

E-Mail & Internet User Policy for Governors, Staff & Students 2016-19

Purpose of Policy/ Document

This document aims to clarify and stipulate the correct usage of Governor, staff and student email and internet use whilst off and on college premises and/or using college equipment.

Application of Policy (Range and Scope)

This document applies to all users (including visitors and guests).

Particular Legal Requirements/Issues Outside of Equality, Diversity and Disability (E.D.D)

Links with Other Policies/Documents

Professional Code of Standards for Staff
Student Standards
Data Protection Policy
Safeguarding Policy

Equality, Diversity and Disability (Disability, Equality, Duty Impact Assessment)

Has a Preliminary Equality Analysis been completed?

Yes Date Completed: 20/04/2015

Is a full Impact Assessment required?

No

If 'yes', has a copy been sent to the Equality Manager?

No

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E-MAIL AND INTERNET POLICY

1. Introduction

The provision and use of E-Mail and the Internet in the College opens up opportunities for marketing, communication and research but it may also create unforeseen consequences and problems. E-Mail can boost efficiency through improved communication, and internet use may stimulate creativity; facilitate research and the gathering of information, however both can also offer opportunities for misuse.

It is important that College Governors, staff & students are aware of the guidelines that they are expected to follow in using E-Mail and the Internet. The College's policy is set out below to ensure that users understand how the system should be used. In this policy users are made aware of the possible dangers of using the system and the fact that disciplinary action may result from its misuse.

The policy attempts to achieve a balance between allowing user's access to E-Mail and Internet services to assist in their work and studies whilst addressing, as far as possible, the risks of such access.

It is therefore essential that users read and agree to be bound by these guidelines and make themselves aware of the potential legal liabilities involved in using E-Mail and the Internet.

2. General Points

- 2.1 Use of E-Mail and the Internet is primarily for work or study related purposes.
- 2.2 The College is the owner of the E-Mail and Internet communication resources. These are designed to assist in the performance of your work, and your studies. You should, therefore, have no expectation of privacy in any E-Mail sent or received, whether it is of a business/course related or a personal nature and in view of the range of legal liabilities that can arise from users having access to E-Mail and the Internet, the College may monitor and intercept communications as considered necessary within legislative requirements.
- 2.3 The College accepts that there are occasions when Governors, staff and students will receive unsolicited material of an obscene or offensive nature. However you should note that under this procedure improper use of E-Mail and the Internet by users to knowingly access, download or transmit any material which might reasonably be considered to be obscene, abusive, sexist, racist or defamatory could, in certain circumstances, be treated by the College as gross misconduct., or result in students being excluded from their course, or from the College. You should be aware that such material may also be contained in jokes sent by E-Mail. The College reserves the right to use the content of any E-Mail in any disciplinary process.

3. Use of E-Mail

- 3.1 E-Mails should be drafted with care. Due to the informal nature of E-Mail, it is easy to forget that it is a permanent form of written communication and that material can be recovered even when it is deleted from your computer. As such users must take reasonable care in ensuring that E-Mails are constructed so as not to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety.
- 3.2 Users should not make defamatory remarks in E-Mails about Governors, staff, students, competitors or any other person since written derogatory remarks can constitute libel.

