

Coiste Gairmoideachais Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath  
City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee

# Computer and Network Usage Policy

October 2010

**CDVEC**

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## To All Staff and Students

The primary objective of the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee's computer and network resources is to enhance and support its educational, training and administrative services. These resources include hardware, software, user accounts, local and wide area network facilities as well as services accessed via the internet. The CDVEC encourages its staff and students to use these resources in a manner which will facilitate their work, education and training.

Computer and network resources are powerful enabling technologies for accessing, and delivering information and knowledge. As such, they are strategic technologies for the current and future needs of the CDVEC. Because these technologies give individuals the ability to access and copy information from remote sources, users must respect the rights of others, respect the integrity of the systems and related physical resources, and observe all relevant laws, rules, regulations and contractual obligations. These will include all existing CDVEC regulations and policies.

This Policy applies to all CDVEC staff, students and to others who are authorised to use its computer and network resources whether individually controlled or shared, standalone or networked. The Policy also applies to all computer and network facilities controlled or contracted by the CDVEC. These include PCs, workstations, servers, communication equipment as well as associated peripherals and software regardless of whether used for administration, teaching, training, research or other purposes.

I would like to take this opportunity of wishing all staff and students in the CDVEC every success in their work, education and training.

**Jacinta Stewart**

*Chief Executive Officer*

## General Rules

The CDVEC's computer and network resources represent a considerable investment and providing access to them is expensive. They shall not be used to disseminate, view or store commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive code such as viruses, spyware, malware, self-replicating programs etc., pornographic text or images, or any other unauthorised materials. All computers on the CDVEC network should have an up to date antivirus program installed from a reputable vendor. On the Administrative Network this is the responsibility of the Head Office IT Department. On the Academic Network it is the responsibility of the Head of the Centre, though Head Office IT will assist and advise as required.

Users shall not use the CDVEC's internet connection to download unauthorised software, "plug-ins", games or other entertainment software (including screen savers) or save inappropriate or offensive material unless approved in advance by a course tutor as class material.

Unlicensed software must not be installed on any computer or network device. Software provided by the CDVEC shall be used only as part of the user's role as a member of the CDVEC staff or for educational and training purposes as a student of the CDVEC. The user agrees to abide by all copyright and licensing agreements for software entered into by the CDVEC with other parties. Users shall not copy or use material created by others without acknowledgement, or, where appropriate obtaining permission from the copyright owner.

No-one must use a port scanner or other hacking tools on the CDVEC network and internet connections to try to attack other individuals, organisations or networks under any circumstances. Any breach of this section will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter.

Users must not jeopardise, in any way, the integrity, security, performance or reliability of the CDVEC's computer and network resource. Users are warned that gaining unauthorised access to data (including programs) and/or interfering with data belonging to others are offences under the criminal law.

All network passwords should contain a mixture of uppercase, lowercase letters and numbers and should contain at least 7 characters. Passwords should be changed regularly.

Users shall not use their personal devices such as PDAs, mobile and camera phones or iPods to synchronise with and/or download data from the CDVEC's computer and network resources. Users are forbidden to engage in unauthorized copying of data and/or software from the CDVEC's computer and network resources to removable media such as CD-RWs and USB keys. Any laptop computers or memory sticks containing personal data must be encrypted. All data should be backed up regularly and the backup tapes should be stored offsite where feasible.

It is not permitted to use computer and network resources for inappropriate purposes which include but are not limited to the following activities:

- Knowingly performing any act which will interfere with the normal operation of computers, peripherals or networks.
- Knowingly destroying the integrity of computer-based information.
- Deliberately wasting computer resources.
- Compromising the privacy of others.

- Granting another individual unauthorised access to your computer account or attempting to access another individual's computer files. Each user is responsible for all activity carried out under his/her account.
- Using the computer and network facilities for unauthorised profit or commercial purposes.
- Accessing, downloading, saving, creating or transmitting any abusive, obscene, threatening, defamatory, offensive or harassing images or material.
- Causing offence to another individual or discriminating on the grounds of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religious or political belief, age, disability, race, colour or membership of the Traveller community.

