



# EMAIL, INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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## PURPOSE

ELATT recognises the benefits of email and internet communications and social networking/social media as a valuable resource and supports its employees in making effective use of email and the internet both at home and at work.

The purpose of this policy is to help ensure that these resources are used effectively and appropriately and to help avoid the potential risks associated with such use.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, learners and visitors to ELATT and to those offered access to these particular resources.

It applies where employees are using email or the internet in connection with their work for the organisation whether within or outside of working hours and whether or not using ELATT owned or supplied facilities and devices.

Employees should be aware that their personal online activity, regardless of whether or not the activity is undertaken in the employees own time and/or using their own resources, may come within the scope of this policy if misconduct in breach of this policy occurs and the employee is identified.

Line managers will ensure that contractors or any other individuals working temporarily for ELATT are made aware of this policy.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ELATT believes that when taking part in social media you should be honest and respectful. The lines between public and private can become blurred so assume that everything you write is permanent and can be viewed by anyone at any time. Also, assume that everything can be traced back to you personally as well as to your colleagues, the organisation and its clients, partners and suppliers.

## USE OF THE INTERNET

Where appropriate employees are encouraged to make use of the Internet as part of their official and professional activities.

Employees are expected to use the Internet responsibly and in such a way that does not interfere with the efficient running of the business or the performance of the employee. Employees may be called upon to justify the amount of time they have spent on the internet or particular sites that they have visited if ELATT suspects the policy is being breached.

Use of the Internet to access and/or distribute any kind of inappropriate or offensive material will result in disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.



## **USE OF EMAIL**

The use of the E-mail system is encouraged, as used correctly it is a facility that is of assistance to employees and aids efficiency. Inappropriate use however causes many problems including distractions, time wasting and legal claims. The following procedure sets out ELATT's position on the correct use of the E-mail system.

Unauthorised or inappropriate use of the E-mail system may result in disciplinary action which could include summary dismissal.

The E-mail system is available for communication and matters directly concerned with the legitimate business of ELATT. Employees using the E-mail system should give particular attention to the following points:-

- All E-mail messages must comply with ELATT communication standards
- E-mail messages and copies should only be sent to those for whom they are particularly relevant
- E-mail should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication or telephone contact. Hasty messages sent without proper consideration can cause upset, concern or misunderstanding
- If E-mail is confidential the user must ensure that the necessary steps are taken to protect confidentiality
- E-mail messages must not be offensive, obscene, constitute bullying or harassment
- E-mails should not be solicited that are unrelated to business activities or for personal financial gain
- Email messages should not represent personal opinions as those of ELATT

## **PERSONAL USE OF EMAIL AND THE INTERNET**

Employees may make limited personal use of the E-mail and Internet facilities in your own personal time (e.g. lunchtime) ensuring that this does not interfere with their work performance.

Employees should note that all emails or communications sent or received by the ELATT's systems are regarded as the property of ELATT. Wherever practicable employees should use their personal email account to send or receive non-work related communications.

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Employees must be aware at all times that while contributing to ELATT's social media activities they are representing the organisation and employees should use the same safeguards as they would with any other form of communication about ELATT in the public sphere.

Social media identities, logon ID's and usernames may not use ELATT's name or logo without prior approval from the Chief Executive.

The following terms should be adhered to at all times, including during periods of absence from work.



You must ensure that your content, or links to other content, does not:

- interfere with your work commitments
- contain libellous, defamatory, bullying or harassing content
- contain breaches of copyright and data protection
- contain material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature
- include confidential information to the organisation
- bring the organisation into disrepute or compromise ELATT's brand and reputation
- use the organisation to endorse or promote any product, opinion or political cause

If content published by you or others implicates you are in the breach of these terms, it may lead to an investigation and disciplinary action in accordance with the ELATT's disciplinary policy.

## **PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA SITES**

ELATT respects an employee's right to a private life. However the organisation must also ensure that its interests, confidentiality and reputation are protected at all times.

Where employees are feeling disgruntled about any work related matter they are reminded of the proper channels for raising issues internally, e.g. the grievance procedure and should avoid knee jerk responses on social networking sites, blogs or other online forums.

## **MONITORING**

### *Email*

ELATT reserves the right to monitor and check individual employees' emails and messages. In using the ELATT's facilities and systems, individuals consent to such monitoring.

ELATT will, where appropriate, endeavour to inform the affected employee when this is to happen and the reasons for it.

When monitoring emails ELATT will endeavour to confine itself to looking at the address and heading of the emails where this is sufficient, however the organisation may need to access the full message content. Employees should mark any personal emails, where possible, which the organisation will avoid opening.

### *Internet*

ELATT reserves the right to monitor employees' internet use at work at any time. In using ELATT's facilities and systems, individuals consent to such monitoring.

Monitoring of individual users may occur where the organisation reasonably suspects that an employee has been accessing the internet in breach of this policy.



## **E-SAFETY**

ELATT will provide opportunities within a range of curriculum areas to teach about eSafety.

ELATT teachers will educate students about the online risks that they may encounter informally when opportunities arise or formally as part of the structured curriculum for a particular programme.

## **POLICY ENFORCEMENT**

Breaching the terms set out within this policy may lead to disciplinary action and result in a finding of misconduct or gross misconduct.

Any disciplinary action taken will be managed in accordance with ELATT's disciplinary policy.