



**Fairfield School of Business**

# Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) Policy

Version 4.1

Approved by Board of Governors

Last Amendment: October 2020

The Virtual Learning Environment policy sets out the expectations and conventions for using the School's Virtual Learning Environment (FSB Connect); it has been drafted with due regard for the relevant information security laws.

The VLE policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Regulations for the use of IT Facilities.



## Document Information

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\*The document owner is responsible for maintaining and updating the content of this document and ensuring that it reflects current practice at the School.

## Contents

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1.	Introduction .....	2
2.	Scope.....	3
3.	Registration .....	4
4.	Responsibilities and acceptable behaviour – Copyright agreement (staff) .....	5
5.	Responsibilities and acceptable behaviour – Copyright agreement (students) .....	8
6.	Monitoring procedures .....	9
7.	Security and recovery.....	9
8.	VLE policy implementation.....	10
9.	Web 2.0.....	11
10.	Appendices.....	11



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. In its continuous effort to enhance the learning experience of its students, FSB has invested in the provision of the necessary infrastructure supporting the delivery of learning in its premises. The deployment of the FSB Portal has introduced an information hub to be used by both students and staff. FSB has invested heavily in the development of FSB Connect. An e-learning facility that provides the necessary learning materials and formative assessment opportunities to support students who are located on its campuses as well as those who wish to participate in its distance education programmes.
- 1.2. This policy determines the code of conduct and explains any issues associated with the use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) which is known as FSB Connect. The FSB vision is for FSB Connect to become a knowledge hub for its students and staff supporting all users in retrieving information, achieving learning outcomes, improving their assessment performance as well as communicating their learning ideas and views.
- 1.3. The use of FSB Connect supports both students and staff in their role within the FSB learning community. It is expected that the main FSB Connect stakeholders will use this resource according to their needs. The aim is for:
  - Students to use FSB Connect for enhancing their learning experience and advancing their assessment performance.
  - Staff to use FSB Connect for further improving their support to students and increasing the effectiveness in delivering excellent teaching through innovative practices.
- 1.4. It is therefore, the objective of FSB to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Computer Misuse Act 1990. The full content of the Act is available <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/18/contents>
- 1.5. It is therefore, the objective of FSB to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Data Protection Act 1998. The full content of the Act is available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/29/contents>.
- 1.6. It is therefore, the objective of FSB to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Communications Act 2003. The full content of the Act is available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/21/contents>
- 1.7. It is therefore, the objective of FSB to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. The full content of the Act is available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1994/33/contents>



- 1.8. This VLE policy covers the use of FSB Connect. A full record of amendments, updates and previous versions is held by FSB Quality Unit.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1. The VLE policy covers the use of FSB Connect and addresses any issues that may rise due to the way it is used by both students and staff. The VLE policy applies to the use of any FSB Connect features, and covers the use of FSB Connect both in campus through FSB computers and networks as well as access to FSB Connect remotely via the Internet. The VLE policy is in line with the FSB Copyright Policy and the FSB IT Regulations. It is expected that both students and staff will ensure that the policy is followed as required and that any requests for clarification with respect to fair and lawful use of works should be directed immediately to the FSB Connect Officer.
- 2.2. The registration to FSB Connect follows a procedure that is clearly defined in the induction pack provided to students and staff. Depending on the role of each individual, user accounts are created with access rights and user privileges corresponding to the role of the FSB Connect user.
- 2.3. Each FSB Connect user is a member of the learning community supported by FSB.
- Depending on the role of individuals an account allows certain functions and has specific access rights. The duration of the FSB Connect account depends on:
- The programme and mode of study for students.
  - The employment arrangements for staff.
- 2.4. Each student and staff member will be allocated a unique username and an initial password. Individuals are responsible to ensure that the original password is changed to one that provides reasonable security against unauthorised access. Each individual account requires the user to maintain a personal profile that should be based on the use of the unique FSB email account and the provision of accurate personal details.
- 2.5. The use of FSB Connect provides a portal for accessing learning content used in class and for distance education mode of study. The FSB Connect is structured according to the Programmes of study and the modules included in each of the available programmes. The FSB Connect environment encourages communication between students as well as interaction between staff and students. There are specific discussion forums used in association with learning activities and learning outcomes.
- 2.6. The use of FSB Connect for formative assessment, self-assessment and work towards assessment brief is strongly encouraged. Each module provides several areas directed to certain activities relating to the assessment of the module learning outcomes. Students are expected to be using FSB Connect in preparation for their assessment brief through the Streamline Learning process.



