

ICT POLICY



ORIGINATOR: Gary Stone
SLT LINK: Stuart Williams

October 2025

CONTENTS

1. POLICY STATEMENT	2
2. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES	2
3. SECURITY	2
4. USE OF EMAIL	3
5. USE OF THE INTERNET	4
6. CONFIDENTIALITY	5
7. USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)	6
8. OUR NETWORK.....	6
9. REMOVABLE MEDIA	6
10. PERSONAL USE OF ICT FACILITIES	6
11. PORTABLE AND MOBILE ICT EQUIPMENT	8
12. REMOTE ACCESS	8
13. ELECTRONIC MONITORING	9
14. ONLINE PURCHASING	10
15. CARE OF EQUIPMENT	10
16. CYBER RESILIENCE TRAINING	10
17. AGREEMENT	10
APPENDIX A - STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ICT	11

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Within this policy 'we' and 'us' means the Federation.
- 1.2 By following this policy, we will help ensure that our ICT facilities are used:
 - legally
 - securely
 - without undermining us
 - effectively
 - in a spirit of co-operation, trust and consideration for others.
- 1.3 The policy relates to all ICT facilities and services provided by us, although special emphasis is placed on email and the internet. All users of our IT systems are expected to adhere to the policy. Where policy differs between students and staff this will explicitly state staff or student.
- 1.4 Students should read and understand Appendix A - Student Code of Conduct at the end of this document.
- 1.5 The ICT equipment covered by this policy includes all hardware and software systems including, but not limited to, desktop machines, laptops, mobile phones, tablets, email and social media. ICT for the purposes of this policy will also include personal ICT devices when connected to the Federation network.

2. DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

- 2.1 Deliberate and serious breach of the policy statements in this section may lead us to take disciplinary measures in accordance with our Staff Disciplinary Policy or Student Behaviour Management Policy. We accept that ICT, especially the internet and email system, is a valuable tool. However, misuse of this facility can have a negative impact upon productivity, availability and the reputation of the organisation.
- 2.2 In addition, all of our phones, internet and email related resources are provided for education purposes. Therefore, we maintain the right to monitor the volume of internet and network traffic, together with the email systems. The specific content of any transactions will only be monitored with the authorisation of the Executive Principal, following reasonable suspicion of improper use.

3. SECURITY

- 3.1 As a user of our equipment and services, you are responsible for your activity.
- 3.2 Staff are required to have 2FA enabled on the following accounts:
 - Accounts that have administrative or higher levels of access
 - Microsoft 365 Account
 - CPOMS
- 3.3 You should not disclose personal system passwords or other security details to others, and do not use anyone else's log-in; this compromises our security. If someone else gets to know your password, ensure that you change it immediately or seek a member of the

IT Support team to help.

- 3.4 If you intend to leave your PC or workstation unattended for any reason, you should lock the screen to prevent unauthorised access. If you fail to do this, you will be responsible for any misuse of it while you are away, you are responsible for the actions someone else takes whilst using your account.
- 3.5 Any pen drives or other storage devices which you use on our network should be secured appropriately when storing personally identifiable data. For more detail, please see the section on Removable Media.
- 3.6 Do not attempt to gain unauthorised access to information or facilities. The Computer Misuse Act 1990 makes it a criminal offence to obtain unauthorised access to any computer (including workstations and PCs) or to modify its contents. If you do not have access to information or resources you feel you need, contact your line manager.

4. USE OF EMAIL

4.1 When to use email:

- Use email in preference to paper to reach people quickly (saving time on photocopying/distribution) and to help reduce paper.
- Use the phone for urgent messages (email is a good back-up in such instances). Use of email is permitted and encouraged where such use supports the goals and objectives of the organisation.
- All users of email must ensure that they:
 - comply with current legislation;
 - use email in an acceptable way;
 - do not create unnecessary risk to us by misuse of the internet.

