incidents and complaints. Unless Becta is notified to the contrary, this contact will be the aggregation scheme's Administrative Contact.
- Attempt to resolve all queries and complaints relating to its aggregation scheme before attempting any form of escalation.
- Refer any complaint or incident not related to the scope of the services being provided within the aggregation scheme to the HAGAS as soon as they receive it, in a format to be provided.
- Notify Becta as soon as reasonably practicable where complaints or incidents represent a media related or other major risk to Becta or the Home Access programme.

5.3 Defining aggregated purchase requirements

Aggregating schools are responsible for offering a choice of Home Access packages to its learners/households, capturing those choices and then managing the purchase of Home Access packages and redeeming Home Access Grants on behalf of the participants in its aggregation scheme.



5.3.1 Offering choice

As an agent of the participants in its aggregation scheme, the aggregating school must act on each applicant's instructions. This will mean that there are limits on how it can advise participants on what package to purchase and, in particular, that:

- It shall not give preference to any approved suppliers or particular device types/models.
- It shall provide participants with an appropriate choice of Home Access packages, including choice of device type.
- It shall facilitate all aggregated purchases, including those which do not match its recommendations.

While the level and type of choice of Home Access packages may vary in each aggregation scheme, the provision of a minimum level of choice amongst Home Access packages is a legal requirement of agency purchasing. Responsibility for compliance with this legal requirement shall rest solely with the aggregating school, which shall:

- Ensure that participants are informed about various Home Access package choices, and that they can choose from a range of Home Access packages that reflects the diversity of learner/household need. This does not preclude the aggregating school from making recommendations to participants in respect of compatibility with existing school or school platforms. However, it must facilitate all aggregated purchases in line with household choice, including those that do not match the aggregating school's recommendation.
- Be able to demonstrate that learners/households have been offered a genuine choice of Home Access packages, and this must consist of at least one alternative to the recommended package for each type of device.

5.3.2 Collating and advertising requirements

The aggregating school shall provide an appropriate mechanism for participants in the aggregation scheme to register their choice of Home Access package. When capturing choice and collating the purchase requirements, the aggregating school must ensure that:

- Home Access package choices comply with the aggregated purchasing Home Access package choice policy set out in appendix G.
- All connectivity solutions are part of a Home Access package and purchased from an approved supplier (aggregating schools must not offer their own connectivity solution to grant recipients as part of their purchase options).
- The collated purchase requirements are communicated to all relevant approved suppliers via the Becta communications mechanism (details to be provided).

5.4 Negotiation and purchase

The aggregating school shall be responsible for engaging with appropriate Home Access approved suppliers to negotiate an aggregated purchase in line with the appendix A: Home Access aggregated purchase benefits policy. This will be facilitated through the Home Access portal; further information can be found in the aggregation toolkit which will be supplied upon successful registration as an aggregator.

When purchasing Home Access packages funded by Home Access Grants, aggregating schools must comply with the following rules:

- All funds from aggregated Home Access Grants shall be spent with Home Access approved suppliers to purchase Home Access packages only. No school is an approved supplier, nor may any school offer a Home Access package.



- It shall be clear in the contract with any approved supplier that the school is acting as the agent of the applicants and is not acting as a contracting party in its own right.
- Normal school purchasing standing orders, such as a requirement to obtain at least 3 quotes before making any purchase, are not applicable to any aggregated purchases funded by Home Access Grants or parental contributions. This does not preclude the aggregating school from obtaining competitive quotes from different suppliers, but any such quotes must be limited to approved suppliers.
- Aggregating schools shall not downgrade or remove any components from the Home Access package or otherwise modify it in a manner that leads to non-compliance with the Home Access package requirements.
- Any charges that the approved supplier levies (for administration or project management costs etc) shall not be met from Home Access funds and shall be funded by the aggregating school itself.
- Aggregating schools can purchase from multiple suppliers (e.g desktop Home Access packages from approved supplier A and laptop Home Access packages from approved supplier B), but packages shall not be split – so purchases of connectivity cannot be made from approved supplier A and devices from approved supplier B.

