



## User Responsibilities

There are a number of statutory laws that have a bearing on the use of the College's computer facilities, and all users must obey these laws.

### **Computer Misuse Act (1990)**

This Act makes it a criminal offence to commit any of the following:

- Unauthorised access to computer material
- Unauthorised access with intent to commit or facilitate commission of further offences
- Unauthorised modification of computer material

These offences are punishable by law with prison sentences ranging from six months to five years and unlimited fines.

### **Copyright, Designs and Patents Act (1988)**

Users must respect the copyright of all material and software made available by Information Services and third parties. Such material is often obtained by the College at special rates, and this arrangement is jeopardised by unauthorised copying. If copyrighted material is to be incorporated into material published 'online' (for example, via the world wide web), the permission of the copyright holder must first be obtained.

For further information on copyright law, see the Copyright Licensing Agency's website.

### **Data Protection Act (1998)**

The Data Protection Act applies to data on living persons which is stored in a computer or other electronic information system. The permission of a data subject should be sought and obtained before any information (irrespective of the medium) relating to them is collected or processed (where processing includes recording, holding disclosing, disposing, or carrying out any operation).

See the College's Policy relating to Data Protection, for further information.

### **Equality Act (2010)**

Any material which discriminates against any person on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, or sexual orientation (or encourages such discrimination), contravenes this act.

### **Libel laws**

The libel laws cover publishing via electronic media. Facts concerning individuals or organisations must be accurate and verifiable and views or opinions must not portray their subjects in any way which could damage their reputation.

### **Obscene Publications Act (1964)**

### **Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994)**

### **Protection of Children Act (1999)**

Using computer facilities for the storage, transmission or display of obscene material is not allowed - irrespective of the legality of material in the country of origin. In addition to the serious penalties faced by the offender, investigation may result in confiscation of computer equipment by the police, causing severe disruption to the College.

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