Academic staff is expected to be using FSB to support students through the Streamline Teaching process.

- 2.7. The use of FSB Connect should be in line with the code of conduct for using FSB IT resources as explained in the FSB IT policy. Users of FSB connect are expected to demonstrate certain behaviour and assume the responsibilities identified in the relative section of the VLE policy.
- 2.8. The misuse of FSB Connect will be dealt in accordance with FSB's *IT Regulations and Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Regulations*.
- 2.9. Users of FSB Connect should also be aware of the School's *Copyright Policy*, of which individuals may be in breach in the event of:
  - Inclusion of materials that are copyrighted without written permission.
  - Inclusion of materials without copyright clearance.
  - Inclusion of materials that are not covered by the FSB copyright clearance agreement without written permission.
- 2.10. The role of the FSB Connect Officer assumes responsibility for undertaking the responsibility of ensuring that the use of FSB Connect falls within the acceptable criteria as determined by the VLE policy. The role holder should be conducted if there are any concerns about the way FSB Connect is used by students or staff. The FSB Connect Officer provides support in the form of advice, mentoring, training, and awareness for students and staff.

### 3. Registration

- 3.1. In order to access FSB Connect students and staff must obtain an account. The account holder must use the FSB email account for setting up the FSB Connect profile. The procedure followed for registering to FSB Connect is explained during the induction period and training for FSB students and staff. Detailed guidelines for FSB Connect use are provided to students and staff at inductions and in the Student Handbook and Employee Handbook.
- 3.2. Registration to FSB Connect provides access to several resources, including:
  - Learning content covering learning outcomes of each module
  - Learning material distributed in classrooms and seminars
  - Communication with academic staff and students through interaction and activities
  - Assessment briefs
  - Streamline learning / teaching interaction activities
  - Self-assessment quizzes



3.3. The structure of FSB Connect is based on the structure of the FSB programmes of study. More specifically FSB Connect components include:

- Programme module areas
- Generic module communication in the form of discussion forums
- Assignments to do
- Upload my Assignment
- Student Module Evaluation Survey
- Formative Feedback
- Module content areas structured according to learning outcomes and topics.

#### 4. Responsibilities and acceptable behaviour – Copyright agreement (staff)

4.1. The responsibilities associated with the way FSB Connect is used by staff are explained in the VLE policy. All staff is expected to:

- Express self-disciplined behaviour and an ethical manner in the way they use the various functions of FSB Connect as well as the way they communicate through FSB Connect.
- Respect the views, ideas, interpretations and contributions of other users, expressed via FSB Connect.
- Ensure that usernames and passwords remain secure, private and strictly for their own personal use.
- Maintain individual FSB Connect profiles that are accurate reflection of their own details and are not causing any offense to other users.
- Understand that users are accountable and liable of own actions, with evidence of FSB Connect misuse leading to an investigation and subsequent disciplinary action.
- Use FSB Connect materials in a fair and lawful manner, including materials that have been uploaded by them.
- Access FSB Connect with the intention to enhance the learning experience and engage in communication associated with learning and not to engage in any activity associated with financial, political, or commercial purpose.
- Guarantee that none of their actions or activities in FSB Connect may be concerned defamatory, inflammatory discriminatory, obscene or offensive.



- Check that none of the materials uploaded to FSB Connect or exchange with other users is affected by viruses, malware, spyware, malicious code, worms or any other form of software related risk.
- Inform the FSB Connect Officer and system administrators of FSB Connect issues relating to:
  - Any technical problems experienced using specific features and functions.
  - Any problems accessing own accounts and editing own profile.
  - Any behaviour that is not in line with the VLE policy.
  - Any concerns about the way FSB Connect is being used.