5.5 Delivery and ownership of devices

Delivery arrangements can be negotiated with the approved supplier(s). However, the following rules and guidelines must be adhered to:

- All purchases funded by Home Access Grants must be in the name of the individual participants and those individuals must be the legal owners of Home Access packages from the point of purchase.
- Title to any additional devices provided by an approved supplier as part of an aggregated purchase (in accordance with the aggregated purchasing benefits policy in appendix A) may rest with the aggregating school.
- Proof of delivery to the individual learner/household must be obtained and retained by the aggregating school and made available to the HAGAS (and also, on request, to Becta). The format for provision of this data will be specified by the HAGAS.
- The aggregating school shall cancel and return all of the Home Access Grant funds allocated to a grant recipient via the aggregation scheme to Becta if for any reason the grant recipient fails to take delivery of the Home Access package (for example, they leave the school's constituency before taking delivery).
- The aggregating school must ensure that learners/households are provided with details of how to obtain after-sales support from the appropriate approved supplier.



5.6 Payment

- 1 When an application is approved, a Notice of Entitlement (NoE) is issued to the applicant stating that they have been successful and that the Aggregation Manager is responsible for ordering on their behalf.
- 2 A 'virtual' plastic grant card for this applicant is sent to the Aggregation Manager.
 - a. This plastic card is similar to a normal grant card in that it has the name, 16 digit account number and the URN (Unique Reference Number) and the CVV2 (3 digit - security) number printed on it.
 - b. It differs from the normal card in that there is no embedded chip, nor a magnetic strip on the back, therefore NO Pin will be issued.
 - c. The card can only be used for online, telephone or fax orders, and cannot be presented in a retail environment (i.e. a shop).
 - d. It has enhanced controls over a normal card – it can only be used up to the pre-determined value, and can only be used with a Home Access approved supplier.
- 3 The Aggregation Manager receives 1 card and accompanying letter for each applicant.
- 4 The Aggregation Manager receives details of each successful applicant (i.e. name and address) from HAGAS on a monthly basis.
- 5 The Aggregation Manager will use the details on the 'virtual' card and the applicant's address details on the accompanying letter to order the package of choice agreed with the applicant.
- 6 The Approved Supplier processes each order separately for each individual (this would always be required as package needs to be issued to an individual address to meet warranty needs).
- 7 The school Aggregation Manager needs to ensure there is a secure method for storage of cards with the school.

Other important information on payment:

- The means of payment is a 'virtual' payment card which shall be issued to the aggregating school Grant Redemption Manager every month following the start of operations.
- The means of payment shall be for a fixed amount equivalent to the total value of the individual Home Access Grants allocated to the aggregation scheme in the period.
- The means of payment shall be valid for a period of three months from issue and must be redeemed within this period. At the end of the validity period, any unspent Home Access Grants shall automatically be returned to the HAGAS.
- Approved suppliers shall be responsible for validating the identity of purchasers using a Home Access means of payment and the Grant Redemption Manager may therefore be required to provide proof of identity and/or additional authorisation before payment can be accepted.
- The aggregating school shall not retain any Home Access Grant funds under any circumstances. In addition the aggregating school shall ensure that no other organisation or individual will receive any, or is able to utilise any, residual Home Access Grant funds.



Returns and refunds

It is the responsibility of the grant redemption manager to act as the primary point of contact for applicants with regards to returns and refunds. The Grant Redemption Manager and Applicant must fully agree the reason for refund. The remedial course of action required, which could be one of the following, is undertaken by the Grant Redemption Manager:-

- The applicant has decided not to proceed under the Home Access scheme – this will require the goods being returned to the supplier for a full refund to the 'virtual card'.
- The package has a fault, which may require a swap at the approved supplier.
- The applicant is unhappy with their choice of package and wishes to exchange for another approved package.

These example scenarios may require the Grant Redemption Manager to:-

- Contact the approved supplier to instigate a full refund or exchange unit.
- Assist the Applicant to find a suitable alternative package, and order same.

In all cases of returns & refunds it is vital that the Grant Redemption Manager and Applicant keep each other informed of developments at all times.

5.7 Reporting and audit

5.7.1 Management reports

The aggregating school must provide management information reports in the format and at the intervals to be specified by Becta or the HAGAS, and respond in a timely manner to ad hoc queries as required by Becta or its nominated representative.

5.7.2 Final report

The full benefits realised by the aggregation scheme will occur over an extended period of time and probably some considerable time after it has ceased operating. As part of a formal evaluation process:

- The aggregating school shall provide a final report to Becta 12 months after all aggregated purchases have been completed.
- The report shall document the aggregated purchasing benefits realised by the aggregation scheme and also capture all available evidence on the benefits and wider impact of the aggregation scheme within the school's area of responsibility.

