

# INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES CAPITAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME GUIDELINE

*Education (Capital Assistance) Act 1993*

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**INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES  
INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME  
GUIDELINE**

**1. Short title**

This guideline may be cited as the *Information and Communication Technologies Infrastructure Capital Assistance Scheme Guideline*.

**2. Commencement**

This guideline commences on 11 February 2005.

**3. Objects of the scheme**

- (1) The objects of the State Government's Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Capital Assistance Scheme (the scheme) is to assist non-state schools which are eligible for State Government funding to install and upgrade ICT infrastructure. The focus of the scheme is to promote equitable access to ICT to support teaching and learning in all non-state schools.
- (2) The basis for the scheme is contained in the *Education (Capital Assistance) Act 1993* and the *Education (Capital Assistance) Regulation 2005*. If there is any inconsistency between this guideline and the legislation, then the operations of the scheme as provided for in the legislation shall apply.

**4. Administration of the scheme**

- (1) The scheme is administered on behalf of the State Government by Capital Assistance Authorities (CAAs), one nominated by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and one nominated by The Association of Independent Schools of Queensland Inc.
- (2) To assist CAAs in meeting costs associated with administering the scheme on behalf of the State Government, each CAA may utilise for administrative purposes up to 1% of the total budget of the scheme.

- (3) Interest earned by a CAA on funds provided for administration may only be used by a CAA:
  - (a) to pay its administrative costs; or
  - (b) to provide capital assistance for approved projects at affiliated schools.

## **5. Funding available**

- (1) The total funding available for the scheme will be announced in the State Budget each year.
- (2) Funds are paid to each CAA to enable the CAA to provide capital assistance for approved projects.
- (3) Funds will be allocated to CAAs on the basis of the most recent State Government data survey of non-state schools (using full-time equivalent enrolment figures, except for preschool students) with a weighting of 1.5905 (Commonwealth area weightings - 9.75m<sup>2</sup> Sec; 6.13m<sup>2</sup> Pri) for secondary enrolments and a weighting of 0.5 for preschool students. Weightings based on each location published by the Queensland Department of Public Works (or its replacement or successor), as amended from time to time, and a needs weighting are also applied.
- (4) The process for determining the needs weighting will be the same as that used in determining the needs weighting for State Government recurrent grants to non-state schools.
- (5) A CAA must make recommendations to the Minister for Education and the Arts (the Minister) for projects to be funded in a financial year up to the amount of funds available for commitment by the CAA in that financial year. The amount of funds available will be equal to the budget allocation plus uncommitted funds including interest earned on these funds.

## **6. Eligibility and affiliation**

- (1) To be eligible for capital assistance under the scheme, a non-state school must be accredited and eligible for State Government funding under the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001* and be affiliated with a CAA.

## **7. Purpose of financial assistance**

- (1) Under the scheme, approved authorities may apply for assistance for the enhancement of a school's ICT capacity and capabilities to support teaching and learning.
- (2) Funding is available for the following types of work:
  - (a) basic ICT infrastructure provision (hardware, software and Internet services for learning, teaching and administration purposes);
  - (b) connectivity (Local Area Networks, Wide Area Networks, terrestrial cabling, wireless networks, switch/router technologies, file/print services);
  - (c) virtual networks (remote hosting, application hosting, co-hosting);
  - (d) ICT infrastructure enhancements within capital programs (new/refurbished schools);
  - (e) power upgrades related to enhancements of ICT; and
  - (f) ICT technical support services in relation to infrastructure projects (consultancy, deployment, monitoring, maintenance, upgrade, security management, help desk, training, professional development).
- (3) Financial assistance will not be provided to meet expenditure related to ICT infrastructure of a type not provided by the State or Commonwealth in State schools.
- (4) Projects for which a contract for the project has been entered into or work commenced prior to Ministerial approval will not be eligible for funding.

## **8. Applications**

- (1) An application for assistance for a proposed capital project must be given to the CAA with which a school is affiliated by a due date determined by the CAA. The due date must occur at least once in every calendar year and a CAA must notify every school affiliated with it by 30 September of the year before the date is to apply of when the due date will occur.

## **9. Assistance parameters**

- (1) Capital assistance will be provided within the following parameters:
  - (a) unless otherwise determined by the Minister, all funds available in a financial year will be allocated to the applications approved in that year or the preceding year;
  - (b) all applications received by a CAA by the due date by which applications can be lodged will be assessed for assistance;
  - (c) the maximum amount of assistance possible for any application will be the total of actual expenditure minus any assistance received from any other State or Commonwealth agency;
  - (d) large projects may be split into discrete applications for assistance and, provided each meets all other conditions, each of these will be considered separately;
  - (e) the provision of capital assistance to a project which is one stage of a larger project does not imply a commitment to fund other stages in the same year or subsequent years;
  - (f) the provision of capital assistance for one application does not imply commitment to fund other applications in subsequent years; and
  - (g) unsuccessful application may be re-submitted by school authorities in subsequent years provided the conditions for assistance continue to be met.