You must respect the laws of Ireland and specifically, but not exclusively, be aware of your responsibilities under:

- Copyright Act (1963) and as amended
- Data Protection Act (1988 & 2003)
- Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act (1989)
- Criminal Damage Act (1991)
- Freedom of Information Act (1997)
- Child Trafficking and Pornography Act (1998)

All of these acts can be accessed on the website <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie>

## Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003

Due to the permanent nature of electronic communication and because record keeping is often now kept electronically, such records may be demanded from the CDVEC in connection with legal proceedings. Further, if any such communications contain personal data, which includes, but is not limited to, data relating to the racial or ethnic origin, the political opinions and the religious or philosophical beliefs of a person or the health or sexual life of the data subject or the commission or alleged commission of any offence by the data subject, then the data subject can require the CDVEC to provide copies of such communications. Accordingly, all electronic communication must be as carefully worded as other formal written correspondence. A definition of personal data is given in the CDVEC Data Protection Policy.

## E-mail

E-mail is provided for educational, training and administrative use only. Users should be aware that e-mail is neither secure nor guaranteed to be private.

Users must not send messages, including attachments, which are abusive, obscene, threatening, defamatory, offensive or harassing. Users must not partake in or promote the sending or distribution of chain e-mail messages or send unnecessary files which would adversely affect computer and network resources. The CDVEC accepts no liability for lost or deleted e-mail. Users must not send anonymous e-mail. Neither may they use the e-mail address of another user to send e-mail. Users must not open e-mail attachments from unsolicited or unknown sources. Existing norms of behaviour apply to computer based information just as they would apply to more traditional media.

E-mails must not be sent from multifunction devices when they contain personal data or confidential information. A multifunction device is a device that combines the functions of a photocopier, fax, printer and scanner.

## World Wide Websites

### CDVEC Centre Websites

Students' work should only appear in an educational context on Web pages with a notice prohibiting the copying of such work without the expressed written permission of the CDVEC Centre. Copyrighted material must not appear on any Web page without the permission of and an acknowledgement of the copyright holder.

No personal information such as home address, telephone numbers, contact details, or other personal information about a student, the student's family or members of staff should appear with such work.

Only large college/centre group photographs should be used on the website. No individual student photographs or images which might assist in identifying an individual should appear. No photographs of staff should appear on a website without the informed prior approval of that staff member.

Students are not permitted to register or sign "visitor's books" on websites without prior permission. If a Web page is inviting contact from other internet users, a generic e-mail address must be used e.g. <info@centrename.cdvec.ie>

All websites should display the following disclaimer:

*"The information contained in these Web pages is, to the best of our knowledge, true and accurate at the time of publication and is solely for information purposes only. The CDVEC accepts no liability for any loss or damage arising as a result of use or reliance on this information."*

Any website which allows users to upload personal information such as applicants for courses should be encrypted with SSL technology.

## External Websites

Access to Social Networking websites (example: Facebook, Bebo and Twitter) should be restricted as these sites permit users to upload personal comments about others. This can give rise to cyberbullying. Like any form of bullying cyberbullying is a serious matter and will be dealt with under the CDVEC's established disciplinary procedures.

Filtering software must be installed with all CDVEC internet connections to prevent users accessing inappropriate material on the internet. On the Administrative Network this is the responsibility of the Head Office IT Department, on the Academic Network it is the responsibility of the Head of the Centre, though Head Office IT will assist and advise as required. Users must not use proxies or any other means to try to circumvent the block on social networking and other websites.

In the event of an incident occurring involving inappropriate use of the internet, the computer in question should be isolated immediately and an Education Officer, Head of IT or Head of Corporate Services in Head Office should be notified.

## Policy Enforcement

Users should report to their Principal or Head of Centre any suspected abuse of computer and network resources, or any unpleasant material or e-mail that may come to their attention as well as any suspected damage or problems with files. Users when requested are expected to co-operate with system administrators and/or other authorised staff in any investigation of system abuse.

The CDVEC reserves the right to examine any files held on its computer systems. The CDVEC also reserves the right to monitor email and internet access using third party software where appropriate. Staff should be informed of the nature and extent of this monitoring as recommended by the Data Protection Commissioner.

Any user found in breach of this Policy may be liable for legal and CDVEC disciplinary procedures.

**This document is subject to regular review and will be re-issued when revisions are necessary.**



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