IT Facilities: Acceptable Use Policy

Version	**4.2**
	Public
Last updated	September 2025
Category	General Regulations
Approved by	Board of Governors

Abstract:

The following sets out what we expect from users of Fairfield School of Business' IT facilities; 'IT facilities' includes the School's desktop computers, laptops, printing facilities and internal networks.

Related Policies:

- *Data Protection Policy*
- *Information Security Policy*
- *Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures*
- *Social Media Policy*

Applicability:

These regulations apply to all staff (including contractors and volunteers), students and visitors at Fairfield School of Business (FSB); they are split into two sections:

- **Regulations applicable to all IT users** (including students staff and visitors)
- **Regulations specifically applicable** to FSB employees only.

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. This guidance expands upon the Employee and Student Codes of Conduct and is to be followed by all staff members and students.

1.2. The consequences for not following these regulations can potentially be severe for the employee or student, and for the School. FSB must therefore treat any breach of these regulations seriously and may take disciplinary action against anyone acting or attempting to act in breach of them; in the most serious cases this may include dismissal without notice for gross misconduct or expulsion from a programme of study.

1.3. These regulations do not cover the use of social media by students or staff, which is dealt with in the school's *Social Media Policy*, however there may be some overlapping of themes regarding communication over company networks. For the avoidance of doubt, where an action would breach the school's codes of conduct in a physical environment, it would do so in an online one.

1.4. Nothing in these regulations is intended to inhibit the academic freedom of FSB's staff and students to undertake legitimate academic enquiry or research; any access to online subject matter which would usually be prohibited by these regulations may be permissible with authorisation sought in advance from senior academics and network administrators.

1.5. Further to 1.5, these regulations do not seek to impose restriction on the fundamental rights of freedom of expression individuals to hold one's own opinions and to express them freely in accordance with Article 10 of the Human Rights; for more information, please refer to FSB's *Freedom of Expression Policy* and *Academic Freedom Code of Practice*.

2. Regulations applicable to all users

Unacceptable Use of IT Facilities

2.1. FSB will not tolerate any instances of students, employees or other users causing financial, material, or reputational harm the School and/or those affiliated with it, for example by:

i. intentionally or unintentionally exposing FSB's systems to any malware or making them vulnerable to vulnerable to third part intrusion (hacking),

ii. causing physical damage to hardware and IT equipment or damage to the integrity of software.

iii. using IT facilities in any way that would constitute bullying, harassment and/or victimisation of a person (as set out in the FSB's Dignity Policy),

iv. viewing, creating, sharing, or distributing unlawful material or messages such that may be construed as libellous, defamatory threatening or extremist in content, or material which advocates breaking the law or in any way breaches the FSB's Prevent Duty policy,

v. viewing, creating, sharing, or distributing material which would be considered "Not Safe for Work" (or "NSFW"); this refers to material containing nudity, explicit sexual references, profanity, violence, and/or other potentially disturbing subject matter),

vi. attempting to gain access to another employee's or student's IT user account to act on behalf of that person, whether with or without their consent,

vii. downloading or disseminating copyright materials without the permission of the copyright owner,

viii. downloading or playing computer games.

ix. sharing of sensitive, confidential, or strategic information without the appropriate permission.

Sharing humorous content

2.2. Students and employees should use discretion in sending humorous material or jokes to colleagues over FSB's networks and are advised to refrain from doing so as things that may seem innocuous to you may be upsetting or offensive to others. Even if the intended recipient is not offended by the message, it may be forwarded on to a person who is, in which case the original sender may accountable for the content.

2.3. Employees should not send humorous material or jokes to external parties as this behaviour does not accord with FSB's standards of professional conduct.