5.7.3 Audit

Approved suppliers and aggregating schools shall submit to open auditing of all aggregation purchases on request by Becta, including the details of all added-value or free of charge benefits resulting from any aggregated purchase.



5.8 Cancellation

Becta will monitor aggregation schemes to ensure that they are complying with the terms and conditions and other requirements as set out in these rules and guidelines or in other applicable documents or materials. In the event of persistent or serious non-compliance, or a material failure to perform, Becta may, at its sole discretion, cancel an aggregation scheme. In this event:

- HAGAS will individually reissue any unspent Home Access Grant funds to the aggregation scheme's affected participants via the consumer model.
- The aggregating school shall assist Becta and the HAGAS to implement an orderly shutdown of the aggregation scheme, including but not limited to:
 - Issuing communications to its learners/households to inform them of the aggregation scheme's cancellation and to advise them of any next steps;
 - Provision of information to Becta or its nominated representatives; and
 - Assistance with the recovery of any means of payment which has either not been spent, or which has not been properly spent, in accordance with the terms and conditions or these rules and guidelines.



6. Home Access Grant Administration Service

6.1 Introduction

This section outlines the role of the HAGAS and its key interactions with the aggregating school. On Friday 16 October Stephen Crowne, Chief Executive of Becta, and Vic Gysin from Capita signed the contract for the Home Access Grant Administration service, which will see Capita managing the Home Access applications to help deliver benefits to over 270,000 households. Detailed guidelines on how these interactions are to be managed will be provided as part of the aggregation toolkit that will be issued to aggregating schools.

6.2 Responsibilities of HAGAS

The HAGAS is responsible for managing the general administration of the Home Access programme. In the case of applicants who have indicated that they wish to participate in an aggregation scheme, the HAGAS will:

- Notify the individual applicant that they have been awarded a Home Access Grant and that, in accordance with their instructions, it has been allocated to the relevant aggregation scheme.
- Notify the aggregating school of the Home Access Grants that have been allocated to its aggregation scheme.
- Issue the means of payment to the Grant Redemption Manager.

6.3 Home Access Grant application form processing

All Home Access application forms must be submitted to the HAGAS. The HAGAS will start accepting Home Access application forms for participation in aggregation schemes on 7th January 2010. The planned closing date for receipt of Home Access Grant applications to be processed as part of an aggregation scheme is 30 November 2010. Thereafter, all Home Access Grant applications will by default be processed through the retail model.

6.4 Notification of Home Access Grant funding

The HAGAS will notify the individual successful applicants that they have been awarded a Home Access Grant and that, in accordance with their instructions, it has been allocated to the relevant aggregation scheme.

The HAGAS will also notify the aggregating school of the individual applicants who have opted in to the aggregation scheme for the relevant period and the value of the Home Access Grant awarded to each grant recipient.

Following notification, the aggregating school shall then be responsible for ensuring that each grant recipient receives an appropriate Home Access package.

6.5 Reporting requirements

The aggregating school must report details of the Home Access Grants redeemed (including details of the Home Access packages purchased, the recipients of these Home Access packages) to the HAGAS. The mechanism for this will be determined by HAGAS.



6.6 HAGAS scope and ways of working

Aggregating schools may wish to enter into dialogue with the HAGAS to identify how the aggregating school and the HAGAS can best work together to deliver an aggregation scheme. These discussions are entirely optional for either party.



Appendix A: Summary of Home Access inclusion policy

The draft Home Access inclusion policy is summarised below. Implementation of this policy will primarily be the responsibility of the HAGAS, but aggregating schools shall not operate aggregation schemes in a way that conflicts with the policy.

This inclusion policy describes the requirements to be adhered to in ensuring that all eligible learners have an equal opportunity to participate and benefit from the Home Access programme. The requirement for the Home Access programme is to ensure that all learners shall have equal opportunities to benefit from the programme. Specifically, this means that:

- All areas of the Home Access programme shall be non-discriminatory. Both direct and indirect discrimination must be prevented. All marketing activity shall adhere to the Home Access communications and branding policy and marketing guidelines.
- The operation of demand generation activities, complaints and appeals processes shall be inclusive, fair and transparent.

