

Internet & Email

1. 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 the company. The Internet and E-Mail system have established themselves as an important communications facility within the company and have provided us with contact with professional and academic sources throughout the world. Therefore, to ensure that we are able to 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.

2. Scope

- The policy applies to all permanent employees of the Lakethorne Group.
- Line managers are responsible for the organisation and content of induction training for all their new staff, including agency staff, and will ensure that their employees are aware of relevant training and development opportunities in relation to environmental practices.

3. Aims and objectives

a) Use of Computer Equipment

In order to control the use of the company's computer equipment and reduce the risk of contamination the following will apply:

- i. The introduction of new software must first of all be checked and authorised by a nominated senior member of the company before general use will be permitted.
- ii. Only authorised staff should have access to the company's computer equipment.
- iii. Only authorised software may be used on any of the company's computer equipment.
- iv. Only software that is used for business applications may be used.
- v. No software may be brought onto or taken from the company's premises without prior authorisation.
- vi. Unauthorised access to the computer facility will result in disciplinary action.
- vii. Unauthorised copying and/or removal of computer equipment/software/data (eg on memory sticks) will result in disciplinary action, such actions could lead to dismissal.

b) 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 the company name. 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 **material that is not work-related, leaves** an individual liable to disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

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

Doc Ref & Version	Owner	Date implemented
POL0008 (V5)	Richard Bent	March 2010

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

- i. all comply with company communication standards;
 - ii. E-Mail messages and copies should only be sent to those for whom they are particularly relevant;
 - iii. 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;
 - iv. 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 the company or to external users of the system; and
 - v. offers or contracts transmitted by E-Mail are as legally binding on the company as those sent on paper.
- d) The company will not tolerate the use of the E-Mail system for unofficial or inappropriate purposes, including:
- i. any messages that could constitute bullying, harassment or other detriment;
 - ii. personal use (e.g. social invitations, personal messages, jokes, cartoons, chain letters or other private matters);
 - iii. on-line gambling;
 - iv. accessing or transmitting pornography;
 - v. transmitting copyright information and/or any software available to the user; or
 - vi. posting confidential information about other employees, the company or its customers or suppliers.
- e) Virus Protection
- In order to prevent the introduction of virus contamination into the software system the following must be observed:
- i. unauthorised software including public domain software, magazine cover disks/CDs or Internet/World Wide Web downloads must not be used; and
 - ii. all software must be virus checked using standard testing procedures before being used.

4. Policy review

The Managing Director undertakes to periodically review this policy in light of current and planned future activities, on an annual basis, and more frequently when legislation or industry best practice dictates.

Signed: 
Richard Bent
Managing Director

Date: January 2019

Next review date: January 2020

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