- 3.3 Users should regularly read and delete unnecessary E-Mails to prevent over-burdening the system. Regular deleting of items in Inbox and Deleted Items will enable the system to work effectively.
- 3.4 Users should where necessary make hard copies of E-Mails which they need to retain for record keeping purposes.
- 3.5 Whilst E-mail is primarily for college related use, reasonable private use of E-Mail is permitted. The "AllStaff" & "AllStudents" E-mail addresses **must not** be used for personal reasons (e.g. personal events, sale of goods, personal or political views), and the contents of personal E-Mails must comply with the restrictions set out in these guidelines.
- 3.6 By sending E-Mails on the College's system, you are consenting to the processing of any personal data contained in that E-Mail and are explicitly consenting to the processing of any sensitive personal data contained in that E-Mail. If you do not wish the College to process such data you should communicate it by other means.
- 3.7 The 'All Staff' E-mail address is for internal use only and must not, without prior consent of the Principal, be given to third parties.
- 3.8 Be security conscious. The Data Protection Act requires that adequate security is maintained to protect personal information held on e-mails, related archives and software (see appendix 1). Do not allow anyone to use your network log-on and password, and do not leave your network account logged on when you have walked away from the computer without ensuring you have locked the computer to prevent others accessing your account.
- 3.9 When an employee/Governor leaves the College's employ an E-Mail will be generated from H.R. to I.T. who will then disable (*not delete*) the account with immediate effect (*unless instructed differently by the Head of ICT*).
- 3.10 When a student leaves the College at the end of their course their account will be disabled two calendar weeks after the official course end date. Where a student has their enrolment terminated prior to the course end date, the I.T. Dept will disable the account with immediate effect (*This will initially be confirmed in an E-Mail to IT Services from the relevant HOD/Director*).
- 3.11 **All** E-Mails sent to the individual using the howcollege.ac.uk address after a user account has been disabled be returned to sender. Where I.T. have been requested to keep the E-Mail account open due to the sharing of information, legal/financial data then confirmation by E-Mail will be required from the relevant HOF/Director. After a period of three (3) years all remaining E-Mails relating to the former user will be deleted.
- 3.12 The College may provide secure E-Mail and Internet access for recognised Trade Unions. These will be provided on the understanding that the facilities are used in connection with normal trade union activities. If there are grounds to believe that the site or address are being abused then the matter will be referred to the Union full time official in order to agree access for the purposes of investigation.

4. Use of the Internet

- 4.1 Computer and internet access is provided to all users on the understanding that it will be exercised in a responsible manner, for educational purposes and College business use. Some group study areas may incorporate the use of additional remote monitoring tools to ensure these standards are met, where implemented signage will indicate this in a clear and understandable manner.

- 4.2 All sites accessed by users must comply with the restrictions set out in these guidelines. The creation or transmission (*other than for properly supervised and lawful research*) of any offensive, obscene or indecent images, data or other material may lead to disciplinary action and may in certain circumstances be treated by the College as gross misconduct, or result in a student's exclusion from their course and/or the College.
- 4.3 Copyright applies to all text, pictures, video and sound, including those sent by E-Mail or on the Internet. Files containing such copyright protected material may not be downloaded, forwarded or transmitted to third parties without the permission of the author of the material or an acknowledgement of the original source of the material, as appropriate.
- 4.4 Copyrighted material must never be downloaded/uploaded without the clear consent of the copyright holder. It is the responsibility of the person downloading/uploading the material to ensure no copyright is infringed.
- 4.5 Users must not use the internet in a way that denies access to others, for example by deliberate or reckless overloading of College systems.
- 4.6 Users should not import non-text files or unknown messages on to the College's system without having them scanned for viruses.

5. General Computer Usage

- 5.1 You are responsible for safeguarding your password for the system. For reasons of security, your individual password should not be printed, stored on-line or given to others. User password rights given to users should not give rise to an expectation of privacy.
- 5.2 Your ability to connect to other computer systems through the network does not imply a right to connect to those systems or to make use of those systems unless authorised to do so. You should not alter or copy a file belonging to another user without first obtaining permission from the creator of the file.

6. I.T. Services

- 6.1 The I.T. Services Department is there to assist you. If you require any information or help about the use or set up of your College computer you should contact I.T. Services via phone or E-mail.