In relation to people with disabilities, reasonable steps shall be taken to ensure equality of opportunity. In particular:

- Disabled people are treated more favourably than other people are treated where necessary. All suppliers must adhere to Becta's document on ICT for Learning and Teaching, Disability and Legislation: Guidance for Commissioners and Suppliers (1) . Moreover
- For blind and partially sighted people (and other groups), the RNIB's See it Right guidance (2) must be consulted.
- For deaf and hard of hearing people, the RNID's Louder than Words quality standards (3) must be consulted.
- For deaf-blind people, Sense's Main Methods of Communication (4) must be consulted.

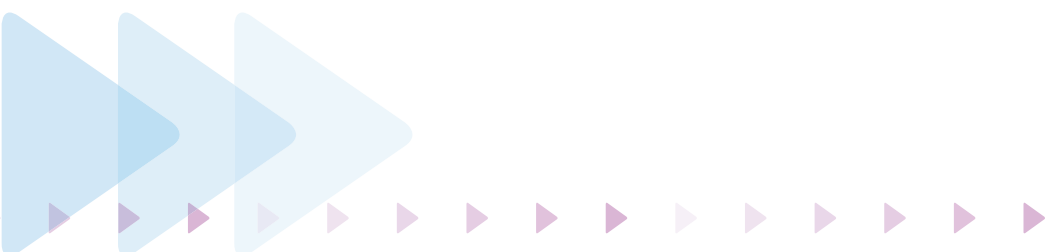
Provision shall be made for particular groups of learners at risk of exclusion from the Home Access programme and their parents, and barriers to their participation removed.

1 Available on line at www.becta.org.uk

2 Only available on-line at: http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/PublicWebsite/public_seeitright.hcsp

3 Only available on-line at http://www.rnid.org.uk/howwehelp/our_services/employment_advice_deaf_awareness_training_courses/advice_for_employers/our_consultancy_service/louder_than_words/standards/

4 Only available on-line: at: http://www.sense.org.uk/what_is_deafblindness/communicating_with_deafblind_people/main_methods_of_communication/



Appendix B: Summary of Home Access marketing and communications policy

Schools who are successful in their application to run an aggregation scheme will be responsible for the marketing and communication of this opportunity to parents and learners. While Becta will be able to provide advice and guidance, there will be no funding available for marketing and communications activity.

Alongside any aggregation scheme which may be running at school level, the HAGAS will be conducting its own marketing campaign to raise awareness of the programme and specifically the consumer model.

It is therefore very important that parents do not become confused by any potential mixed messages, and understand the two different options which are being presented to them. This will enable parents to make an informed decision about which model they wish to benefit from.

As such, any school which is successful in their application to run an aggregation scheme will be required to adhere to Becta's marketing and communications policy. This comprises two main requirements:

1. Any marketing and communications materials produced by schools must utilise the Home Access brand to ensure that parents recognise that the aggregation scheme is part of the wider Home Access programme.
2. Schools will be required to explain the availability of the main model so that parents are provided with the necessary information to make an informed decision about whether they wish to opt in to the aggregation scheme.

Schools will have to submit any marketing and communications products to Becta for approval prior to issue.

Once schools have been notified of their success, a full marketing and communications policy, including branding guidelines, content requirements and PR escalation processes, will be made available. Aggregating schools will then be required to nominate a contact for marketing and communications activity.



Appendix C: Summary of Home Access eligibility criteria

The following is a summary only of the complete Home Access eligibility and reflects the position at the time of writing. Becta reserves the right to change the Home Access programme eligibility criteria, at any time, without notice, and at its sole discretion. There are separate eligibility criteria for Looked After Children.

Learner basics

To be eligible, a learner must satisfy all of the following requirements:

- Learner in years three to nine inclusive (normally, this will be learners aged between 7 and 14 inclusive).
- Learner enrolled fulltime in a maintained learning establishment in England.
- Learner has not received a CfP, HATG or a Home Access pilot device previously.
- If learner has received an AT package 2 under Home Access pilot or HATG then the household may be eligible for a Home Access grant under NRO.

Learner eligibility

If a learner satisfies any of the following criteria, they may be eligible:

- Learner is currently registered for Free School Meals under standard rules.

Parent / Guardian eligibility

If a learner does not meet any of the Learner Eligibility criteria, they may be eligible if their parent or guardian meets any one of the following criteria:

- Parent receiving Income Based Jobseekers Allowance.
- Parent receiving Income Support.
- Parent receiving Child Tax Credits (but no Working Tax Credits) and household income under £16,040/year.
- Parent receiving Guaranteed Pension Credit.
- Parent receiving Income-Related Employment Support Allowance.
- Parent receiving support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Household requirements

All applications must also pass all of the following requirements:

- A maximum of one device per household (taking into account all CfP and Home Access programme devices) excluding AT package 2.

