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# Policy on Responsible Computing

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In support of its mission of teaching, research and public service, Saint Patrick's College provides access to computing and information resources for students and staff, within institutional priorities and financial capabilities.

## **Preamble**

The Policy for Responsible Computing at the College contains the governing philosophy for regulating staff and student use of the College's computing resources. It spells out the general principles regarding appropriate use of equipment, software and networks. By adopting this policy, the Academic Council recognises that all members of the College are also bound by local, national and international laws relating to copyrights, security and other statutes regarding electronic media. The policy also recognises the responsibility of academic staff and system administrators to take a leadership role in implementing the policy and assuring that the College community honours the policy.

## **Policy**

All Members of the College community who use the College's computing and information resources must act responsibly.

All users and system administrators must guard against abuses that disrupt or threaten the viability of systems, including those at the College and those on networks to which the College's systems are connected.

Every user is responsible for the integrity of these resources. All users of College-owned or College-leased computing systems must respect the rights of other computing users, respect the integrity of the physical facilities and controls and respect all pertinent license and contractual agreements. It is the policy of Saint Patrick's College that all members of its community act in accordance with these responsibilities, relevant laws and contractual obligations and the highest standard of ethics.

Access to the College's computing facilities is a privilege granted to College staff and students. The College reserves the right to limit, restrict or extend computing privileges and access to its information resources.

Data owners - whether academic departments, administrative departments or students - may allow individuals other than College staff and students access to information for which they are responsible, so long as such access does not violate any license or contractual agreement, College policy, or any national or international law. The data owner must also take account of the need to know on the part of the applicant for access, the sensitivity of the information and the risk of damage to, or loss by the College, should the information be misused. College computing facilities and accounts are to be used for the College-related activities for which they are assigned. This policy applies equally to all College-owned or College-leased computers.

## **Data Protection Declaration:**

*Saint Patrick's College* processes your personal information (including the e-mail address assigned to you by the College) within the College only for administrative purposes, both prior to and on your admission, at registration, for examinations and on your graduation. Save in cases where the College is by law required or permitted to disclose your details to others, third party disclosure only takes place to:

- Funding Bodies and agencies that support and sponsor your education
- Professional, Educational or similar institutions that you have approached
- Third party service providers
- Organise Conferring Ceremonies where your graduate status or other award is publicly acknowledged
- The Maynooth Alumni Association and Development Office to facilitate future contact between you, the College and fellow alumni.

Access to information resources without proper authorisation from the data owner, unauthorised use of College computing facilities and intentional corruption or misuse of information resources are direct violations of the College's Code of Conduct for Users of Computing Facilities as outlined in the *Kalendarium* of Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth. Such instances may also be considered civil or criminal offences.

**Implementation**

Appropriate College administrators should adopt guidelines for the implementation of this policy within each department and regularly revise these guidelines as circumstances warrant. The Computer Centre shall, from time to time, issue recommended guidelines to assist departments and units with this effort.

**Enforcement**

Alleged violations of this policy may be dealt with by the College in accordance with such disciplinary codes and/or procedures as are in place, from time to time, in respect of students and / or staff of the College.

## **Code of Conduct for Users of Computing Facilities**

This code of conduct supports the College Policy for Responsible Computing. It should be read in conjunction with the Notes on the Code of Conduct which are attached.

Staff, registered students and registered visitors are authorised to use certain computing and networking facilities provided by Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth in support of its mission of teaching, research and public service.

Username and passwords are required to gain access to specific services. Students are assigned Usernames and Passwords and e-mail addresses at registration which allow them access to a range of facilities. Staff are allocated e-mail accounts on request.

All users must comply with the code of conduct for users of computer facilities at Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth that is outlined below.

Under the Code of Conduct you are not permitted to:

- engage in activities which waste resources (people, networks, computers)
- engage in activities which are likely to cause a serious disruption or denial of service to other users
- use computer or network resources to access, distribute or publish material that is obscene, libelous, threatening or defamatory or in violation of any right of any third party
- use computer or network resources for any activities which contravene the laws of the state, or the destination country in the case of data being transmitted abroad
- use computer or network resources for commercial activities which are not part of your work in Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth
- infringe copyright or the proprietary rights of software
- share usernames or e-mail addresses, transfer them to other users, or divulge your passwords to other users. Assigned group Usernames and accounts are to be used only for the College-related activities for which they are assigned
- access or interfere with data, displays or storage media belonging to another user, except with their permission
- undertake any actions that are likely to bring Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth into disrepute

### **Notes on the Code of Conduct**

1. While network traffic or information stored on College equipment is not normally monitored, it may be necessary to monitor if there is reason to suspect that this Code of Conduct is being breached, or for purposes of backup or problem-solving. You must therefore be aware that such monitoring may occur.
  2. Software and / or information provided by Saint Patrick's College may only be used as part of user's duties as a member of staff of Saint Patrick's College or for educational purposes.
  3. The user is responsible and accountable for all activities carried out under their username.
  4. Passwords used must adhere to accepted good password practice.
  5. Attempts to access or use any user name which is not authorised to the user may be in breach of the *Criminal Damages Act (1991)*.
  6. Existing norms of behaviour apply to computer based information technology just as they apply to more traditional media. The ability to undertake a particular action does not imply that it is acceptable.
  7. If you store personal data about others on a computer, you must comply with the provisions of the *Data Protection Act, 1988 to 2003* and the *Freedom of Information Act (1997)* and any applicable legislation from time to time.
  8. The user may use approved College links to other computing facilities which they are authorised to use. When using external facilities the user must also abide by their rules or code of conduct, insofar as such rules or codes of conduct are not incompatible with the College Codes of Conduct.
  9. All Computer usage is subject to compliance with the *Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998*. Users are hereby informed that Section 5 of the Act makes it an offence to knowingly produce, distribute, print or publish any child pornography. The term "distribution" in relation to child pornography is defined in the Act as including "parting with possession of it to, or exposing or offering it for acquisition by another person". Persons guilty of producing, distributing, printing or publishing any child pornography are liable:
    - on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding €1,905 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months, or both or;
    - on conviction on indictment, to a fine or to imprisonment not exceeding 14 years or both.
- The Garda Síochána have powers of entry, search and seizure where they believe that an offence has been or is being committed under the Act. A person who obstructs a Garda is guilty of an offence, and may be tried summarily and if convicted, be subject to a fine of not more than €1,905 or imprisonment for not longer than 12 months.
10. The attention of all network users is drawn to the fact that attempts at 'hacking' across networks may result in criminal prosecution in the State or elsewhere.
  11. This code of Conduct is reviewed from time to time and any new regulations must be observed by all users.
  12. Alleged violations of this code of conduct may result in the service being withdrawn and may be dealt with by the College in accordance with such disciplinary codes and / or procedures as are in place, from time to time, in respect of students and / or staff of the College.