

Ó FIAICH INSTITUTE OF FURTHER EDUCATION



LEARNER INTERNET SAFETY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)

JANUARY 2021

PURPOSE/AIM OF THIS POLICY

The aim of this Acceptable Use Policy is to ensure that learners will benefit from learning opportunities offered by the PLC College Internet resources in a safe and effective manner. Internet use and access is considered a PLC College resource and privilege. Therefore, if the Centre/College AUP is not adhered to, this privilege will be withdrawn, and appropriate sanctions as outlined in the AUP will be imposed.

EMERGENCY REMOTE TEACHING AND LEARNING/DISTANCE LEARNING/VIDEO CONFERENCING

During the COVID-19 pandemic there may be occasions where full or partial closures of PLC colleges occur. In these instances, interactions between learners and teachers/trainers/tutors/instructors (here-after 'teachers') via an online learning and teaching platform/video conferencing e.g. Microsoft Teams, etc and/or via email will reflect that which takes place in a physical classroom where possible. There may be additional applications that teachers may use, and the teacher will provide the learner with the information required to access them.

PLC COLLEGE STRATEGY

The PLC College employs several strategies in order to maximize learning opportunities and reduce risks associated with the Internet. This includes the use of college ICT devices and equipment including laptops, tablets, college computers and learners' personal devices including mobile phones, tablets etc. The college Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy will also be relevant. These strategies are as follows:

GENERAL

- Filtering software and/or equivalent systems will be used in order to minimise the risk of exposure to inappropriate material while learners are in LMETB FET centres and colleges. For learners, who are under 18 year in Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings, it is expected that parents/guardians have appropriate filtering software in place for these learners while working away from the college
- The college will regularly monitor learners' Internet usage
- Learners and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Internet safety
- Uploading and downloading of non-approved software will not be permitted
- Virus protection software will be used and updated on a regular basis
- The use of USB keys, CD-ROMs, or other digital storage media in a college requires a teacher's permission as all learners with LMETB email addresses/accounts have access to a OneDrive account through LMETB
- Learners will treat others with respect at all times and will not undertake any actions that may bring the college into disrepute or cause hurt or embarrassment to any member of the college community
- For learners who are under 18 years old attending the Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings, Internet sessions will always be supervised by a teacher

WORLD WIDE WEB & SOCIAL MEDIA

- Learners will not intentionally visit Internet sites that contain obscene, illegal, hateful or otherwise objectionable materials
- Learners will report accidental accessing of inappropriate materials in accordance with college procedures
- Learners will use the Internet for educational purposes only
- Learners will not copy information into assignments and fail to acknowledge the source (plagiarism and copyright infringement)
- Learners will never disclose or publicise personal information
- Downloading by learners of materials or images not relevant to their studies is in direct breach of the college's acceptable use policy
- Learners will be aware that any usage, including distributing or receiving information, college-related or personal, may be monitored for unusual activity, security and/or network management reasons

E - MAIL

- Learners will use the approved LMETB college email accounts which includes @lmetb.ie at the end of the email address.
- Learners will not send or receive any material that is illegal, obscene, defamatory or that is intended to annoy or intimidate another person
- Learners will not reveal their own or other people's personal details, such as addresses or telephone numbers or digital images
- Learners will not under any circumstances share their email account login details with other learners
- Learners will never arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone they only know through emails or the internet
- Learners will note that sending and receiving email attachments is subject to permission from their teacher
- Learners should avoid opening emails that appear suspicious. If in doubt, learners should ask their teacher before opening emails from unknown senders

INTERNET CHAT

- Learners will only have access to chat rooms, discussion forums, messaging or other electronic communication fora that have been approved by the college
- Chat rooms, discussion forums and other electronic communication forums will only be used for educational purposes and will always be supervised
- Usernames will be used to avoid disclosure of identity
- For learners (under 18's) in Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings, face-to-face meetings with someone organised via Internet chat will be forbidden

