



Crown  
Commercial  
Service

*Newsletter*  
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# Buying goods and services for schools

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter for schools

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This issue provides you with the latest updates on buying goods and services from the Crown Commercial Service (CCS). Our compliant, money saving deals have been developed for the whole of the public sector, including all publicly funded schools.



## G-Cloud 7

The latest version of the G-Cloud agreement - [G-Cloud 7](#) - is now available, providing you with a compliant route to buy cloud based IT services on a direct award basis (meaning that you can contact your preferred supplier immediately). G-Cloud is regularly refreshed so you can access the most up to date and innovative cloud solutions.

### How to access G-Cloud services

All G-Cloud services are showcased via an online catalogue called the Digital Marketplace. The Digital Marketplace is an online platform providing all public sector organisations with a way to find and buy:

- standard cloud-based services
- specialists who can work on digital projects
- physical datacentre space for legacy systems.

Within [Digital Marketplace](#), there is a G-Cloud front page where you can look for suppliers using a search term/ keywords relating to your requirement. Your search will then return a list of references to potential suppliers and their offer, including pricing information for each one.

Assuming that a supplier's offer meets your requirements, you will be able to engage directly with them as a shortlisted supplier. No tender or pre-qualification process is required, just direct contact with a supplier.

If you have any questions about G-Cloud please email [ict\\_services@crownccommercial.gov.uk](mailto:ict_services@crownccommercial.gov.uk)

## Webinar - G-Cloud or Digital Services?

We offer two different solutions for digital and cloud services - [G-Cloud](#) and [Digital Services](#) - and are often asked by our customers which route is best for their particular needs. To answer this, we are hosting a webinar at **10.30am** on **15 March** to show customers how the Digital Marketplace works and the difference between G-Cloud and Digital Services. The session will last about an hour and there will be the opportunity to ask the team your questions. To reserve your place for your preferred date please email [Cloud\\_digital@crownccommercial.gov.uk](mailto:Cloud_digital@crownccommercial.gov.uk).

At a very high level, the following characteristics will help you determine whether G-Cloud or Digital Services best suits your needs:

### G-Cloud

- Commodity services
- Direct award
- Supplier T&Cs
- Supplier Intellectual Property Rights/ Source Code
- No agile development, configuration only

### Digital Services

- Bespoke services
- Further competition
- Government T&Cs
- Customer Intellectual Property Rights/ Source code
- Agile development - iterative

## How to buy communication services

A guide to buying media and advertising services such as market research, strategy planning, creative solutions, events and media monitoring is available [here](#).

The guide outlines the options available and helps direct you to the best solution to meet your specific requirement.

## Energy for Schools

One of our energy suppliers, EDF, has published an article on “**Energy for Schools: guidance for a complex market with DfE approval**”.

The article describes our collaborative project with the Department for Education to improve access to our energy deals for schools. You can read the full article [here](#).

If you have any questions regarding Energy for Schools please email [customer.acquisition@crowcommercial.gov.uk](mailto:customer.acquisition@crowcommercial.gov.uk) or visit our Energy for Schools page [here](#).

## Buying technology: how we can help

We have a pipeline of technology opportunities you can join so that your requirements can be combined with those of other organisations to help you achieve greater value for money.

Taking part in an aggregated competition is a straightforward process:

- simply sign a Memorandum of Understanding to confirm your commitment
- tell us what your requirements are
- validate the supplier tenders
- sign a contract with the successful supplier

An opportunity for mobile voice and data services specifically for the education sector is under consideration but is dependent on demand and the complexity of going to market.

If you are interested in getting involved please email [technologyaggregation@crowcommercial.gov.uk](mailto:technologyaggregation@crowcommercial.gov.uk).

Other opportunities include technology hardware and software. You can find further guidance and information about this and other future aggregated purchasing opportunities here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/buying-technology-how-ccs-can-help>.

## Full list of our agreements

We provide a wide range of agreements that you can use to buy common goods and services, such as stationery, printers, photocopiers, electricity and IT equipment, without having to carry out your own tender process. To view a list of all our agreements, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/crown-commercial-service-agreements/ccs-agreement-list>

## Upcoming events

### Energy for Schools Webinar

We will be holding another **Energy for Schools** webinar on **15 March** from **12:30 to 13:00** to tell you more about buying energy.

The webinar is part of our Energy for Schools initiative, in collaboration with the Department for Education, and is aimed specifically at the schools sector.

Numbers are limited so to reserve a place please email [education@crowcommercial.gov.uk](mailto:education@crowcommercial.gov.uk).

### Academies Show

We will be speaking and exhibiting at the next [Academies Show](#) in London on **20 April**. The event is free to attend so if you are planning to visit please come to see us at our session on the conference programme or visit us at our stand.



# Guidance from the Department for Education

## Procurement training for schools

The Department for Education (DfE) has recently launched self-service procurement training for schools. Designed in collaboration with CCS and based over 12 modules, it provides online resources that you can use in collaborative school training sessions for staff who are responsible or accountable for budgets or buying.

The free to access modules aim to help school staff understand public procurement legislation and to allow clusters or groups of schools to share effective practice and improve procurement skills. Each module, complete with trainer notes, lasts from 15 to 50 minutes to fit in with your meetings and follows a simple procurement cycle. Improving these skills should lead to better financial health and efficiency for your school.

The modules are available at no cost. For more information, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-training-for-schools>

## Schools Financial Health and Efficiency

DfE has launched a new collection of tools, training and guidance to help you improve your financial management and efficiency. The information includes an outline of a simple process you may wish to use when looking to improve your financial efficiency and achieve a greater impact on pupil outcomes from your resources. Details on the collection can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/schools-financial-health-and-efficiency>

## Microsoft Deal

Following negotiations with Microsoft, DfE has announced a major new agreement that will save schools an estimated £30 million. The deal, which was negotiated in conjunction with CCS, means that schools in the UK will be able to take advantage of discounts and better licensing terms across a wide range of Microsoft's academic software. For further details, please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/buying-for-schools-microsoft-memorandum-of-understanding>

## Supply Teacher Guidance and Good Practice - Request for Information

DfE, in collaboration with the National Association of Head Teachers and the Association of School and College Leaders is developing guidance for schools and academies to help improve the way you use supply teacher agencies and the service you receive.

To develop guidance that is fit for purpose, DfE is keen to hear your views on what it should cover, including any advice, tips, good practice and lessons learnt.

All information used will be anonymised. If you are happy to take part, please email [kelvin.mcbride@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:kelvin.mcbride@education.gsi.gov.uk) by **11 March**.

## Get in touch

Our education team is on hand to help you create savings for your school. We recognise that schools, particularly academies and free schools, often require guidance when buying goods and services and we are here to assist at any stage of the process.

Please visit our [education pages](#) on our website for further information on our deals and how to access them or email us directly at [education@crownccommercial.gov.uk](mailto:education@crownccommercial.gov.uk)