

Acceptable Use: IT Facilities

What is this information about?

It provides users with information on what is considered acceptable use of the IT facilities by the University and what is acceptable use, by legislation.

Who is the information aimed at?

All users who have been authorised by the University to use University IT Facilities.

Who can you contact if you require further information?

IT Service Desk on 0141 273 1234 or internal extension 1234 or <https://myservice.gcu.ac.uk>

Information

The University considers acceptable use of IT Facilities to include;

- the use of your fixed desktop, portable computer device or any other device owned and issued by the University
- the use of software licensed to the University and installed on any University owned and registered fixed or portable computer device
- Use at your work station, use in a computer lab or use in any other University work area or area out with the University registered work place (s).

Further Information

For the avoidance of doubt, viewing, accessing, transmitting, posting, downloading or uploading any of the following materials are strictly prohibitive. This list is not exhaustive;

- Material which is sexist, racist, homophobic, xenophobic, pornographic, paedophilic or similarly discriminatory and/or offensive;
- Offensive, obscene, derogatory or criminal material or material which is liable to cause embarrassment to the University and any of its staff, students or stakeholders or bring the reputation of the University and any of its staff or its customers into disrepute;
- Any defamatory material about any person or organisation or material which includes statements which are untrue or of a deceptive nature;
- Any material which violates the privacy of others or unfairly criticises or misrepresents others;
- Any other statement which is likely to create any liability (whether criminal or civil, and whether for you or the University);
- Material in breach of copyright and/or other intellectual property rights; or
- Unsolicited commercial or advertising material, chain letters or other junk mail of any kind

There are regulations and a code of conduct for IT Facilities which compliment this guidance and the acceptable use policy.

The University policy on acceptable use has been directed by the following legislation.

Obscene Publications Act 1959

The law makes it an offence to publish, whether for gain or not, any content whose effect will tend to "deprave and corrupt" those likely to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in it. This could include images of extreme sexual activity such as bestiality, necrophilia, rape or torture.

The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995 make it an offence to discriminate on the grounds of sex, race or disability (or perceived disability). Harassment, such as unwelcome emails or copying of such material from the Internet, is not permitted and could result in legal action against you.

Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

Copyright is a legal means of ensuring that content creators can protect what they create. When using computers, unless you have permission with regard to a particular copyrighted material, it is illegal to;

- Make copies
- Publish
- Distribute
- Sell copies

If you download a music track, film, game or programme without the copyright holder's permission, you are breaking the law.

Criminal Justice Act 1988

Offences created under this act include possession of indecent photograph (s) of a child.

Criminal Justice Public Order Act 1994

Offences created under this act include offences related to obscene publications and indecent photographs of children.

Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015

Offences created under this act include meeting a child following sexual grooming and possession of pornographic images of rape and assault by penetration.

Terrorism Act 2006

This act makes it an offence "to collect material which could be used by a person committing or preparing for an act of terrorism."

Computer Misuse Act 1990

The Computer Misuse Act attempts to discourage people from using computers for illegal purposes. There are 3 separate parts to the Act;

- 1 It is illegal to access data stored on a computer unless you have permission to do so.
- 2 It is illegal to access data on a computer when that material will be used to commit further illegal activity such as fraud or blackmail.
- 3 It is illegal to make changes to any data stored on a computer when you do not have permission to do so. If you access and change the contents of someone's files without their permission, you are breaking the law. This includes installing a virus or other malware which damages or changes the way the computer works.

Defamation Act 1996

It is unlawful to make an untrue statement, published to a third party, which damages the reputation of a person or company or holds them up to hatred, ridicule or contempt. It need not be obviously insulting. It could, for example, be a suggestion that a competitor is in financial difficulties or is unprofessional in the conduct of its business. Facts concerning individuals or organisations must be accurate and verifiable and views or opinions must not portray their subjects in any way that could damage their reputation.

Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act exists to protect personal details and encompasses 8 principles which state how personal data should be treated;

1. Personal data must be fairly and lawfully processed
2. Personal data must be obtained for specified and lawful purposes
3. Personal data must be adequate, relevant and not excessive
4. Personal data must be accurate and up to date
5. Personal data must not be kept for longer than is necessary
6. Personal data must be processed in line with our rights. Your rights include the right to see any data held on you, and the right to correct inaccurate data
7. Personal data must be held securely
8. Personal data must not be transferred to other countries outside the European Economic Area, unless those countries have similar data protection laws

Freedom of Information Act 2000 & Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

These acts provide a right to receive information from public authorities.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act (The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relations Act 1976 and Disability Discrimination Act 1995) and makes it an offence to discriminate on the grounds of sex, race or disability (or perceived disability).

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 & Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000

These acts enable relevant permitted investigatory powers to be used in accordance with human rights covering;

- The interception of communications
- The acquisition of communications data (e.g. billing data)
- Intrusive surveillance (on residential premises/in private vehicles)
- Covert surveillance in the course of specific operations
- The use of covert human intelligence sources (agents, informants, undercover officers)
- Access to encrypted data

Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

This act imposes a duty on “specified authorities” – if which the University is one - , when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Information Security Policies: <https://www.gcu.ac.uk/staff/it/itregulationspolicies/>