## **10. Assessment of applications**

- (1) In considering an application for capital assistance, a CAA must have regard to the following criteria:
  - (a) the condition and extent of the applicant school's existing ICT infrastructure;
  - (b) the ICT infrastructure that is, or is likely to be, needed to provide the applicant school's curriculum or proposed curriculum;
  - (c) how many students attend the applicant school in the year of application;
  - (d) how many students are expected to attend the applicant school within 2 years after the application;

- (e) the characteristics of the students who attend, or are expected to attend, the applicant school including, for example, the ages of the students and whether they have particular needs because of disabilities or a requirement for special learning support;
  - (f) an assessment of the following factors taking into account the nature and cost of the project:
    - (i) the applicant school's financial resources
    - (ii) the applicant school community's capacity to generate financial resources
    - (iii) whether the applicant school is in a remote area of the State.
- (2) Applicant school means the school or schools for which an application for assistance under the scheme is made.
- (3) Assessment of applications in accordance with section 10 (1) is intended to ensure that all funds are allocated on the basis of educational and financial need. All eligible applications may not receive assistance as a matter of course.

### **11. Submission to Minister**

- (1) By 30 September, each CAA will provide to the Minister a list of all applications received, a brief description of the project associated with each application, the level of recommended assistance for each application, reasons for the recommended level of assistance, including reasons for recommending that assistance not be granted for any application, and the date each project is expected to commence.

### **12. Agreement between school and CAA**

- (1) To be eligible to receive approved assistance, the approved authority of an eligible non-state school must enter into an agreement with the CAA with which it is affiliated. The agreement must include the following conditions:
- (a) the approved authority must agree to use items funded under the scheme for educational purposes for the economic life of the item; and
  - (b) the approved authority must agree to return monies to the CAA under conditions outlined in section 13.

### **13. Payment process**

- (1) Payment will be made to the approved authority of an eligible non-state school for approved projects on the following basis:
  - (a) an approved authority of a non-state school that has signed an assistance agreement as described in section 12 applies to a CAA for payment in respect of the approved project. A CAA must determine that at least one-quarter of the work (in terms of value) has been completed. In determining whether one quarter of the work has been completed, a CAA may request a statutory declaration signed by a representative of the approved authority, and counter-signed by the project supervisor;
  - (b) if the CAA is satisfied with the application, the CAA may proceed with payment. Upon request by the Minister, CAAs must provide details of all payments made in any specified period;
  - (c) unless otherwise approved by the Minister in exceptional circumstances, assistance received by approved authorities under this scheme must be expended as soon as possible, but within six months of the date of payment to the school. Any funds not expended by this time must be returned to the CAA. If project expenditure on the approved works is less than the assistance provided, the difference must be returned to the CAA. Any funds so returned may be available to increase the amount of funds available for future applications for capital assistance; and
  - (d) an application for payment must be received by the relevant CAA within two years of the date of approval, or approval for the project will lapse, unless an extension is approved by the Minister.

### **14. Minor variation**

- (1) A CAA may make a minor variation to the amount paid to the approved authority of an eligible non-state school for an approved project where:
  - (a) the variation to be paid is less than 10% of the grant; and
  - (b) the variation is required because of a change in the costs of the approved project that was not foreseeable at the time of the approval of the project.

- (2) A minor variation can only be paid using uncommitted funds, including interest earned, held by a CAA.

### **15. Review of application**

- (1) If capital assistance has been granted to a school for a capital project, the approved authority of the school may apply to the Minister, through the CAA, for the amount of assistance to be increased. The application must specify the amount of the increase sought and give reasons for seeking the increase, which must be within available funds.
- (2) The CAA must assess the application for review on the same criteria on which it assesses applications for assistance. After assessment of the application, the CAA must make a recommendation to the Minister.
- (3) The Minister will inform the school and the CAA of the amount of any increased assistance granted.

### **16. Accountability**

- (1) Each CAA must establish an ICT Capital Assistance Scheme Fund (the fund) into which it pays:
  - (a) all amounts paid by the State Government under the scheme;
  - (b) interest earned on administrative funds which it intends to use for capital assistance;
  - (c) amounts of capital funding returned by schools; and
  - (d) interest earned on amounts in the fund.
- (2) A CAA must keep funds standing to the credit of the fund with a bank or another institution approved by the Queensland Treasurer and keep those funds separate from any other funds.
- (3) The CAA must make all records of approved projects available for inspection to a person approved by the Minister for that purpose. The person may make a copy of, or take extracts from such records for that purpose and may retain it in the person's possession for a reasonable period.

- (4) A CAA must, by 30 June each year, give to the Minister a written return for the previous calendar year. The return must:
- (a) contain an audited statement of the amounts received by it for administration in the previous year, interest received on the amounts and the expenditure of the amounts;
  - (b) contain an audited statement of the fund showing details of the amounts paid to and from the fund in the previous year and the financial position of the fund at the beginning and end of the previous year; and
  - (c) give the following details, in a format agreed to between the CAAs and the Department of Education and the Arts, for all capital projects for which an approved authority received or retained capital assistance in the previous calendar year:
    - (i) a description of the project;
    - (ii) whether or not the project was completed in the previous year;
    - (iii) the amount spent on the project as at the end of the previous year;
    - (iv) the amount, if any, held on account of the project at the end of the previous year;
    - (v) the amounts, and sources of the amounts, used to fund the project.
  - (d) Contain an assessment of the scheme including the effectiveness of the assessment criteria.
- (5) The audit specified in section 16 (5) (a) and (b) must be carried out by a person registered as an auditor under Part 9.2 of the Corporations Law and approved by the Minister.

### **17. Recognition of assistance**

- (1) For projects assisted with State Government funds, appropriate recognition of the source of the funding is to be provided in any publicity associated with the project.
- (2) If there is to be an official commissioning ceremony, the Minister or a representative must be invited to attend the ceremony.