Assistive technology eligibility

Basic assistive technology will be included in all Home Access packages. Learners who are eligible for a Home Access Grant may also qualify for additional support for assistive technology package 2.

Learners will qualify for assistive technology package 2 if they meet both of the following criteria:

- Applicant has self-certified that the assistive technology package 1 provisions are insufficient to meet learner need.

And any one of the following criteria:

- Current possession of a Statement of Special Educational Need;
- Parent in receipt of Disability Living Allowance on behalf of the learner; or

Confirmation of assistive technology package 2 need via authorised signatory from the learner's school.



Appendix D: Aggregated purchasing Home Access package choice policy

Introduction

Schools participating in a Home Access aggregation scheme are responsible for offering a choice of Home Access packages to learners/households as part of their aggregation scheme.

Demonstrating choice

Aggregating schools must offer a choice of Home Access packages to learners/households participating in an aggregation scheme. Aggregating schools can indicate a preference for a Home Access package or packages, and point out the associated benefits.

Aggregating schools are free to offer Home Access packages that integrate tightly with school technology environments, learning platforms and local initiatives/infrastructure, provided they meet the minimum specification for Home Access packages and are purchased through an accredited supplier.

The choice of Home Access packages need not be limited by any local procurement arrangements, for example existing supply contracts, framework agreements or, if relevant, Building Schools for the Future arrangements.

With regards to connectivity options, there may be external factors acting to impose restrictions on choice. In such cases, it is acceptable to offer limited connectivity options under an aggregated purchase where these limited choices reflect the current market offerings available within an area.

There is no upper limit to the number of choices that can be offered under an aggregation scheme or the ability to vary these between purchasing rounds, but it is expected that aggregating schools will want to limit the number of choices to achieve economies of scale and to simplify the selection process.

In offering a choice of Home Access packages to learners/households, aggregating schools must:

- Offer packages that are compliant with the Home Access package technical statement of requirements;
- Demonstrate an unbiased approach to the presentation of choices, in order to ensure that free choice can be exercised by learners/households and can be demonstrated to a level that can withstand legal challenge;
- Be able to demonstrate an auditable process for offering choice and maintain sufficient records to substantiate the offer of choice, if challenged;
- Support learners/households with expressed home access needs that do not align directly with in-school usage, for example those who require a desktop device rather than a laptop;
- Refer to all package choices in generic terms which do not preclude or favour any approved suppliers or retailers, either directly or inadvertently; and
- Provide sufficient level of detail for each option to enable an informed choice to be made by learners/households and to supply additional detail (e.g. technical information) about options, if requested.



In offering a choice of Home Access packages to learners, aggregating schools must not:

- Unduly influence the Home Access package choices of learners/households or promote options which do not support the overall aims of the Home Access programme;
- Use or infer brand names or product/model names in any presentation of choice; or
- Unreasonably limit access to any benefits of aggregation (for example, additional software or hardware) to a limited number of package choices.
- Offer package choices that exclude, restrict or only partially allow the basic functionality of any Home Access package.

Any additional hardware, software or configuration implemented through aggregation should not act to limit the functionality of any element of the basic assistive technology package or limit the use of the Home Access package outside of the school environment.

Examples of choice options

	Example
Appropriate choice offers	<p>Option 1: Netbook with external display</p> <p>Option 2: 15" Laptop</p> <p>Option 3: Desktop with external display</p> <p>Option 4: Netbook with an extra year of connectivity</p> <p>All options are otherwise functionally equivalent, and include negotiated elements over and above the basic Home Access package specification (e.g. special software configuration).</p>
Inappropriate choice offers	<p>Option 1: [Brand A] 15" Laptop</p> <p>Option 2: School preferred option</p> <p>Option 3: [Brand B] Desktop – note that this will not be able to be used in school, and therefore will hamper your child's learning</p> <p>Option 4: Laptop with access to local wireless network (but no standard Home Access connectivity)</p> <p>Option 5: 15" laptop with additional 2GB of RAM</p>
Discussion of inappropriate choice	<p>The above example is inappropriate because:</p> <p>Option 1: Mentions a brand name</p> <p>Option 2: Does not provide sufficient detail for an informed choice, e.g. no form factor specified</p> <p>Option 3: Shows undue preference to a given option, does not align with Home Access programme purpose</p> <p>Option 4: Not compliant with the Home Access package requirements, does not support broader Home Access aims</p> <p>Option 5: It is not been made clear if the extra 2GB is functional benefit to this option which does not apply to other options, may be unreasonably limited benefits of aggregation to this option and may represent undue favour to this option</p>

Appendix E: Summary of Home Access anti-fraud provisions

The objective for Becta and the Home Access programme as a whole is the establishment of an anti-fraud culture, covering working practices and business ethics culminating in formally documented procedures.