Use of IT Equipment

2.4. The following apples to treatment of the FSB's IT equipment (including computers, laptops, phones/smartphones, display screens/projectors, printer copiers, computer peripherals etc).

i. No IT equipment may be moved without the consent of the IT Department (except for small items such as desktop phones, conferencing hubs and cables), and in such circumstances the IT Department will carry out the move.

ii. Any item of equipment belonging to the school that plugs into a mains outlet must be PAT tested by a certified practitioner; if there is no evidence that an item has been PAT-tested, this should be brought to the attention of the IT Team (it@fairfield.ac).

iii. No equipment may be attached to the school's network without the consent of the IT Department and in such circumstance the IT Department will carry out the attachment

iv. No equipment may be modified without the consent of the IT Department and in such circumstance the modification will be made by the IT Department.

v. All IT equipment must be treated with care and left in good working order. Any fault, loss or damage must be reported by an employee to their Line Manager, as well as the IT Department immediately.

vi. All equipment must be logged off correctly and powered down when not in use for prolonged periods of time; employees must turn off their PC at the end of each working day.

vii. School-issued laptops, tablet computers and mobile phones must be kept secure when taken off site and never left unattended in a public place. Employees are required to take all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of loss or theft occurring to School equipment and data.

viii. It is mandatory that employee's re-boot their computer daily to enable periodic system updates, including important security updates, to take effect.

User Accounts and Login Credentials

2.5. All students and employees will be assigned a personal IT user account with specific login credentials (i.e., username and password), which can be used to log on to any computer connected to the school's network. A person's IT user account is for their use only; employees and students should take all reasonable steps to prevent unauthorised use of their user account by anyone other than themselves.

2.6. Individuals will be held responsible for all actions undertaken on a system which has been logged onto with their username and password, regardless of whether those actions where their own.

i. User account passwords are to be kept confidential and must not be shared with anyone. Employees and students should refrain from writing their password down in a place where it could be seen by anyone else.

ii. A logged-in workstation should never be left unattended; employees and students should always log out of or lock their workstations when not working at them to prevent unauthorised use.

Hint: you can lock your workstation quickly by simultaneously pressing the Win+'L' keys

iii. Where any employee/student suspects their login details may have been compromised, they should immediately notify their Line Manager or IT@fairfield.ac; following the old credentials will be deactivated and new ones will be issued.

iv. Employees gaining or attempting to gain unauthorised access to another employee's user account to view or edit files they should not have access to, or present themselves as another staff member, will be subject to disciplinary action which may lead to summary dismissal for gross misconduct.

Data Protection and IT Security

2.7. Employees and students must take reasonable steps to guard against unauthorised access to, alteration, accidental loss, disclosure, or destruction of data.

2.8. Anyone who suspects their computer, or any other workstation, may be infected with malware (such as a computer virus) must report this to their line manager or course leader and comply with the directions of the IT Department (IT@fairfield.ac). Failure to do so can jeopardise the security of FSB's network and could result in data loss / damage to computer hardware and software or make them vulnerable to hacking.

2.9. All attempts to circumvent FSB's IT security protocols, either deliberately or otherwise will be investigated by the IT Department and appropriate action will be taken. Examples of such actions would include disabling network firewalls, use of proxy servers to browse restricted websites, installation of software via 'back-door' methods, disabling security software, etc. Depending on the severity, such acts may lead to immediate dismissal for gross misconduct or expulsion form a programme of study.

2.10. Files attached to emails should not be opened unless they are received from a trusted source, i.e., from another known School employee or student or student representative. If in doubt, recipients should forward the email to the IT Department for verification.

3. Regulations Applicable to Employees Only

Emails and Instant Messaging

3.1. FSB's email and other internal communications platforms are to be used only for legitimate business purposes. All written communications sent over FSB's servers are recorded and archived and may be viewed by the School at any time. Employees should therefore be mindful of the following when sending emails or personalised messages from their user account:

i. The tone of all communications made via email, IM or CRM should be appropriate and professional; messages should never be of a hostile nature, use rude, inappropriate, or threatening language or contain profanities.

ii. Communications should be proof-read and spellchecked, particularly where they sent in an official capacity to external recipients; this is to prevent ambiguity or misinterpretation arising, whilst preserving standards of professionalism.

iii. Emails sent to external networks will display the approve FSB signature graphic and information; employees should not add their own signatures or logos to outgoing emails.

iv. It is accepted that Instant Messages between colleagues may be of a less formal nature; employees should nonetheless use their discretion when considering what would be an acceptable tone to use over the school's IM platform.

v. FSB does not permit the use of its email for unofficial and/or personal purposes, including social invitations, personalised messages, jokes, chain letters or other private matters, although this may be permissible in exception circumstances and with a Line Manager's permission.

