

ACCEPTABLE USAGE OF ELEARNING ENVIRONMENT POLICY OPEN TRAINING COLLEGE

1. Introduction

The Open Training College's eLearning environment is made up of a variety of online resources. These elements include a Moodle virtual learning platform (MyOTC), Google educational products (Gmail, Google docs, Google drive, Google calendar) and Turnitin (plagiarism testing software). Through these online resources, the College provides an area for teaching and learning.

During online learning, various interactions can occur, namely student-student, student-tutor and tutor -student. These interactions can occur synchronously (through Google Hangouts) or asynchronously (through email, online discussion groups).

It is only through adherence to the *Acceptable Usage Policy* that we can ensure that our e-learning environment remains an enjoyable and comfortable learning space, like any of the College's workshops, tutorials etc.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure users are aware of 'acceptable use' of the e-learning environment as outlined by College and that opinions expressed on discussion boards, chat rooms and emails etc. are respectful to all participants and the agencies and service users they work with; and are the views of the individuals and not of the Open Training College or representing other people including employer/agency without their permission.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all students of the College. This Policy covers documentation of policy, procedures, and standards relating to: e-learning environment.

4. Policy Statement

Student users must accept responsibility for all actions and content which they post within the Open Training College e-learning environment, noting that the following is **unacceptable**:

1. The posting or inclusion into assignment work of copyright/trademarked materials. (Work submitted for assessment will be verified for plagiarised material).

2. The disclosure of an individual's password for another student's use. (Students are responsible for all communications originating from their account).
3. The use of the name of an agency, a staff member from an agency, a service users name or any other person from an agency. Anonymity must be adhered to at all times.
4. Use of another student's account.
5. Use of inappropriate language i.e. language that is obscene, defamatory, threatening or offensive.
6. Posting of material that may encourage criminal conduct.
7. Anonymous postings to the discussion boards.
8. Transferring computer viruses or other codes that interfere with other users' use of the e-learning environment or their personal computers.
9. Emailing tutors / College with material that is not related to the programme e.g., jokes, circulars etc.
10. The use of the College's e-learning environment to carry out any illegal/criminal activities.

Students are requested to:

- Install virus-checking software onto their computer before they start their programme and undertake to keep this up to date.
- Notify the College immediately if they identify a security problem on the system.
- Ensure that they put in place on their own personal PCs, adequate measures for backing-up their work
- Regard any email as a written formal letter or any online posting as a formal academic response. Any defamatory or careless remarks can have very serious consequences. The use of indecent, obscene, sexist, racist or other inappropriate remarks whether in written form, cartoon/gif/pictorial form or otherwise, is strictly prohibited
- Back up every assignment onto their hard drive and onto a removable disc for their own records
- Inform the College immediately by emailing the E learning Team at elearning@opentrainingcollege.com on receiving any offensive, unpleasant, harassing or intimidating message while studying within MyOTC.

Use the OTC e-learning environment only for lawful purposes. Without limiting that general statement, you may not use our network:

- In any way that breaches any applicable local, national or international law or regulation;

- In any way that is unlawful or fraudulent, or has any unlawful or fraudulent purpose or effect;
- For the purpose of gaming or online gambling websites;
- For the purpose of harming or attempting to harm minors in any way;
- To transmit, or procure the sending of, any unsolicited or unauthorised advertising or promotional material or any other form of similar solicitation (spam);
- To knowingly transmit any data, send or upload any material that contains viruses, Trojan horses, worms, time-bombs, keystroke loggers, spyware, adware or any other harmful programs or similar computer code designed to adversely affect the operation of any computer software or hardware;
- To communicate hate speech, bullying or harassment against any person, whether or not they form a part of the broader OTC community.