4.2 Unacceptable Behaviour:

- Sending confidential information to external locations without appropriate safeguards in place. See point 5 of this policy for more details.
- Distributing, disseminating or storing images, text or materials that might be considered indecent, pornographic, obscene or illegal.
- Distributing, disseminating or storing images, text or materials that might be considered discriminatory, offensive or abusive, in that the context is a personal attack, sexist or racist, or might be considered as harassment or bullying.
- Using copyrighted information in a way that violates the copyright.
- Breaking into our, or another organisation's system, or unauthorised use of a password/mailbox.
- Broadcasting unsolicited personal views on social, political, religious or other non-Federation related matters.
- Transmitting unsolicited commercial or advertising material.
- Undertaking deliberate activities that waste effort or network resources.
- Deliberately or recklessly introducing any form of computer virus or malware into the network via email.

4.3 Confidentiality:

- Always exercise caution when committing confidential information to email since the confidentiality of such material cannot be guaranteed. We reserve the right to

monitor electronic communications in accordance with applicable laws and policies. The right to monitor communications includes messages sent or received by system users within and outside the system, as well as deleted messages. Further information can be found within this policy.

4.4 General points on email use:

- When publishing or transmitting information externally, be aware that you are representing us and could be seen as speaking on our behalf. Make it clear when opinions are personal. If in doubt, consult your line manager.
- Check your inbox at regular intervals during the working day. Keep your inbox fairly empty so that it just contains items requiring your action. Try to decide what to do with each email as you read it (e.g., delete it, reply to it, save the whole email in a folder, or extract just the useful information and save it somewhere logical).
- Keep electronic files of electronic correspondence, only retaining what you need to. Do not print it off and keep paper files unless absolutely necessary.
- Treat others with respect and in a way in which you would expect to be treated yourself (e.g., do not send unconstructive feedback, argue, or invite colleagues to make their displeasure at the actions/decisions of a colleague).
- Do not forward emails warning about viruses. Instead contact a member of the IT team and make them aware of the email.
- Do not open an email unless you have a reasonably good expectation of what it contains, and do not download files unless they are from a trusted source. For example, do open a JSmith-MathsPrep.docx file from someone you know and are expecting but do not open invoice.doc sent from an address you have never heard of, however tempting. If in doubt alert the IT team.

4.5 Email signatures:

- Staff should keep these short and follow our Brand Guidelines, they should include your full name and job title, usual working days and hours and the main reception contact telephone number.

5. USE OF THE INTERNET

5.1 Use of the internet is permitted and encouraged where such use supports our goals and objectives. However, when using the internet, you must

- comply with current legislation;
- use the internet in an acceptable way;
- do not create unnecessary risk to our organisation by misuse of the internet.

5.2 In particular, the following is deemed unacceptable use or behaviour, however, this list is non-exhaustive:

- Visiting internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or other illegal material.
- Using the computer to perpetrate any form of fraud, or software, film or music piracy.
- Using the internet to send offensive or harassing material to other users.
- Downloading commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, unless this download is covered or permitted under a commercial agreement or other such licence.

- Hacking into unauthorised areas.
- Creating or transmitting defamatory material.
- Undertaking deliberate activities that waste our organisations resources.
- Deliberately or recklessly introducing any form of computer virus into any network.
- Sharing/posting confidential information to an unauthorised website.

5.3 Chat rooms/instant messaging

The use of chat rooms and instant messaging is permitted for business/education use only.

5.4 Webmail

The use of webmail for Federation communication (e.g., Hotmail, Gmail) is not permitted unless previously agreed with your line manager. All of our communication should be from Federation email accounts only. Under no circumstances should Federation emails be forwarded to personal accounts, unless it is your own personal data.

5.5 Obscenities/pornography

Do not write, publish, look for, bookmark, access or download material that might be regarded as obscene or pornographic.

5.6 Copyright

Take care to use software legally and in accordance with both the letter and spirit of relevant licensing and copyright agreements. Copying software for use outside these agreements is illegal and may result in criminal charges.

Be aware of copyright law when using content you have found on other organisations' websites. The law is the same as it is for printed materials.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

6.1 If you are dealing with personal, sensitive and/or confidential information, then you must ensure that extra care is taken to protect the information. ensure that all personal data is stored and accessed securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK data protection legislation (please refer to the Federation Data Protection Policy for more information).