vi. Emails to customers, suppliers and other business contacts should only relate to business matters. Confidential or sensitive information relating to FSB, or its employees should not be transmitted via email unless done so during business and with a Line Manager's approval; where there is any doubt about whether certain information should be disclosed, the school's Data Protection Officer should be consulted.

vii. Email messages should only be sent to those for whom they are particularly relevant; the sender should refrain from copying in long lists of people who are peripheral to or not involved in the matter under discussion.

viii. Further to (vii.); employees should be aware that, as an email thread develops, it may no longer be appropriate to copy in people originally included, as this may be a distraction to those no longer involved or potentially result in disclosure of information to the wrong person(s).

ix. All internal communications are presumed confidential, and a communication which is exclusively between school employees must not be forwarded to external recipients (including consultants) unless it has been marked as "approved for external distribution" and/or specific agreement has been sought and received from the most Senior Manager copied into such e-mail.

x. Employees who receive any email or personal message that is not intended for them should immediately notify the sender of the error and delete the message from their inbox to preserve confidentiality.

xi. Where unusual circumstances require an employee to use a non-school email address, the employee must seek the approval of their Line Manager for such usage, forward all messages sent and received by their personal account to the Line Manager, promptly delete all copies their personal email account once access to their school email is restored.

xii. Employees should not knowingly attach to emails, any files which may contain a virus, malware or spyware as the school could be liable to the recipient for any loss suffered by them as a result.

xiii. Employees should take care that there is no infringement of copyright when adding attachments to emails.

Access Rights and Permissions

3.2. The access permissions (or 'access roles') assigned to an employee's user account will allow them to view only files, folders and directories that are needed for them to work, as per the approval of their Line Manager. These will be granted in accordance with FSB's *Information Security Policy* and *Data Protection Policy*.

3.3. Employees requiring access to files, directories or mailboxes to do their work should first seek permission from their Line Manager who will make the request in line with our *Information Security Policy,* which includes the requirements that:

i. All requests to the IT Department should clear about the extent and type of access (i.e., editing rights/read-only, etc.)

ii. Employees must not attempt to circumvent access restrictions; to do so may be construed as gross misconduct and result in summary dismissal.

iii. Employees who no longer require access to certain folders, directories, databases, etc. must relinquish this access as soon as possible by contacting their Line Manager and forwarding a request to the IT department as soon as possible.

Use of Portable Data Devices

3.4. The following pertains to the security of any electronic school data which is physically separate from the school's networks; this might be information on portable storage media such as USB memory sticks (pen drives), DVDs and external hard drives, or it on portable computing devices such as laptops, tablet computers or smartphones.

i. Employees must not use portable storage media to transfer files between FSB's computers and company-issued laptops; this should be done using the network drives and/or Intranet.

ii. School data should be loaded onto portable storage media only in urgent and/or exceptional circumstances with permission sought in advance form a Line Manager; all files should be removed from the device immediately once they are no longer needed and returned to a location on the school's network or deleted.

iii. Employees transporting a portable data device with school information on it, whether on or from FSB's premises, should ensure the device is always securely in their possession; the device must never be left unattended (e.g., plugged into a computer workstation or left in an unlocked draw).

iv. Files stored on a portable device should be password protected and/or encrypted.

v. In the event that a laptop or other portable data device has been lost or stolen, this must be reported immediately to the appropriate Line Manager and the IT department; the Data Protection Officer should also be informed about any sensitive school or personal data on the device and the implications the loss of this data may have.

vi. Employees who receive media from any unknown source must have it virus checked by the IT Department. Employees bringing in media from a home computer must get permission from the IT Department before doing so.

Loaning of Portable Computing Devices

3.5. All portable computing devices (including laptops, tablet computers and smartphones) as well as accessories for this equipment (e.g., charging and data cables, carry cases, portable speakers, etc.) loaned to employees by the school for remote working shall be subject to a signed User Agreement.

3.6. The User Agreement shall make the employee liable for ensuring that such devices are used appropriately and for their intended purpose.

3.7. The User Agreement will clearly set out the terms and conditions of use for loaned computing equipment; where an employee is found in breach of any part of this agreement they may be sanctioned under the school's disciplinary procedures.