OR

- For learners (under 18's) in Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings, the use of chat rooms within the FET Centre are forbidden

COLLEGE WEBSITE

- Learners will be given the opportunity to publish projects, artwork or college work on the World Wide Web in accordance with clear policies and approval processes regarding the content that can be loaded to college's website
- The website will be regularly checked to ensure that there is no content that compromises the safety of learners or staff
- Website using facilities such as guestbooks, noticeboards or weblogs, where applicable, will be checked frequently to ensure that they do not contain personal details. Records will be kept regarding same
- The publication of learner work will be co-ordinated by a teacher
- Learners' work will appear in an educational context on web pages with a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of such work without express written permission
- The college will endeavour to use digital photographs, audio or video clips of focusing on group activities. Content focusing on individual learners will not be published on the college website without their prior permission, or in the case of learners under 18 years of age, parental permission will be required. Photographs, audio and video clips will focus on group activities. Video clips may be password protected
- Personal learner information, including home address and contact details, will be omitted from college web pages
- The college website will avoid publishing the first name and last name of individuals in a photograph
- The college will ensure that the image files are appropriately named – will not use learners' names in image file names or ALT tags if published on the web
- Learners will continue to own the copyright on any work published

MICROSOFT (MS) TEAMS

- Is an online learning and teaching platform that teachers and learners may use in this college
- It provides teachers with a method of managing lessons setting, sharing content with teachers and learners and facilitating live classes remotely
- Learners may use the platform to check for homework, see online demonstrations or elements of lessons, engage with live classes, get help and support from teachers and for the purposes of sending work to teachers
- Learners should be aware that any links received for MS Teams meetings and/or classes are for their private use only and they are not authorised to forward any links to other parties either within or outside the college
- This platform is for education and college work only and it must not be used by learners and teachers for any purposes other than this
- As with all MS products extensive user logs are maintained and can be accessed when required for the purposes of an investigation by a college, LMETB, TUSLA, Garda Siochana etc. where necessary

PERSONAL DIGITAL DEVICES

- The college acknowledges that as a high technology 21st century college, learners may use advanced digital devices such as iPads, tablets or laptops to engage in learning. The use of such appropriate digital devices is permitted for learning purposes only, in the classroom with the permission of the teacher
- Learners are prohibited from viewing or allowing others to view on a digital device, material which is obscene, defamatory or inappropriate
- Leaving a mobile phone turned on or using it in class, sending nuisance text messages, or the unauthorised taking of images with a mobile phone camera or digital device camera, still or moving is in direct breach of the college's acceptable use policy
- The college will take no responsibility for a personal digital device taken into the college building and its grounds by a learner

Online Teaching and Learning Platforms/Video Conferencing

- Learners and teachers will be provided with training in the area of Online Teaching and Learning Platforms/Video Conferencing (i.e. Zoom)
- All Teaching and Learning Platforms/Video Conferencing (i.e. Zoom) will have a meeting ID and passcode for the learners own use and this is not to be shared
- It is expected that learners and staff will use this platform in a professional and ethical manner for the purpose of teaching, learning and assessment
- It is expected that learners when engaging in classes remotely will follow the instruction of their teacher regarding the use of camera during live classes that may occur. It is also expected that learners will locate themselves in an appropriate setting for such classes
- Learners should never post, stream or transmit any content, including live video, that violates this policy in such a way that is offensive to learners/staff
- Learners should not do anything illegal, facilitate any illegal activity, or promote violence
- Learners should not do anything that threatens, exploits or otherwise harms children or fellow learners
- Learners should not engage in any activity that is harmful, obscene or indecent. This includes offensive gestures, displays of nudity, violence, pornography, sexually explicit material or criminal activity
- Learners should not engage in any activity that is fraudulent, false or misleading
- Learners should not engage in any activity that is defamatory, harassing,