6.2 If sending personal, sensitive and/or confidential information via email, then the following protocols should be used. If there is any doubt as to the information being sent or the appropriate level of protection required, please check with the Technologies Director.

- Personal, sensitive and/or confidential information should be contained in an attachment;
- In appropriate cases the attachment should be encrypted, and/or password protected;
- Any password or keys must be sent separately via alternative means;
- Before sending the email, verify the recipient by checking the address, and if appropriate, telephoning the recipient to check and inform them that the email will be sent;
- Do not refer to the information in the subject of the email.

7. USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools can enhance productivity, support learning, and streamline administrative tasks. However, to ensure data protection and ethical use the following applies to the use of AI technologies:

- Only Microsoft Co-pilot (using Federation accounts) is authorised for use within the Federation. This ensures that any content shared or generated remains secure and is not used to train external models or leak personal data to third parties.
- The use of external AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, or other third-party generative AI platforms) is strictly prohibited unless explicitly authorised by the Executive Principal. These platforms may not guarantee data privacy or compliance with UK data protection legislation.
- AI generated content should be checked for authenticity and reviewed for errors.
- Any queries regarding AI use should be directed to the Technologies Director.

This policy does not cover the use of AI in exams or assessment, please refer to the Examinations Policy for further guidance.

8. OUR NETWORK

- 8.1 Keep master copies of important data on our network or authorised cloud services and not solely on your PC's local C: drive or portable disks. Not storing data in this way means it will not be backed up and is therefore at risk.
- 8.2 Ask for advice from the Technologies Director if you need to store, transmit or handle large quantities of data, particularly images or audio and video. These large files use up disk space and can be difficult to transfer to restrictions.
- 8.3 Be considerate about storing personal, non-Federation files on our network and understand there is additional costs to the organisation when this data is backed up.
- 8.4 Do not copy files that are accessible centrally into your personal directory unless you have good reason (i.e., you intend to amend them or you need to reference them and the central copies are to be changed or deleted) since this uses up disk space unnecessarily.

9. REMOVABLE MEDIA

- 9.1 If storing or transferring personal, sensitive, confidential or classified information using Removable Media you must first contact the Data Protection Officer for permission and also:
 - Always consider if an alternative solution already exists.
 - Only use recommended removable media.
 - Encrypt and password protect using technology such as bit locker.
 - Store all removable media securely.
 - Removable media must be disposed of securely by the Technologies Director.

10. PERSONAL USE OF ICT FACILITIES

10.1 Social Media

For the purpose of this policy, social media websites are web-based and mobile technologies which allow parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. They include but are not limited to; websites such as Facebook,

Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter, Google and LinkedIn. They also cover blogs and image sharing websites such as YouTube and Flickr. This is not an exhaustive list and you should be aware that this is a constantly changing area.

10.2 Staff use of social media at work

- Employees and volunteers are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media websites from our IT equipment. Employees and volunteers should ensure that usage is not excessive and does not interfere with work duties. Use should be restricted to only your non-working hours, unless this forms part of your work responsibilities.
- Access to particular social media websites may be withdrawn in the case of misuse.
- Inappropriate comments on social media websites can cause damage to the reputation of the organisation if a person is recognised as being an employee. It is, therefore, imperative that you are respectful of the organisation's service as a whole including clients, colleagues, partners and competitors.
- Employees should not give the impression that they are representing, giving opinions or otherwise making statements on behalf of the Federation unless appropriately authorised to do so. Personal opinions must be acknowledged as such, and should not be represented in any way that might make them appear to be those of the organisation. If in doubt, an explicit disclaimer should be included, for example; 'These statements and opinions are my own and not those of the Federation.'
- Any communications that made in a personal capacity must not:
 - bring us into disrepute, for example by criticising clients, colleagues or partner organisations;
 - breach our policy on client confidentiality or any other relevant policy;
 - breach copyright, for example, by using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 - do anything which might be viewed as discriminatory against, or harassment towards, any individual, for example, by making offensive or derogatory comments relating to: age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation;
 - use social media to bully another individual;
 - post images that are discriminatory or offensive (or links to such content).
 - We maintain the right to monitor usage where there is suspicion of improper use.

