

TITLE: **ACCEPTABLE USE OF COMPUTERS AND NETWORKS**
(Relates to EL:16 Information Management Technology)

EFFECTIVE DATE: November 1, 2002

PRACTICE:

This practice covers the acceptable use of College computers and networks. It is applicable to the entire Red Deer College community using any device connected to the College network from any access point, internal or remote, and the use of such device is conditional upon the user having read and agreeing (an annual online agreement) to comply with this Practice. This practice includes all computers connected to the Red Deer College network. In this context, the College community includes: all registered students, both full-time and part-time; all employees, full-time, part-time and casual; all others associated with the College as such board members, Community Borrowers, Clients, volunteers, and visitors who are granted temporary user status by the College.

The College will not act as censor of information available on the Red Deer College network, but will investigate properly identified allegations to ensure compliance with applicable provincial and federal laws, collective agreements, and with college policies and procedures.

PROCEDURE:

Red Deer College encourages the use of computing and network resources to enhance the learning and working environment of the College community. However, access to the computing and network environment at Red Deer College is a privilege to be used in effective, ethical and lawful ways that support the mission of the College and the following sets out the terms under which access to the computing and network environment at the College is to be exercised by all users.

PRINCIPLES

- Computing and network resources are provided primarily to support and further the college mission and the use is limited to purposes and activities, which are related to the college.
- College community users must comply with all applicable local, provincial and federal laws.
- College community users will comply with Red Deer College policies and procedures.
- Members of the college community are responsible and accountable for their actions and statements in the electronic working and learning environment.

- Members of the College community are expected to use reasonable restraint in consumption of these valuable shared resources, and to use them in ways that do not interfere with the study, work or working environment of other users or with the reasonable use of resources by other users.
- Generally, with respect to computing accounts established for students, faculty and staff, there is a presumption of privacy. However, Red Deer College reserves the right to review accounts in their entirety, which includes but not limited to all email, stored data, and data in transit, and if an infraction is suspected, the traffic and files will be investigated with or without the knowledge of the account holder.
- Computing accounts provided to students will be deleted at the end of the program or course or if the student is no longer registered at some point before the end of their program or course. Computing accounts provided to faculty and staff will be deleted or transferred to a key person in the department, at the end of employment.
- Members of the College community accessing external networks shall comply with all policies or procedures of those networks as well as with this Practice unless there is a conflict between the policies and procedures of those networks and this Practice, in which case the user shall comply with the more restrictive of the conflicting requirements.

UNACCEPTABLE USES

Note: Unacceptable uses as outlined here are not limited to these examples.

Unauthorized access (hacking): This may include using unauthorized user names, passwords, computer addresses or identities or modifying assigned network settings to gain access to computer resources and/or data, use of ‘sniffing’ devices, or otherwise attempting to evade, disable or “crack” security provisions of college or external systems. In addition, this includes physical access to secured areas where computer and network equipment is located. It is unacceptable to attempt to circumvent network security or the security of any external system or to provide passwords to others. Use of delegates is permitted.

Vandalism of data: Deliberate alteration or destruction of computer files is an offence and offenders will be prosecuted. Under no circumstance may a user inspect, alter, delete, publish or otherwise tamper with files or file structures that the individual is not authorized to access.

Interference with other users’ work: This includes use of any process that causes a user to be deprived of services or resources that they would normally expect to have available. It covers, but is not limited to, the creation of “spam,” the introduction of viruses or chain letters, the sending of an email in which there is no reasonable belief of favorable reception by the recipient, sending multiple copies of the same or similar email to one address (mail bombing).

Squandering resources: Resources are shared and no user may degrade the systems by unwarranted: data space, time and bandwidth consumption through resource-intensive programs, unattended network connections and/or lengthy print jobs. It is not acceptable to log on to more than one computer at a time. It is not acceptable to develop or use programs, which adversely impact computers or networks or other users.

Sharing of account: The College's computing resources are allocated to individuals for specific academic and administrative purposes. It is not acceptable to give, sell, or otherwise provide computing resources to individuals or groups that do not have explicit permission to use them from the college authority. An email must have the account holder's name as the sender and it is not acceptable to send email using anonymous or code names. College sanctioned generic accounts are allowable. It is not acceptable to use anyone else's account and to allow another person to use your account. The account holders will be held responsible for all activities in their account whether such activities are done by the account holder or by someone else.

Commercial uses: The College system(s) may not be used to sell or promote products or services for personal gain. This includes uses such as distribution of advertising materials, the offering of network information or services for sale, and private enterprises other than those sanctioned by the college.

Breach of copyright: This includes installing, reproducing and/or distributing copyrighted materials such as proprietary software, publications or files without permission. College software is provided under license agreements with various vendors and may not be copied or otherwise removed.

Offensive material: Materials not subject to legal sanction may be objectionable or repugnant to persons other than the computer user. Importation or distribution of such material (including, but not limited to racist material, hate literature, sexist slurs or pornography) requires an underlying academic or educational purpose.

Hostile atmosphere: The display of sexually explicit or violent images in public spaces and/or the initiation of unsolicited communication with sexual content or other content that contravenes the College's harassment policy.

Installation of hardware and software: Installation of hardware or software, including games, and personal peripheral devices requires prior authorization from the Computer Services Department of Red Deer College.

Harassment: Harassing or defamatory material may not be sent by electronic means, including email and voice mail, or posted to news groups.

RAMIFICATIONS

Adjudication/disciplinary action: Misuse of the College's computing and network resources may result in disciplinary action by the college. Violations of law will result in immediate loss of privileges and will be reported to the appropriate College and law enforcement authorities. In other cases, access privileges may be revoked immediately and outcomes may include temporary or permanent loss of access privileges, depending on the nature of the activities. Disciplinary actions will be determined by the College Leadership Team and will consider any applicable provincial and federal laws, collective agreements, and College policies and procedures.

USER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Users acknowledge and agree that neither Red Deer College nor its Board of Governors, employees, or agents are responsible for any damages or losses which the user might suffer, however caused, as a result of the use of the computer resources and network. Users are encouraged to make back up copies of all material which they wish to save so as to minimize the risk of material being lost in the event of a computer or network crash.

Users acknowledge and agree that they will indemnify and save harmless Red Deer College, its Board of Governors, employees and agents from any claims or demands which might be made against Red Deer College, its Board of Governors, employees or agents as a result of the user's use of the computer resources and/or network.

Users acknowledge and agree that failure to comply with the terms of this agreement may result in the user's privileges with respect to the computing resources and network being suspended or taken away entirely. Infractions which also infringe upon other Red Deer College policies or local, provincial or federal laws may also be reported to the appropriate other authorities for further handling by those authorities.

All users will sign or electronically acknowledge "I acknowledge that I have read the foregoing and agree to be bound by it in return for being allowed access to Red Deer College's computer resources and network."

ACCOUNTABILITY:

VP Administrative Services

RESPONSIBILITY:

Director of Computer Services

Consultation For Review:

College Community

Practice Review Date:

October 2003

Associated Policy: