
Internet, Email & Social Media Policy

Policy Area	Internet,Email & Social Media Policy
Policy no.	Policy no. 30
Policy version	Version number 1
Policy operational date	22.01.2024
Policy review date	22.01.2026

Introduction

The purpose of the Internet and E-mail policy is to provide a framework to ensure that there is continuity of procedures in the usage of Internet and E-mail within torc.CFRC. The Internet and E-mail system have established themselves as an important communications facility within torc.CFRC and have provided us with contact with professional and academic sources throughout the world. Therefore, to ensure that we can utilise the system to its optimum we have devised a policy that provides maximum use of the facility whilst ensuring compliance with the legislation throughout. torc.CFRC e-mail and internet facilities are monitored on a regular basis. Excessive or inappropriate use of these facilities will result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Internet

Where appropriate duly authorised staff are encouraged to make use of the Internet as part of their official and professional activities. Attention must be paid to ensuring that published information has relevance to normal professional activities before material is released in torc.CFRC. Where personal views are expressed, a disclaimer stating that this is the case should be clearly added to all correspondence. The intellectual property right and copyright must not be compromised when publishing on the Internet. The availability and variety of information on the Internet has meant that it can be used to obtain material reasonably considered to be offensive. The use of the Internet to access and/or distribute any kind of offensive material, or non-related employment issues, leave an individual liable to disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal. These provisions apply to internet usage on torc.CFRC mobile phones also.

E-Mail

The use of the E-Mail system is encouraged as its appropriate use facilitates efficiency. Used correctly it is a facility that is of assistance to employees. Inappropriate use however causes many problems including distractions, time wasting and legal claims. The procedure sets out torc.CFRC position on the correct use of the E-Mail system.

Procedures - Authorised Use

- a. Unauthorised or inappropriate use of the E-Mail system may result in disciplinary action which could include summary dismissal.
- b. The E-Mail system is available for communication and matters directly concerned with the legitimate business of torc.CFRC. Employees using the E-Mail system should give particular attention to the following points:-
 1. All E-Mail messages comply with torc.CFRC communication standards.
 2. E-Mail messages and copies should only be sent to those for whom they are particularly relevant.

3. E-Mail should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication or telephone contact. Flame mails (i.e., E-Mails that are abusive) must not be sent. Hasty messages sent without proper consideration can cause upset, concern, or misunderstanding.
 4. If E-Mail is confidential the user must ensure that the necessary steps are taken to protect confidentiality. The Company will be liable for infringing copyright or any defamatory information that is circulated either within torc.CFRC or to external users of the system.
 5. Offers or contracts transmitted by E-Mail are as legally binding on torc.CFRC as those sent on paper.
- c. The Company will not tolerate excessive use of the E-Mail/Internet system for personal use, and should not be used for unofficial or inappropriate purposes, including:-
1. Any messages that could constitute bullying, harassment, or other detriment.
 2. Personal use where this interferes with work (e.g., social invitations, personal messages, blogging, jokes, cartoons, downloading music/films/clips chain letters, buying, or selling of goods, accessing social networking sites or other private matters).
 3. Use of social networking sites during your working hours is strictly forbidden. Due to the lack of confidentiality of these sites contact with clients/customers or other third parties outside your working hours must not refer to torc.CFRC or discuss business related to torc.CFRC. Failure to abide by this policy may lead to disciplinary action which could result in your dismissal depending on the seriousness of the breach.
 4. On-line gambling.
 5. Accessing or transmitting pornography.
 6. Transmitting copyright information and/or any software available to the user.
 7. Posting confidential information about other employees, torc.CFRC or its customers or suppliers.

Monitoring

We reserve the right to monitor all e-mail/internet activity by you for the purposes of ensuring compliance with our policies and procedures and of ensuring compliance with the relevant regulatory requirements. This includes monitoring of any additional accounts you may be requested to set up for the purposes of performing your work tasks, which are subject to the same rules as your work e-mail account. Information acquired through such monitoring may be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings. Monitoring your usage will mean processing your personal data. You may read more about the data we hold on to you, why we hold it and the lawful basis that applies in the employee privacy notice.

Use of Social Networking Sites

Any work-related issue or material that could identify an individual who is a client or work colleague, which could adversely affect the Company, community member, or our relationship with any person, must not be placed on a social networking site. This means that work related matters, must not be placed on any such site at any time either during or outside of working hours and includes access via any computer equipment, mobile phone, or any mobile device.

Use of Social Networking Sites for Company Business

It may be a requirement of your role that you must use social networking sites to promote and further the development of the business. Any work or material created during the course of your employment remains the property of the Company and is inclusive of any pages or contacts obtained on non-work-related computers or outside of normal working hours. Upon termination of your employment, you will be required to turn over all contacts and log in details obtained via social media outlets and in some instances delete any profiles created by you during the course of your employment.

Abuse of any Social Networking Profiles

The Company takes its responsibility towards its employees very seriously, and in light of this all employees should be aware that it will be considered an offence to abuse another employee's social networking profile on Company time, by using Company equipment, or which implicates the Company in any way. Abuse of social networking profiles is considered to be the posting of offensive comments, pictures, links or otherwise on any employee's social networking profile/page.

As an employee you should not access social networking sites during working hours, however if accessing these pages on designated rest breaks or outside of working hours you should not put yourself in a position where your profile is susceptible to hacking by any employee.

Any employee who is found to have abused any employee's account may be in breach of the Company's Harassment and/or Equality policies and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in 3 years or sooner should circumstances change.

Revision History

Revision No.	Approval Date	Document Reference and Changes Made	Name