The following shall be adhered to by all employees, sub contractors and suppliers to the aggregating school, Becta and other parties involved in the delivery of the Home Access programme, which must adopt a zero-tolerance attitude to criminal breaches of business practices which may be reported to the police.

The aggregating school shall:

- Take appropriate measures to deter fraud.
- Introduce/maintain necessary procedures to detect fraud.
- Investigate all instances of suspected fraud.
- Report all suspected fraud to the appropriate authorities.
- Assist the police or other authorised bodies in the investigation and prosecution of suspected fraudsters.
- Encourage employees to report any suspicion of fraud.
- Allocate responsibilities for the overall management of fraud.
- Set out procedures to be followed if a fraud is suspected.
- Provide ongoing training in relation to anti-fraud policies and procedures.
- Support the authority in the satisfactory resolution of all fraud related incidents, including but not limited to reclamation of funds.
- Understand the types of risk that threaten the integrity of the Home Access programme.
- Assess the scale, likelihood and potential impact of identified fraud threats.
- Set targets for monitoring and controlling performance.
- Invest appropriate resources in effective anti-fraud measures.

The aggregating school shall establish arrangements for their employees, sub contractors and suppliers to report any concerns they may have without fear of prejudice or harassment.



Appendix F: Working with e-Learning Foundations

Overview of e-Learning Foundation schemes

The e-Learning Foundation (e-LF) and its regional counterparts have to date focused on “equity” computing schemes in schools, most of which involve laptop computers and therefore enable home access. These schemes take funds from Becta, DCSF, private contributors and schools to fund purchases of home access devices and internet access for all learners within a given class or year group within the participating schools. Parents are asked to contribute a monthly charitable contribution which repays for the schemes’ initial costs and which also allows new equipment to be bought for a new cohort of learners. As schools conduct the purchasing on behalf of their learners, they are a form of aggregation scheme.

The traditional e-LF “equity” approach is founded on a different philosophical approach to that underpinning the Home Access programme which is primarily focused on providing grant funded packages to disadvantaged households.

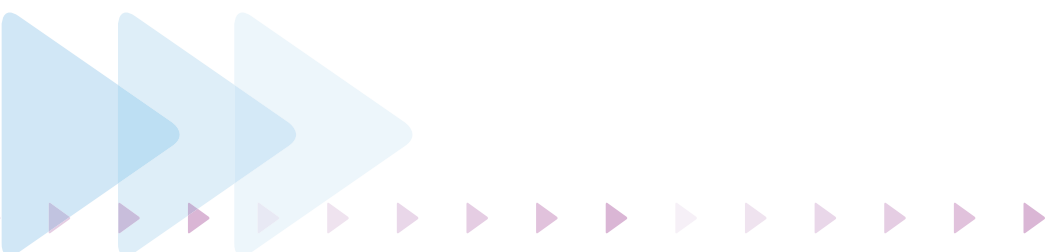
Aggregation scheme and e-LF alignment

Becta has been in close discussions and negotiations with the e-Learning Foundation and with schools running e-LF schemes to ensure that the Home Access aggregated model is compatible with new e-LF schemes. Importantly, this has also coincided with a stated change in e-LF policy to focus on low-income families who are not eligible for government assistance.

It is also a stipulation that any school wishing to aggregate must be affiliated with the e-LF, and this must take place before an application to aggregate has been submitted. Failure to follow this process will mean an instant rejection and a fresh application will need to be made. An exception to this rule is academies who due to their independent status do not need to hold this affiliation.

The aggregated model has been developed such that new e-LF schemes can comfortably sit alongside Home Access Grant funded aggregations. Home Access Grant funded aggregations will contribute to reduced costs for equity schemes by:

- Directly funding deprived families and removing the need for them to make any contributions to e-LF schemes;
- Simultaneously reducing overall costs for providing home access to whole year-groups or schools, reducing a school’s own costs, and so lowering the average charity contributions for those families who do not qualify for a Home Access Grant.





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