Responsibilities and Guarantees of the Open Training College:

1. The Open Training College in consultation with their eLearning suppliers will endeavour to ensure that there is minimum downtime on MyOTC.
2. Loss of data due to interruptions in the Internet service is not the responsibility of the Open Training College but that of the user's Internet service provider.
3. The Open Training College will not be responsible for the loss of data caused by a computer or electronic virus. It is the responsibility of the student to implement procedures for the backing up of data and virus checking.
4. The Open Training College reserves the right to monitor user activity, for quality assurance, learning improvement, learner analytics and security reasons.
5. The Open Training College reserves the right to review, move or delete materials at its own discretion, including postings to discussion boards, bulletin boards and chat rooms, which it considers to be in breach of the Acceptable Usage Policy.
6. The College reserves the right to monitor all online activity rigorously and will take action, including legal action, for any serious breach of this policy.
7. The Open Training College will not be responsible for links posted by users in its system.
8. No member of the Open Training College will knowingly give out a user's personal contact details without their permission.

Online Content

These content standards apply to any and all material which you contribute to the OTC E-learning environment ("contributions"), and to any interactive services associated with it.

Users must comply with the spirit of the following standards as well as the letter. The standards apply to each part of any contribution as well as to its whole.

Contributions must:

1. Be accurate (where they state facts);
2. Be genuinely held (where they state opinions); and
3. Comply with applicable law in Ireland and in any country from which they are posted.

Contributions must not in the opinion of the OTC:

1. Contain any material which is defamatory of any person;
2. Contain any material which is obscene, offensive, hateful or inflammatory;
3. Promote sexually explicit material;
4. Promote violence;
5. Promote the harm or abuse of children;
6. Promote discrimination based on race, gender, religion, nationality, disability, membership of the traveller community, sexual orientation or age;
7. Infringe any copyright, database right, trademark or other intellectual property of any other person;
8. Be likely to deceive any person;
9. Be made in breach of any legal duty owed to a third party, such as a contractual duty or a duty of confidence;
10. Promote any illegal activity;
11. Be threatening, abuse or invade another's privacy, or cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety;
12. Be likely to harass, upset, embarrass, alarm or annoy any other person;
13. Be used to impersonate any person, or to misrepresent your identity or affiliation with any person;
14. Give the impression that they emanate from the OTC, if this is not the case; and
15. Advocate, promote or assist any unlawful act such as (by way of example only) copyright infringement or computer misuse.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

eLearning Team

The OTC eLearning Team is responsible for:

- Monitoring use of College IT Resources to ensure this Policy is not breached;
- Acting on breaches to this Policy and bringing any breaches to the attention of Head of eLearning.

Users

Each User is responsible for:

- Complying with this Policy and all other relevant policies and procedures;
- Ensuring all passwords assigned to them are kept confidential;
- Reporting all breaches of this Policy to College

6. Sanctions

Violation of the Acceptable Usage Policy may result in the termination of the student's right to access and use of the e-learning environment. Furthermore, other disciplinary actions may follow.

7. Related Documentation

Please note that certain additional standards and policies may supplement this Policy in particular circumstances and therefore they should be read in conjunction with this Policy and all Users should ensure they are compliant with them.

1. Risk Management Policy
2. GDPR Policy
3. Social Media policy

Policy Title:		Acceptable Usage Policy
OTC Policy No		1708
Version		3.0
Date approved: June 2021	Date policy will take effect: June 2021	Date of Next Review: 2023
Approving Authority:		Academic Council
Document Owner/Contact:		Head of eLearning
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy:		Social Media Policy Risk Management Policy GDPR Policy
Audience:		Public
Reference(s)		<p>Criminal Damage Act, 1991 (particularly Section 5) http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/1991/act/31/enacted/en/print#sec5 ;</p> <p>Data Protection Act, 2018 http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2018/act/7/enacted/en/print.html;</p> <p>Child Trafficking and Pornography Act, 1998 http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/pdf/2000/en.act.2000.0028.pdf ;</p> <p>Copyright and Related Rights Act, 2000 http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/pdf/2000/en.act.2000.0028.pdf ;</p> <p>Health and Safety Act (2005) https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Legislation/Acts/Safety_Health_and_Welfare_at_Work/SI_No_10_of_2005.pdf ;</p> <p>Intellectual Property Miscellaneous Provisions Act (1998) http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1998/en/act/pub/0028/index.html</p>