



Acceptable Telecommunications, Network and Internet Use Policy

May 2025 – May 2028



SIGNIFICANT CHANGES FOLLOWING REVIEW

PAGE NUMBER OR HEADING NAME	DETAILS OF SIGNIFICANT CHANGE	CHANGES MADE BY

Contents

1.	Introduction	6
2.	Purpose and Scope	6
3.	Acceptable Use Principles	6
4.	Access, Monitoring and Privacy	6
5.	Internet, Email and Communication Use	7
6.	Social Media and Online Conduct	7
7.	Printing and Learning Resources	7
8.	Third-Party Services	7
9.	Enforcement and Sanctions	8
10.	Version Control	8

Equality Impact Assessment

It is proposed that this form be included in all college policy template from hereon before the contents page..

The aim of an equality impact assessment (EIA) is to consider the equality implications of any new or amended policy, procedure, practice, project, function on different groups of staff, students and visitors to the college. This EIA tool provides a simple framework that helps evaluate whether the change may inadvertently disadvantage protected characteristics and identify ways to proactively advance and promote equality.

You will need to consider each of the equations and provide information as to consideration and any changes made in relation to Equality, diversity and inclusion.

Date EIA completed.	
Name of person responsible for completing the EIA	
Role of person responsible for completing the EIA	
Who is affected by the policy / decision / change	
What's the reason for the new policy / change in policy, practice, process etc.	

You will need to consider whether its possible that the proposed new policy / change in policy /procedure/practice etc could discriminate or unfairly discriminate or disadvantage people. You should consider:

Who gets to participate	Who does not, or who now does not due to the changes proposed / made.
Who is at an advantage	Who is at a disadvantage, and again has this changed?
Who will benefit	Who will not benefit (or who did and now doesn't due to the changes proposed in policy
Who can access the policy	Who cannot, or now cannot.

Protected Characteristic	What degree of impact does the change have (score 1-5 with 1 the lowest and 5 the highest)	What is a potential positive, neutral or negative impact? Include what you have considered. Are there any barriers?	What action will be taken to address any negative impact or remove any potential barriers identified? Note if we are not able to resolve anything identified.	Date by when and whom will this action be taken.
Age				
Disability				
Gender (Sex)				
Gender Reassignment				
Marriage or Civil Partnership				
Pregnancy / Maternity				
Race				
Religion or Religious Belief				
Sexual Orientation				
Any other element that needs to be considered.				

Note:

1. The terms stated under protected characteristics are the terminology used in the Equality Act 2010.
2. As part of the policy approval process Executive Board will consider the EIA assessment and any potential barriers which we may not be able to overcome and whether the action proposed will mitigate sufficiently within legislation or whether we decide to not implement the new policy if the risk are significant. If the policy is approved the EIA is also approved.

Acceptable Telecommunications, Network and Internet Use Policy

1. Introduction

This policy governs the use of telecommunications, IT systems, and internet access provided by South Essex Colleges Group (SECG). It ensures that users, staff, students, contractors, and visitors operate within legal, safe, ethical, and professionally appropriate boundaries. It aligns with the Computer Misuse Act 1990, GDPR 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Prevent Duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

2. Purpose and Scope

The policy aims to:

- Protect College systems and users from harm and misuse.
- Clarify permitted and prohibited behaviours.
- Provide transparency around monitoring, security, and legal obligations.
- Apply to all College-owned devices, accounts, and services, as well as personal devices connected via Eduroam or other approved means.

3. Acceptable Use Principles

Users must:

- Only access systems through authorised accounts and keep credentials secure.
- Avoid engaging in illegal, discriminatory, or malicious behaviour (including harassment, hate speech, radicalisation, or sexual exploitation).
- Refrain from installing unapproved software or altering system configurations.
- Use services primarily for educational or administrative purposes.
- Adhere to copyright and licensing rules when using or sharing materials.

4. Access, Monitoring and Privacy

The College monitors all data activity on College-owned systems in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and other legislation. Monitoring includes:

- Keyword detection to flag risks.
- Logging internet activity on College devices even off-campus.
- Filtering or blocking access to inappropriate or illegal content.
- Use of anti-malware tools to remove or prevent system compromises. Personal data is processed in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

5. Internet, Email and Communication Use

All communications (email, messaging, collaboration tools) should reflect professional standards.

Users must:

- Not transmit spam, chain letters, or offensive content.
- Ensure external messages are accurate and appropriate, with no impersonation.
- Notify IT of any suspicious or accidental breaches.

Internet use should relate to studies or work. Accessing or storing inappropriate content is prohibited. Misuse may lead to disciplinary measures.

6. Social Media and Online Conduct

Users engaging with social platforms (e.g. X, Facebook, TikTok) must:

- Avoid posting defamatory, harmful, obscene, or threatening content.
- Not use pseudonyms or impersonate others.
- Not share College-related content that violates confidentiality or copyright.

The same professional standards apply online as in direct communication, and breaches will be investigated.

7. Printing and Learning Resources

Students receive £3.50 free print credit per term. Rates are:

- A4 Mono - £0.03
- A4 Colour - £0.10
- A3 Mono - £0.05
- A3 Colour - £0.15

Prints can be released via College card. Unused credit rolls over annually but is non-refundable upon departure.

Borrowed Learning Resource Centre items must be returned as per agreement. Contact the LRC Co-ordinator for fees, damages or queries.

8. Third-Party Services

College services rely on external platforms like Microsoft, JISC and Adobe. Users must:

- Follow any third-party terms of use.
- Understand that data may be stored or processed externally.
- Seek clarification from IT on any service compliance concerns.

9. Enforcement and Sanctions

Breaches of this policy may result in:

- Temporary or permanent revocation of IT privileges.
- Disciplinary proceedings aligned with student/staff codes of conduct.
- Referral to external authorities if a criminal act is suspected.

IT misuse is a serious offence and will be treated with urgency. Users are encouraged to report breaches immediately to security@southessex.ac.uk.

10. Version Control

- Version: 2.0
- Author: Head of IT
- Reviewed: May 2025
- Next Review: May 2028
- Changes: Consolidated content, integrated IT Terms of Use, aligned with CMA and OU feedback.



Senior Leadership Responsibility	
Policy Author	Pete Daly, Head of IT
Roles Responsible for Reviewing	
Issue date of current version	May 2025
Date to be reviewed	May 2028
Type of Policy	Public / Internal