7. Misuse of E-Mail or the Internet

- 7.1 The E-Mail and internet facilities provided by the College are provided on the understanding that users will use them in a responsible manner. However, misuse such as excessive private use of the E-Mail system during working hours or excessive private access to the Internet during working hours or knowingly downloading improper or obscene materials may lead to disciplinary action and may in certain circumstances be treated by the College as gross misconduct, or result in a student's exclusion from their course and/or the College.
- 7.2 If the College considers that a user is abusing the Colleges policy it reserves the right to withdraw any of the facilities provided from any member of staff or student.
- 7.3 Use of the College's E-Mail systems, internet facilities including VPN connections will signify that a user has read and understood the above guidelines and has agreed to comply with these guidelines at all times.

8.0 PREVENT Agenda

In order to safeguard students utilising the IT facilities at the College and prevent individuals from accessing extremist materials via the College's network, we will ensure:

- 8.1 The organisation will retain the ability to log and retain records of all electronic communications (web browsing, e-mail traffic etc) by users on the College network.
- 8.2 Appropriate staff will be available to monitor any aspects of its telephony network, including mobile phones and any computing facilities made available to staff, students and visitors.
- 8.3 Only College approved software will be supported by the College and allowed to be used on the College network.
- 8.4 Any unauthorised software that breaches College policies and/or presents a risk to staff/student safety will be removed and appropriate action taken where necessary.
- 8.5 All unusual and/or suspicious events including breaches of security are to be reported immediately via the safeguarding team for further investigation.

Appendix 1

Data Protection Issues

Personal data is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. Under the terms of the Act, personal data includes any information about a living identifiable individual, including their name, address, phone number, e-mail address and any other information about the individual. If you include such information in an e-mail, you are deemed to be processing personal data and must abide by the law. In particular, you must not collect such information without the individual knowing you propose to do this; you may not disclose or amend such information except in accordance with the purpose for which the information was collected; and you must ensure the information is accurate and up to date. In addition, the individual has the right to inspect what is held about him or her on the e-mail system, or held in separate archives of e-mails. The individual can demand correction of inaccurate information, can request blocking or erasure of damaging information, and can sue for damage caused by inaccurate information.

The law also imposes rules on the storage of personal data. Such data should only be kept for as long as it is needed for the purpose for which it was collected. If you maintain your own stores of e-mails, you should ensure that such stores are not maintained for longer than is necessary for the purpose for which it was collected. E-mails should be held in such a way that they can be easily identified, reviewed and, when necessary, destroyed.

Finally, the law imposes strict rules on the transfer of personal data outside the European Economic Area (EEA). Transfer is not just the deliberate sending of information outside the EEA, but also allowing third parties from outside the EEA access to the personal data held in the UK.

Therefore, you should not:

- Use e-mails for any purpose that is not permitted under the College's notification under the Data Protection Act;
- Use a false identity in e-mails you send out;
- Exploit mail servers or other systems to facilitate the widespread distribution of unsolicited and unwanted e-mails;
- Use e-mails for communicating confidential or sensitive matters relating to individuals;
- Obtain, handle or disclose personal information without ensuring you are complying with the law or with the College's notification to the Data Protection Commissioner;
- Allow third parties to read personal information in e-mails or attachments by leaving your screen in view of such third parties;
- Create or forward advertisements, chain letters or unsolicited e-mails;
- Read other peoples' e-mails sent to someone else without their express permission;
- Pass on your password or ID to any third party;
- Invade someone's privacy by any means using e-mail;
- Send e-mails containing personal information outside the EEA, or allow third parties outside the EEA to read your e-mails containing such information without checking with the College's Data Controller.

You should:

- Be cautious about putting personal information in the body of the text, especially if it is of a sensitive or confidential nature;
- Comply with a request from the Data Controller, your manager or a member of the Executive to inspect your e-mail archives and/or to print out items relevant to a particular individual if that individual demands a copy of his/her file. This will only be requested when required under the Act, or where there is good reason to believe that violations of the law or of College policies have taken place, or for some other compelling or time critical reasons;
- Agree to pass to the College all of your e-mail records if you leave the employment of the College;

Note that the recipients of your e-mails, the originators of e-mails you receive and the content of all e-mails sent or received may be the subject of scrutiny within current legislative provision.