3.8. Employees may be liable for the cost of or replacing lost or damaged equipment up to the current market value of those goods, where this occurs because of their own misuse or failure to safeguard the equipment.

3.9. The school's IT Services shall retain the capability to remotely wipe the memory of a portable device at any time, should the company become aware of a risk to personal or commercially sensitive data.

3.10. The IT Services shall additionally wipe the memory of a device once it has been returned at the end of a loan and remove all active user accounts; the employee loaning the device is responsible for ensuring they have saved any files or documents they need before returning the device, as these will be irretrievable.

3.11. The IT services shall have a record of such equipment that is out for loan at any given time with details of what equipment has been loaned to whom. This record will include details of any breaches of the user agreement.

3.12. When a person leaves employment of the school, they will return any loaned equipment immediately upon leaving. The HR team will liaise with IT services when an employee leaves to ensure any loaned equipment is accounted for. In the event this equipment is not returned, the IT Services will remotely wipe the hard drive and deactivate any registered company account; the company may dock the final salary payment of the employee to cover the current market value of any unreturned goods.

Where devices connect to data networks

3.13. The use of company devices which are contracted on external data networks will be monitored. Employees may be required to account for any surplus costs run up on these contracts where such costs are attributed to inappropriate use of the device (such as accruing excessive call or data charges). In this instance, employees may be personally liable for such costs.

3.14. Employees will be personally liable for such costs, where the school deems these were not necessary to the business and/or are attributable to personal use.

Use of School Software and Work Applications

3.15. Employees' workstations will be set up by the IT Department and must not be altered by the user. This setup will include installation of any specific programmes and applications required by the employee to perform their role.

3.16. Under no circumstances will employees be permitted to purchase or load any unauthorised software without approval from their Line Manager and the IT Department. If a specific application programme is necessary for an employee's work, then the school will consider its purchase, and where approved, the IT Department will manage the download and installation.

3.17. Standard operating procedures must be always followed when using software. Where no procedures exist, employees should consult with the IT Department and follow any instructions given.

3.18. All original Read-only Memory devises (ROMs) should be kept with the IT Department.

3.19. It is illegal to make unauthorised copies of software or use third party applications without lawfully obtaining the proper licenses. Software and computer facilities issued by the school for employees' use are licensed to the school and are protected by copyright law. Employees must not make copies of or distribute software that has been copied nor should they attempt to use unlicensed software applications. Employees who breach this condition will be subject to disciplinary action which could result in dismissal without notice for gross misconduct. Furthermore, persons who are found to making unauthorised

duplicates of copyrighted software may be personally liable to prosecution under copyright law.

Internet Browsing at Work

3.20. Employees should note that the School reserves the right to monitor employees' use of its internet facilities and maintains a record of individual user's internet histories. Line Managers will be able to request a report on an employee's online activities whilst at work on a school computer where they may have concerns about the amount of time an employee spends online and/or the web content viewed.

3.21. Employees may at any time be called upon to justify the amount of time which they have spent on the Internet, or on any specific Internet site, during working hours.

3.22. The following outlines that which constitutes acceptable use of Internet access:

i. All school computers have Internet access which is provided for business purposes only; employees personal internet browsing, or correspondences should be conducted during designated breaks and preferably on their own personal devices.

Note: Whilst at work, employees are still required to comply with the general provisions in Section 1 of this Code, regardless of whether they are using their own personal devices.

ii. Anyone believed to have been viewing unsuitable content as defined in 2.1 may be subject to FSB's disciplinary procedures. Offences of this nature may be considered gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice.

Note: The School uses internet 'reputation engines' which prevent access to websites material considered be unsuitable for the work environment; this includes (but is not limited to) NSFW materials, sites linked to criminal activity or hate speech, gaming and gambling sites

iii. Whilst 'reputation engines' are highly effective at blocking prohibited material there is no assurance that all NSFW results will be blocked from an internet search; if content is not filtered out this does not mean it is acceptable to the school and employees may be held to account for the web content they view during work hours and/or using school IT facilities.

iv. Employees must not enter into any licence or contract terms via the Internet on behalf of the school, without the prior express consent from the School.