10.3 Other personal use

- Use of facilities for leisure or personal purposes (e.g., sending and receiving personal email, personal phone calls, playing computer games and browsing the internet) is permitted so long as such use does not:
 - incur specific expenditure for us.
 - impact on the performance of your job or role (this is a matter between each member of employees and their line manager);
 - break the law;
 - bring us into disrepute;
 - detrimentally affect the network performance by using large amounts of bandwidth (for instance by downloading/streaming of music or videos);

- impact on the availability of resources needed, physical or network capacity.
- Any information contained within our network is for use by the employee for the duration of their period of work and should not be used in any way other than for proper business purposes, or transferred into any other format (e.g., loaded onto a memory stick / pen drive), unless necessary for business use, and with prior agreement of the Executive Principal.

11. PORTABLE AND MOBILE ICT EQUIPMENT

- 11.1 This section covers items such as laptops, mobile devices such as phones or watches and removable data storage devices. Please refer to the section on Removable Media when considering storing or transferring personal or sensitive data.
- 11.2 Use of any portable and mobile ICT equipment must be authorised by the Executive Principal before use.
- 11.3 All activities carried out on our system and hardware will be monitored in accordance with the general policy.
- 11.4 Federation staff must ensure that all data belonging to us is stored on our network and not kept solely on a laptop or mobile device. Any equipment where personal data is likely to be stored must be encrypted.
- 11.5 Equipment must be kept physically secure in accordance with this policy to be covered for insurance purposes. When travelling by car, best practice is to place the laptop in the boot of the car before starting your journey.
- 11.6 Synchronise all locally stored data, including diary entries, with the central organisation network or approved cloud-based service on a frequent basis.
- 11.7 Ensure portable and mobile ICT equipment is made available as necessary for anti-virus updates and software installations, patches or upgrades.
- 11.8 The installation of any applications or software packages must be authorised by the Technologies Director, fully licensed and only carried out by the Technologies Director.
- 11.9 In areas where there are likely to be members of the general public, portable or mobile ICT equipment must not be left unattended and, wherever possible, must be kept out of sight.
- 11.10 Portable equipment must be transported in a protective case if one is supplied.

12. REMOTE ACCESS

- 12.1 If remote access is required, you must contact the Technologies Director to set this up.
- 12.2 You are responsible for all activity via your remote access facility.

- 12.3 Laptops and mobile devices must have appropriate access protection, i.e. passwords and encryption, and must not be left unattended in public places.
- 12.4 To prevent unauthorised access to our systems, keep all remote access information such as, logon IDs and passwords confidential and do not disclose them to anyone.
- 12.5 Avoid writing down or otherwise recording any network access information where possible. Any information that is written down must be kept in a secure place and disguised so that no other person is able to identify what it is.
- 12.6 Protect our information and data at all times, including any printed material produced while using the remote access facility. Take particular care when access is from a non-office environment.
- 12.7 Users of laptops and mobile devices are advised to check their car and home insurance policies for the level of cover in the event of equipment being stolen or damaged. Appropriate precautions should be taken to minimise risk of theft or damage of federation equipment.
- 12.8 Care should be taken when working on laptops in public places (e.g., trains) that any personally identifiable information is not visible to other people.

13. ELECTRONIC MONITORING

- 13.1 To safeguard and promote the welfare of all, the Federation reserves the right to filter and monitor the use of its ICT Facilities and network. This includes, but is not limited to the filtering and monitoring of:
- Internet sites visited
 - Bandwidth usage
 - Email accounts
 - User activity/access logs
 - Any other electronic communications.
- 13.2 Only authorised ICT personnel may filter, inspect, monitor, intercept, assess, record, and disclose the above, to the extent permitted by law. The Federation monitors ICT use to:
- Obtain information related to school business.
 - Investigate compliance with school policies, procedures and standards.
 - Ensure effective school and ICT operation.
 - Conduct training or quality control exercises.
 - Prevent or detect crime.
 - Comply with a subject access request, Freedom of Information Act request, or any other legal obligation.
- 13.3 The Trust is responsible for making sure that:
- The Federation meets the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards.
 - Appropriate filtering and monitoring systems are in place.
 - Staff are aware of those systems and trained in their related roles and responsibilities.

