



Dublin City University

Code of Conduct for the Use of Computer Resources



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Purpose

The University provides computing resources for student and staff use to support the normal activities of the University, in particular for educational, research and administrative purposes.

The purpose of this document is to make users aware of what the University deems to be acceptable and unacceptable usage of the facilities and to provide guidelines for good practice.

Computing resources must not be used for any illegal or unethical purposes and should not generally be used for recreational or personal use.

Those acting in contravention of this Code of Conduct may be subject to the University's disciplinary procedures and/or criminal proceedings.

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the University's ICT policies and guidelines which can be found at:

<http://www.dcu.ie/iss/policies/procedures-guidelines.shtml>

General Principles and Regulations

- The University provides computing resources to students and staff to facilitate the normal activities of the University, in particular for educational, research and administrative purposes.
- Computing resources must not be used for any illegal or unethical purposes and should not generally be used for recreational or personal use.
- The use of computing resources is subject to the regulations and guidelines outlined in this document and the ICT policies and guidelines found at: <http://www.dcu.ie/iss/policies/procedures-guidelines.shtml>
- It is the responsibility of the individual to be aware of the regulations and guidelines. Ignorance of the regulations and guidelines is not acceptable as an excuse or defence.
- Students and staff are authorised individually to use the University's computing resources. Accounts are created for staff and students on systems and networks as appropriate. Each user is responsible for the content and use of their own account. Users are responsible for all activities carried out under their account. Passwords assigned to

accounts must not be divulged to others. See the University's [Password Policy](#) for more detailed information.

Users must not jeopardise, in any way, the integrity, performance or reliability of the University's computing resources. No attempts must be made to circumvent [data protection](#) schemes, to uncover security loopholes, to "hack" into systems or to interfere with the intended operation of the computer resources.

- Users must take adequate precautions to protect the computing resources of the University from malicious software (e.g. computer virus programs).
- Users must not interfere or attempt to interfere in any way with data belonging to another user. No user should access or make unauthorised copies of data belonging to another user.
- Users must not impersonate or send email messages whose header fields have in any way been altered or where the message appears to originate from someone or somewhere else. For more information on the use of email facilities please see the [Guidelines](#) on the use of the University's email facilities.
- Users must not use the computing resources to store, create, display or transmit (other than for properly supervised and lawful research purposes) any offensive, obscene or indecent images, data or other material, or any data capable of being distorted into obscene or indecent images or material.
- Users must not deliberately perform acts which are wasteful of computing resources or which unfairly monopolize resources to the exclusion of others.
- The University may make regulations from time to time to govern access to computing resources with a view to ensuring that all users have a fair share of resources.
- When users are using approved links to external computing facilities, they must abide by the rules and code of conduct of the host organisation.
- Users must not undertake any actions that would bring the University into disrepute.
- Users may not connect equipment to the University Network, except in areas designated for such purposes. The [Network Connectivity Policy](#) provides more details regarding the connecting of equipment to the University's network.
- Use of Internet facilities is also subject to the [HEAnet Acceptable Usage Policy](#). Where a school or unit maintains its own website, the



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head of the school or unit is responsible for the content and activities relating to that system.

All users are bound by law to observe inforce legislation such as the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000 (<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/ZZA28Y2000.html>) and the Criminal Damages Act 1991 (<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/ZZA31Y1991.html>).

- It is not acceptable to engage in any activity which:
 1. Disrupts the intended use of the resources.
 2. Wastes resources (people, capacity, computer, network, data etc.).
 3. Compromises the legal rights of others.
 4. Modifies, damages or destroys computing resources or the data on them.
- Disciplinary action and/or criminal proceedings may result from any breach of this Code of Conduct.
- The University reserves the right to amend or update the regulations from time to time as it sees fit.

Responsibility for interpreting the regulations lies with the Chief Operations Officer of the University.

Licensing/Copyright/Legal

- The University recognises that copyright provides owners with exclusive legal rights to reproduce, publish, sell, or distribute literary, musical or artistic works.
- Users of the University's computing facilities should be aware that copyright law applies to materials accessed or published on the Internet. Material on the Internet should be considered to be copyrighted work unless it is specified not to be so.
- Users of the Internet facilities must be careful to ensure that any Internet activities engaged in are not in breach of any copyright or other intellectual property rights.
- Users must not put any copyrighted material (e.g. images, video, music, software etc) on web pages without prior permission from the appropriate authority.
- Users must abide by all the licensing agreements entered into on behalf of the University. Users must not infringe any copyright residing in software or documentation.
- Users have an obligation to make themselves aware of the licensing conditions attaching to software being used by them and to comply

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with those conditions. Users are reminded that software should not be illegally acquired, copied, used or distributed.

