

Information Services Provision and Use of Central Software Policy

1. Central Software Portfolio

- 1.1 Information Services (INSRV) funds and supports a range of software applications on a number of different platforms; these applications form the *central software portfolio*. Applications in the central software portfolio are required and provided for general purpose and research use.
- 1.2 The current list of supported applications may be found on the INSRV web site at <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/schoolsanddivisions/divisions/insrv/computingservices/supportedsoftware/index.html>
- 1.3 This lists applications supported on the network by platform (Windows NT, XP, UNIX, MAC etc.), defines levels of support, and shows to what level each application is supported. It is subject to regular review.
- 1.4 Applications in the central portfolio are available to users in all academic schools and administration divisions, and support will be provided on the same basis to all users.

2. Categories of Software in the Central Portfolio

- 2.1 The objectives of the INSRV-funded and supported central portfolio are:-
 - To provide core software required by most users;
 - To provide and deliver such software in the most cost-effective way, taking advantage, where available, of site license deals such as the Microsoft Campus Agreement.
- 2.2 A key element in defining what should be included in the portfolio is the list of the categories of applications. The current list is shown below. These are kept under review. Within each category the current policy is to support one version of one application unless special circumstances apply.
- 2.3 Current categories are:-

<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Word processor· Spreadsheet· Database· Graphics· Statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Web browser· Communications· Bibliographic· Web editor· Other*
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* includes anti-virus software, document readers and programming languages

3. Criteria for Inclusion in the Central Portfolio

- 3.1 Criteria for inclusion in the central portfolio, in the context of the previously stated objectives, are a combination of:-
 - Generic software potentially of interest to any school
 - Best of breed for category / platform
 - Application in category most widely used in the University
 - Best value for money in category.Sufficient funds also have to be available.
- 3.2 When available, and where it is economic to do so, a site licence will be purchased. In other cases, as a general “rule of thumb”, around 20 concurrent licences will be purchased. The actual number may depend on price bands for batches of licences, or on special circumstances applying at the time of the order. Adjustments can be made subsequently on the basis of monitored concurrent usage if appropriate and affordable. This may involve financial contributions from schools (see Use of Centrally Supported/Licensed Software in teaching).
- 3.3 If schools wish to propose an additional or alternative application for the central portfolio a written case should be submitted to the head of the University Systems Group in INSRV. The criteria and

rules set out in *Criteria for Inclusion in the Central Portfolio* will be applied in making a decision on any such proposal. Schools should note that new applications are normally made available via the summer software release, usually scheduled for late August or early September. To allow for workload planning plus evaluation and testing on the network proposals should normally be made by the end of the preceding March.

4. Use of Centrally Supported/Licensed Software in Teaching

- 4.1 **It is expected that academic schools will make their own arrangements for classroom teaching use of software for which we do not hold a site licence.**
- 4.2 If a school wishes to teach the use of an application to a large number of students concurrently, this may exceed the number of licences installed. Suppliers may agree to such teaching use provided that it is for very limited periods. Suppliers should always be asked to give appropriate permission in writing before such teaching periods are conducted. Requests to suppliers should state the number, length and dates of planned sessions. Where such arrangements are not possible schools are expected to purchase additional licences (see Additional Licences, below).
- 4.3 If schools require students to use a particular piece of software as part of their academic work, it is not acceptable for this to result in no licences being available to other users for significant periods. An example would be if a large cohort of students is given an assignment for completion within a short period of time, which requires the use of a centrally provided application with limited concurrent licences. Similarly schools may be expected to purchase additional licences (see Additional Licences, below).
- 4.4 It is expected that the use of most software in the central portfolio will spread across a range of schools in proportion to their relative size. If it becomes apparent from the INSRV monitoring procedures that usage is concentrated on a small number of schools to a disproportionate extent then INSRV reserves the right to request a contribution towards the cost.

5. Additional Licences

- 5.1 Where schools require extra licences they should purchase them and ask INSRV to install them for their reserved school use.

6. Removal of Software from the Central Portfolio

- 6.1 Software purchased and supported as part of the central software portfolio will be reviewed annually, to ensure that its category, platform and usage still fulfil the criteria required for it to be included in the central portfolio.
- 6.2 If an application fails to meet the required criteria, e.g. becomes less well used, prohibitively expensive, or superseded, Information Services will have to consider its removal from the portfolio.
- 6.3 If software is to be removed from the central portfolio INSRV will give users as much advanced notice as possible, ideally twelve months. It may be the case that details of future terms, conditions and costs are not available that far in advance and a firm decision can not be made, in these instances INSRV will provide initial notice to Heads of Schools and School Computing Representatives a year in advance to serve as a warning that central funding may be withdrawn.
- 6.4 If users anticipate an ongoing need for software which is under notice of withdrawal, they should contact the INSRV Licensing Officer who will be happy to discuss options and act as a broker for schools collaborating on software purchases.

7. School applications

- 7.1 An application may not fulfil criteria for inclusion in the central portfolio, but it will usually still be sensible to install it on the network. These situations may be discussed with INSRV on an ad hoc basis if assistance with network installation is required.
- 7.2 INSRV will install software on the network in these circumstances with licences reserved for the use of the school(s) concerned. However a charge will be made for the actual staff time involved in the installation.
- 7.3 For more detailed advice on the purchase of software please email SoftwareLicensing@Cardiff.ac.uk.

This information is based on paper 00/1327R "Information Services Policy on the Provision and Use of Central Software" which was endorsed by Information Services Committee on 19 April 2001.

For information, advice and assistance contact the Information Services Licensing Officer, Information Services Computing Centre Tel: 029 2087 9033 Email: SoftwareLicensing@Cardiff.ac.uk