- It regularly reviews the effectiveness of the academy's monitoring and filtering systems.
- The academy's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) will take lead responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place.
- Where appropriate, staff may raise concerns about monitored activity with the academy's DSL as appropriate.

13.4 Where authorised, you may find that you have access to electronic information about the activity of colleagues. Any such information must not be used by unauthorised individuals to monitor the activity of individual employees in any way (e.g. to monitor their working activity, working time, files accessed, internet sites accessed, reading of their email or private files, etc.) without their prior knowledge. Exceptions are:

- In the case of a specific allegation of misconduct against staff, the Executive Principal can authorise accessing such information when investigating the allegation.
- When the IT Team cannot avoid accessing such information while fixing a problem, but this will only be carried out with the consent of the individual concerned.

14. ONLINE PURCHASING

14.1 Any users who place and pay for orders online using personal details do so at their own risk and we accept no liability if details are fraudulently obtained whilst the user is using our equipment.

15. CARE OF EQUIPMENT

15.1 Do not rearrange the way in which equipment is plugged in (computers, power supplies, phones, network cabling, modems etc.) without first contacting the Technologies Director.

16. CYBER RESILIENCE TRAINING

16.1 As a user of our equipment and services, you are required to complete cyber resilience training.

16.2 Staff are expected to complete compulsory training sessions when offered.

16.3 Students complete this as part of the curriculum.

17. AGREEMENT

17.1 All students, employees, contractors or temporary employees who have been granted the right to use our ICT systems are required to read and follow this policy.

APPENDIX A - STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ICT

To ensure that students are fully aware of their responsibilities when using IT systems or when communicating with others, they are asked to read and comply with this code of conduct.

- 1.2. I appreciate that ICT (Information and Communication Technology) includes a wide range of hardware and software systems including, but not limited to, desktop machines, laptops, mobile phones, tablets, email and social media. ICT use also includes personal ICT devices when connected to the Federation network.
- 1.3. I understand that I must not share my account username or password with anyone at any time unless directed to by a member of the senior leadership team.
- 1.4. I will log off when I leave a workstation.
- 1.5. I will not attempt to use or access any other user account without permission from a member of staff.
- 1.6. I will not attempt to use any unauthorised software, install any software or code, or modify any Federation ICT hardware, except where this is under instruction and authorised as part of the normal course of my learning.
- 1.7. I will not remove any ICT equipment from site without permission from the Executive Principal.
- 1.8. I will ensure that all electronic communications, including email, instant messaging and social networking, are in line with my role as a student at the Federation. All communications should be appropriate, respectful and courteous.
- 1.9. I will not attempt to access any inappropriate material using the Federation network or ICT devices. This includes, but is not limited to, pornography, racist or offensive material, online gaming, or gambling sites.
- 1.10. I will ensure I do not bring the Federation or members of the Federation community into disrepute by publishing, accessing, handling, sharing or sending inappropriate material via electronic means.
- 1.11. I will follow e-safety guidance and will help other students develop a responsible attitude towards system use, communications and publishing.
- 1.12. I will not attempt to connect any personal ICT device to the Federation network, other than the Federation's personal ICT wireless networks, without the express permission of the Executive Principal.
- 1.13. I understand the Federation ICT is provided for schoolwork use only and that personal use may result in access to equipment being restricted or removed.
- 1.14. I understand that if I damage equipment through lack of due care and attention, repair costs may be passed on to me.

A breach of this acceptable use agreement is likely to result in my ICT access being restricted or removed and may lead to further disciplinary action as outlined in the Behaviour Management and Exclusion policies.

With the Executive Principal's authorisation, the Federation may exercise its right to monitor the use of the Federation's ICT systems and network access at any time. This includes, but is not limited to, email, network file storage and internet access.