Working from Home and Hybrid Working

3.23. FSB will not usually permit the connection of personal devises to networks which contain protected information; restricted access may be permitted at the discretion of line managers, the School's Data Protection Officer and the Head of IT.

3.24. Employees granted remote working will usually be allocated company laptop subject to the restrictions relating to portable devices.

3.25. FSB may additionally prohibit the transfer of its intellectual property onto employees' personal devices, where such intellectual property is not already in the public domain.

4. Review of these Regulations

4.1. Changes to these regulations will be reviewed annually. All changes will be approved by the school's Board of Governors.

Appendix A: Legal Framework

These regulations have been created with due regard for the following legislation applicable to companies operating in the UK:

The Computer Misuse Act 1990 protects personal data held by organisations from unauthorised access and modification). Unauthorised access to computer material. This refers to entering a computer system without permission (hacking) Unauthorised access to computer materials with intent to commit a further crime.

The Data Protection Act 2018 regulates the processing of personal data, enhancing individuals' rights and aligning with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

The Counterterrorism and Security Act 2015 creates a general duty on the school when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism having particular regard to the duty to secure freedom of speech imposed by section 43(1) of the Education (No. 2) Act 1986 when carrying out that duty.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 creates both civil and criminal offences for harassment and makes provision for protecting persons from harassment and similar conduct.

The Equality Act 2010 requires the school, in the exercise of its functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between diverse groups.

Appendix B: Accountability for Company Information Communication Technology Assets

The security and care for our ICT assets are of great importance to prevent their misuse leading to breaches of School policies; regard is given in particular to upholding the School's Data Protection Policy.

The following relates specifically to the use and security of laptops provides by the school for academic activities.

The responsibility of each lecturer is to collect and return the laptop trolley key from the IT department, at the beginning of your class session and return it promptly after use. This is to ensure the security of the laptops and to guarantee that they are available for use when needed. It is important that you adhere to these guidelines and protect company assets failure to comply with this will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Trolley Key Collection:

- Please visit the IT department before your scheduled class to collect the key for the laptop trolley. This will be available for pick-up.
- Fill and sign the key control log sheet "collection"

Trolley Key Return:

- Immediately following your class, we kindly request that you return the key to the IT department. This ensures that the laptops remain secure and ready for the next user.
- Fill and sign the key control log sheet "Return"

Accountability for Laptops:

- Each lecturer is responsible for the laptops trolley key they collect from the IT department. Please ensure that you only take the number of laptops you need for your class and return them promptly after use.

Security Measures:

- Do not leave the laptop trolley unattended in public spaces or classrooms.
- Ensure that the trolley is securely locked when not in use, and always report any malfunctioning locks or issues with security to the IT department.

Charging Etiquette:

- Return laptops to the designated charging slots after each use to ensure that they are ready for the next session.

- Please be mindful of the charging time needed for each laptop to avoid any inconvenience during your classes.

Personal Accountability:

- Take reasonable precautions to prevent theft, such as not leaving the trolley unattended in open areas and reporting any suspicious activity promptly.

Reporting Issues:

- If you encounter any technical issues with the laptops, charging stations, or the trolley itself, please report them to the IT support team immediately.

Educational Use Only:

Laptops from the trolley should be used by students exclusively for educational purposes related to their courses.

Document governance

Document owner*	**Vice Principal**
Consulted parties**	IT and Network Manager; HR Advisor
Next update due	September 2026
Classification	Public

**Responsible for updates to this content.*
*** To be consulted on updates to this content.*

Versions

Version no.	Description of Changes	Approved by	Date
1.0 – 2.3	Original version and subsequent updates.	Board of Governors	Sep 2016 Sep 2017 Sep 2018
3.0 – 3.1	Expanded 'Acceptable Use' definitions; alignment with Prevent Duty and Data Protection requirements; division into two sections; document reformatted applied.	Board of Governors	Sep2019
3.2	Annual review and update.	Board of Governors	Oct 2020
4.0	Review and update- changes to rules on portable data devices, and legal framework (Appendix); new document formatting applied.	Board of Governors	Sep 2022
4.1	Annual review and update. Addition of Appendix B:	Board of Governors	Jan 2024
4.2	Annual review – minor updates; new formatting applied	Board of Governors	Oct 2025