threatening, obscene, indecent or otherwise inappropriate

- Learners should not send unauthorised messages or irrelevant material
- Learners should not share any links for meetings with anyone else either inside the college, LMETB or to external users
- Learners should not misrepresent a user's identity or affiliation with any entity or organization, or impersonate any other person
- Learners should not harvest, collect or gather user data without consent
- Learners should not violate or infringe any intellectual property or proprietary rights of others, including copyrights
- Learners should not violate the privacy of others or distribute confidential or personal information of others
- Learners should not engage in any activity that is harmful or disruptive to the operation of online classes. This includes transmitting viruses, malware or other malicious or destructive code or using tools that mask IP address location or to otherwise circumvent restrictions on use due to regulations or account closures
- Learners should report any concerns or suspicious activity immediately to a member of staff

LEGISLATION

The college will provide information on the following legislation relating to use of the Internet which teachers, learners and parents (of learners under 18 years of age, in PLC colleges, Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings), should familiarise themselves with:

- Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998
- Interception Act 1993
- Video Recordings Act 1989
- The Data Protection Act 1988
- General Data Protection Regulation - Regulation (EU) 2016/679

EDUCATION & TRAINING ON INTERNET SAFETY

- Learners will be provided with education in the area of internet safety as part of their studies in the PLC college
- Internet safety advice and support opportunities are provided to learners through Induction Programmes, Transfer and Transition Programmes, Wellbeing Programmes, ICT Classes
- The college holds an annual Internet Safety Week
- The college holds an annual Wellbeing Week
- Teachers are provided with continuing professional development opportunities in the area of internet safety

- Training is provided for parents on online learning and teaching platforms
- The college website has a tab that links direct to www.WEBWISE.ie , www.education.ie, www.scoilnet.ie, www.ncse.ie and www.pdst.ie which include a range of resources for learners, teachers, parents and guardians
- The college has many visiting speakers who meet with learners to discuss the area of Internet Use and Online Safety
- In Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings, An Garda Siochana present various programmes in FET Centres to groups of learners

CONTENT FILTERING

- Content filtering is an essential and integrated element of the broadband service that is provided to FET Centres by the College's Broadband Programme. The purpose of Content filtering is to ensure (in so far as possible) that inappropriate websites and content are not accessible from within the college
- Within the content filtering service provided, FET centres/colleges are given a choice of six different levels of content filtering so that they can choose a level that best meets their particular situation, age group of learners etc. FET centres/colleges can choose from these six levels, and the chosen level of content filtering is implemented by the FET Centre/College Broadband team. If the FET Centre/College subsequently want to change the level that is applied, they can do so by a formal written communication from the FET Centre to the FET Centre/Colleges Broadband Service Desk, which is the single point of contact for all FET Centres/College in relation to FET Centres /College broadband
- Content filtering systems classify websites into different 'categories', and these categories are used to control which category of website is allowed for FET Centres/College on the different filtering levels. Level one is the most restrictive (as outlined below), while level six is the 'widest' level available as it allows access to websites such as YouTube, personal blogging and social networking
- Learners taking steps to by-pass the content filter by using proxy sites, Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) or other means may be subject to disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges, detention and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion

SUPPORT STRUCTURES

- The college will inform learners (and parents/guardians in the case of Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings), of key support structures and organisations that deal with illegal material or harmful use of the Internet

SANCTIONS

- Misuse of the Internet and abuse or infringement on the rules outlined in this Acceptable Use Policy may result in disciplinary action, including written warnings, withdrawal of access privileges and, in extreme cases, suspension or expulsion
- The college also reserves the right to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities including TUSLA and/or the Gardaí. This could include unacceptable use of the internet, inappropriate use of any app which includes the camera, inappropriate, inaccurate, defamatory, obscene or illegal material found on devices. This also includes the distribution, publication and sharing of any inappropriate images and/or links to private and confidential data

AUP ANNUAL ACCEPTANCE

It is envisaged that PLC colleges will revise the AUP annually. Before signing, the AUP should be read carefully to ensure that the conditions of use are accepted and understood.