4.2. VLE Administrators, on top of their general duties, are expected to:

- Ensure that they maintain FSB Connect in excellent operational order.
- Ensure that they adhere to the FSB Connect copyright policy.
- Be aware of the latest technologies and practices necessary for the optimum performance of FSB Connect.
- Guarantee the confidentiality of any FSB Connect information that is accessible to them as part of their role.
- Maintain uninterrupted FSB Connect logs and back-ups, including individual profiles of all users.
- Housekeep FSB Connect accounts and any assigned access rights and user privileges.
- Assess each point of entry to FSB Connect for security vulnerabilities including viruses, malware, spyware, malicious code, worms or any other form of software related risk.
- Perform any necessary maintenance tasks to server computers, networks and any other part of FSB network infrastructure that is needed for the operation of FSB Connect.
- Check that any outsourced services affecting the use of FSB Connect are provided to an acceptable standard and specified by a detailed Service Level Agreement.
- Audit periodically FSB Connect with respect to:
  - Security
  - Privacy
  - Monitoring
  - Back-ups and logs



- Code of conduct
- Report on any issues associated with FSB Connect operation and describe in detail any interruption of its service.
- Provide the support needed for uninterrupted availability and acceptable performance of FSB Connect, its features and functions.
- Keep a log of any FSB Connect changes and archive any actions, including:
  - Management of user accounts
  - Management of content
  - Management of interface
  - Management of dynamic content
  - Management of user profiles
  - Management of user interactions
  - Management of communications
  - Management of user generated content

4.3. Programme coordinators, on top of the general staff responsibilities also have specific ones relating to their role, therefore they are expected to:

- Report on the use of FSB Connect for the specific programme.
- Monitor issues relating to the use of FSB Connect in specific modules.
- Investigate issues relating to staff involvement in the use of FSB Connect.
- Support FSB Connect academic and student users in engaging with its features.
- Provide feedback to administrator users for FSB Connect management issues.
- Liaise with the FSB Connect Officer for any cases of FSB Connect misuse.

4.4. Academics, on top of the general staff responsibilities also have specific ones relating to their role, therefore they are expected to:

- Utilise the FSB Connect environment for enhancing the learning experience.
- Follow the Streamline Teaching procedure in using FSB Connect features.
- Provide FSB Connect content that is of high quality.
- Establish their presence in the FSB Connect areas relevant to their modules.
- Encourage students to use FSB Connect in their studies.
- Align FSB Connect features with the delivery of their modules.
- Interact with students through FSB Connect discussion forums.



## 5. Responsibilities and acceptable behaviour – Copyright agreement (students)

5.1. The responsibilities associated with the way FSB Connect is used by students are explained in the VLE policy. All students are expected to:

- Express a self-disciplined behaviour and an ethical manner in the way they use the various functions of FSB Connect as well as the way they communicate through FSB Connect.
- Respect the views, ideas, interpretations and contributions of other users, expressed via FSB Connect.
- Ensure that usernames and passwords remain secure, private and strictly for their own personal use.
- Maintain individual FSB Connect profiles that are accurate reflection of their own details and are not causing any offense to other users.
- Understand that users are accountable and liable of own actions, with evidence of FSB Connect misuse leading to an investigation and subsequent disciplinary action.
- Use FSB Connect materials in a fair and lawful manner, including materials that have been uploaded by them.
- Access FSB Connect with the intention to enhance the learning experience and engage in communication associated with learning and not to engage in any activity associated with financial, political, or commercial purpose.
- Guarantee that none of their actions or activities in FSB Connect may be concerned defamatory, inflammatory discriminatory, obscene or offensive.
- Check that none of the materials uploaded to FSB Connect or exchanged with other users is affected by viruses, malware, spyware, malicious code, worms or any other form of software related risk.
- Inform the FSB Connect Officer and system administrators of FSB Connect issues relating to:
  - Any technical problems experienced using specific features and functions.
  - Any problems accessing own accounts and editing own profile.
  - Any behaviour that is not in line with the VLE policy.
  - Any concerns about the way FSB Connect is being used.