Software, data or information which is developed or becomes available through the use of the University's computing resources cannot be copied or used without the permission of the University and of the owner.

- Users must comply with all laws relating to the use of computing resources, copyright privacy and the protection of data.
- Users are warned that breaches of copyright may result in legal proceedings and/or financial penalties and in some cases constitute criminal offences. The University disclaims all liability in such cases.
- Users are warned that gaining unauthorised access to data(including programs) and/or interfering with data belonging to others are criminal offences under the Criminal Damages Act 1991 and persons convicted under this Act may be subject to fines or terms of imprisonment and they, and their parents or guardians, may be required to pay compensation to those affected.

E-mail, Electronic Messaging and Internet Usage

The use of e-mail/electronic messaging or the internet must be in compliance with the University's policies and guidelines relating to such resources. Specific guidelines relating to the use of E-mail/Electronic Messaging and the Internet are available at :

<http://www.dcu.ie/iss/policies/procedures-guidelines.shtml>

Other Specific Activities

Food, liquids and smoking are not allowed in the computer laboratories; those in breach of this regulation will be liable to a fine of €20.

Ownership

All computing facilities provided by the University are the sole property of DCU. DCU encourages the use of these facilities and respects the privacy of users. The University reserves the right to monitor the use of the facilities and users should be aware that the University may, in certain situations, be compelled to access and to disclose information such as e-mail and message content and data relating to the use of Internet facilities. This applies whether the e-mail system is hosted by the University or externally by a third party on behalf of the University.

The University may access an individual's records such as, but not limited to, e-mail, file and Internet records, without their consent, in the following circumstances:

- i. when required by and consistent with the law.
- ii. when there is substantiated reason to believe that violations of law or of University policies have taken place. Substantiated evidence being reliable evidence or information that violation of law or of University policies probably has occurred, as distinct from rumour or other unreliable evidence.
- iii. under time-dependent, critical operational circumstances. These would be circumstances where failure to act could seriously hamper the ability of the University to function. This could include, but would not be limited to, rogue or spam e-mails that were flooding the network.

Access under these conditions must be authorised by the Chief Operations Officer, in advance and in writing, or exceptionally by such other University officer as the President may nominate, with the President being formally notified in every instance.

The affected individual will be informed of the actions taken and the reasons for them. In certain emergency circumstances it may not be possible to get the President's authorisation in advance. In these circumstances appropriate action can be taken by a senior University officer to resolve the emergency and the authorisation must then be acquired as quickly as is possible, setting out the reasons in writing why the President's authorisation could not be obtained and why the delay would have been critical.

Retention

Logs are kept of most activities, for example, for backup purposes, the e-mail system retains records of all e-mail messages sent and received through the University's e-mail accounts, hosted internally and externally, and all accesses to the Internet are automatically logged.

There are daily, weekly, monthly and annual cycles of backups.

It is important to note that deleting data does not necessarily remove it from the system. It may still be possible to retrieve such data and to have it reviewed.



Contravention

Those acting in contravention of these regulations may be subject to the University's [disciplinary](#) and/or criminal procedures. Any action taken by the University will be consistent with the relevant Staff and/or Student University disciplinary procedures.

Responsibility for interpreting the regulations lies with the Chief Operations Officer of the University.

Notification of Violations

Students should report breaches of this Code of Conduct to one of the following: their lecturer, Head of School, Director of information Systems & Services or other senior person within the University. Staff have an obligation to report breaches to one of the following: their Head of School/Unit, Director of Human Resources, Director of Information Systems & Services or to the University Chief Operations Officer.

Amendments

The University reserves the right to amend or update this document from time to time as it sees fit.

Other Relevant Policies/Guidelines

Users of DCU computing resources must also be aware of the following relevant policies and guidelines:

- [Data Protection Policy](#) and [Guidelines](#)
- [Mobile Computing Policy](#)