This version of the AUP was ratified by the PLC College's Board of Management/Senior Management Team on **27th January 2021** following consultation with all partners including Learners, staff, and where relevant with parents and guardians.

The policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis from the date of ratification, or as necessitated.

Internet Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

Please review the attached College Internet Acceptable Use Policy, sign and return this permission form to the College Co-ordinator/Principal

College Ó Fiaich Institute of Further Education

Learner Name

Year Group

Class

Learner Confirmation of Acceptance of AUP

I agree to follow the 'Colleges Acceptable Use Policy' on the use of the Internet. I will use the Internet in a responsible way and obey all the rules explained to me by the college.

Learner Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Acceptance Part A

As the parent or legal guardian of the above Learner, I have read the Acceptable Use Policy and grant permission for my son or daughter or the child in my care to access the Internet. I understand that Internet access is intended for educational purposes. I also understand that every reasonable precaution has been taken by the college to provide for online safety, but the college cannot be held responsible if Learners access unsuitable websites.

I accept the above paragraph **OR**

I do not accept the above paragraph

(Please tick above as appropriate)

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Acceptance Part B

In relation to the college's website, I accept that, if the college considers it appropriate, my child's FET coursework may be chosen for inclusion on the website. I understand and accept the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy relating to publishing Learners' work on the college website.

I accept the above paragraph

OR I do not accept the above paragraph

(Please tick above as appropriate)

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

Contact No(s): _____

Applicable to Learners under 18 years of age (in the Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings), Parent/Guardian Confirmations of Acceptance of AUP

(Applicable to Learners under 18 years of age in the PLC, Youth Reach and Community Training Centre settings)

SAMPLE LETTER TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Date: **27th January 2021**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Re: Internet Permission Form/College Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)

As part of the college's education programme we offer pupils supervised access to the Internet. This allows Learners access to a large array of online educational resources that we believe can greatly enhance Learners' learning experience.

However, access to and use of the Internet requires responsibility on the part of the user and the college. These responsibilities are outlined in the college's Acceptable Use Policy (enclosed). It is important that this enclosed document is read carefully, signed by the Learner and his/her parent(s)/ guardian(s) and returned to the college.

Although the college takes active steps to promote safe use of the Internet, it recognises the possibility that Learners may accidentally or deliberately access inappropriate or objectionable material.

The college respects each family's right to decide whether or not to allow their children access to the Internet as defined by the 'College's Acceptable Use Policy'.

Having read the terms of our 'College's Acceptable Use Policy', you may like to take a moment to consider how the Internet is used in your own home and see if there is any way you could make it safer for your own family.

Should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact us at the college.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Pdraig McGovern
Principal

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Review Checklist

For an AUP to be robust it needs to be reviewed and updated regularly, taking into consideration implementation issues that may arise. The following is a checklist that may be used when developing or revising an AUP.

- Have AUP implementation issues arisen since the AUP was designed/revised?
- Have these issues been discussed with parents, learners and teachers and incorporated into an updated AUP?
- Given that an AUP is in place, can the FET Centre/College confidently address the following scenarios?
 - A learner is found using a chat room to arrange a face-to-face meeting with a friend.
 - The FET Centre/College uses filtering software but a learner accidentally accesses a pornographic website while in your care.
 - A learner publishes defamatory information on a personal website about a peer.
- Has the AUP had a positive impact on curriculum delivery?
- Has internal or external expertise assisted the formulation or reformulation of the AUP?
- Has the FET Centre/College discussed the use of the Internet with parents and guardians?
- Has the AUP as a code of Internet use transferred to home use?
- Does an open dialogue exist between learners and teachers relating to Internet misuse and safety issues?
- Are trainers/tutors/instructors/teachers' and learners' internet safety training needs being met?