5.2. Students, on top of the general staff responsibilities that are common with the ones of staff, also have specific ones relating to their role, therefore they are expected to:

- Follow the Streamline Learning procedure in using FSB Connect features.
- Participate in the use of FSB Connect features towards the assignment briefs.
- Be responsible for not inflicting any problems in the operation of FSB Connect.
- Ensure that they are enrolled all modules of their programme and year.
- Use FSB Connect features and its contents solely for their learning activities.
- Guarantee that FSB Connect contents are not disseminated further.

## 6. Monitoring procedures

6.1. The use of FSB Connect will be subjected to regular monitoring, for a number of reasons:

- Providing statistics for the use of FSB Connect features.
- Assessing the impact of FSB Connect on the learning experience.
- Identifying issues associated with the use of FSB Connect in specific modules.
- Ensuring that the copyright policy is adhered to throughout FSB Connect.
- Introducing innovative methods of using FSB Connect for learning.
- Investigating issues relating to FSB Connect operation and security.

6.2. At all times FSB Connect monitoring will be in line with the relevant laws as discussed at the beginning of the VLE policy.

## 7. Security and recovery

7.1. Users should ensure that the user names and accounts provided remain private.

7.2. Access to FSB Connect should be gained only by using computer systems and networks that are not perceived as high risk ones.

7.3. It may be required to change passwords periodically and ensuring that password strength is according to the required standards.

7.4. Account privileges will be reviewed periodically to ensure that no accounts exist for previous users who should no longer have authorisation to access FSB Connect.



- 7.5. Users who suspect that certain FSB Connect vulnerabilities have been exposed or evidence of misuse exist should contact the FSB Connect Officer at the first instance.
- 7.6. Accounts of users who have been involved with any incident of misuse may be suspended during an investigation following the incident.
- 7.7. Regular back-ups of FSB Connect will be held by administrator users.
- 7.8. The Network Manager will maintain a record of the following:
  - Exact date and time of each back-up.
  - The specific storage details of the back-up.
  - The archive records of previous back-ups.
  - The number of back-up copies held in different locations.
  - The traceable incremental back-ups available.
  - The retention period for each back-up is determined by the Network Manager.

## 8. VLE policy implementation

- 8.1. Any cases of FSB Connect misuse are taken very seriously as they are:
  - Affecting the learning experience of students.
  - Disrupting the support provided by staff.
  - Creating an unacceptable environment for all users.
  - Leaving FSB vulnerable to several risks.
- 8.2. Students who have been involved with any incident of misuse will be subject to student disciplinary procedure as specified under Student Conduct & Disciplinary Regulations (available from Student Portal).
- 8.3. Cases of misuse will be treated according to the seriousness of user actions, focusing on:
  - Use of inappropriate language.
  - Derogatory remarks.
  - Attempts to hurt, disgrace or damage the reputation of others.
  - Offensive, false and defaming remarks against FSB.
  - Inaccurate claims for any entity that may be regards these as an attack.
  - Dissemination of racists, sexist, exploitative materials.
  - Storage and sharing of inappropriate content.



- Cyber bullying.
- Profit making and commercial activities.
- Communication over topics irrelevant to learning that may cause harm or offense to others.

## 9. Web 2.0

9.1. It is common for students to engage in extra curriculum activities by using Web 2.0 technologies and applications such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. It is expected that FSB Connect users have no reason for reproducing any FSB Connect content or sharing any interactions taking place by using Web 2.0 tools. This practice is strongly discouraged as it may cause harm to others. Any FSB Connect users should be aware that:

- Other users of Web 2.0 technologies may not be who they claim they are.
- Personal details are not private if posted on Web 2.0 profiles.
- Online presence may affect one's future as it may affect how they are perceived.
- Malicious software is a common vulnerability of file exchange.
- Web 2.0 activities may have certain legal implications.
- Own contributions may harm others if not considerate.

## 10. Appendices

10.1. The details of the FSB CLA are available from FSB Connect and the FSB Connect Officer.



## Version History

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Principal

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