



Computer Network Acceptable Use Policy

REVIEWED: November 2024

1. THE COMPUTER NETWORK: TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE AGREEMENT

- a. Rustenburg Girls' High School (the school) actively pursues making cutting-edge technology and advanced learning aids available to learners and staff. We are proud to be able to offer full-time internet access, with e-mail, to all staff and learners. The internet is a powerful, and rapidly growing, information resource and communication tool, but its use comes with associated threats and risks, and this policy sets out the expectations of learners when using the school's computer network.
- b. This policy must be read in conjunction with the iPad Acceptable Use Policy where such is in place for a learner.
- c. Acceptable Use
 - i. The purpose of providing internet access at Rustenburg Girls' High School is to facilitate the availability of information for the sake of research and education, by providing access to resources, and the opportunity of collaborative research. The use of internet accounts provided by the school must be consistent with these objectives.
 - ii. Transmission of any material in violation of any South African national or provincial laws or regulations or rules of the school is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyright material, threatening, obscene or offensive material, or material protected by trade secret.
 - iii. Use of the school network and internet connection for commercial activities is not acceptable. Product advertisement and political lobbying are also prohibited
 - iv. No learner may attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school's internet connection or to any other computer system through the school internet link or go beyond their authorized access. This includes attempting to log in through another person's account or access someone else's files. These actions are illegal, even if only for the purposes of "browsing".
- d. Plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the Rustenburg Girls' High School Code of Conduct (Reference: School Assessment Policy)

2. PRIVILEGE

- a. The network has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. The school reserves the right to place reasonable restrictions on material/software accessed or material/software published through the system.
- b. The use of the network is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use, including any violation of these conditions and rules, may result in cancellation of the privilege. The school, under this agreement, is delegated the authority to determine appropriate use and may deny, revoke, suspend or close any user account at any time based upon its determination of inappropriate use by the account holder or user.

3. MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

- a. Rustenburg Girls' High School reserves the right to review material held on user accounts and to monitor file server space in order to determine whether specific uses of the network are inappropriate. In reviewing and monitoring user accounts and file server space, the school will respect the privacy of the user accounts at all times.
- b. The school reserves the right to manage access to and use of the internet by learners. This includes applying policies that may limit, shape or block access to certain sites or services, such as Social Media sites, Torrents, Peer2Peer Networks, Proxies and video streaming services which are not being used for education purposes. While we would prefer to educate users around appropriate use of a shared network, these limitations may be applied from time to time and enforced on individuals or groups when we find evidence of abuse of access.
- c. The school reserves the right to assign, withdraw or adjust quotas or bandwidth limits to manage the functional provision of access. Sites and services that impact on the performance of the network, where the use is primarily for personal entertainment, may be restricted. Access to such services may be allowed for educational purposes during a lesson as advised by the teacher. Note that the absence of restrictions on access to a site or service does not necessarily condone such access.

4. SECURITY

- a. Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Users must never divulge their password, user code, pin or passphrase or in any way allow others access to their account. Users must also protect their passwords, etc. to ensure system security and their own privilege and ability to continue to use the system.
- b. Users may not use the accounts of other users, even with their express permission.
- c. Users are not allowed to gain unauthorised access to the school's systems, user accounts, restricted areas, files and folders, or circumvent the firewall or other security systems that restricts or controls access to the computers, network and services. Unauthorised access, including any attempt to use the Administrator account, will result in the cancellation of user privileges.
- d. Users must seek permission from the ICT Department before attempting to connect any personal device (e.g. cellphone or laptop) to the school network, and to follow required procedure for registration of such devices. Any personal device connected to the network must be maintained free of malware, viruses and content not acceptable to the school.
- e. Peer-to-peer software, bit torrents and other sharing tools are not to be connected to the network nor may systems be used to avoid the policies and controls of the network.

5. VANDALISM AND HARASSMENT

- a. Vandalism and harassment will result in disciplinary action and the possible cancellation of user privileges.
- b. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, modify, or destroy data of the school or another user. This includes, but is not limited to, the transferring or creating of computer viruses.
- c. Harassment is defined as the persistent annoyance of another user, or the interference with another user's work. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, the sending of unwanted mail.
- d. This section should be read in conjunction with the Schools Policy on Bullying and Code of Conduct.

6. COPYRIGHT VIOLATION

- a. Copyright is defined as the exclusive right of the creator of a work to copy, change, present or reproduce a work through any means. Anyone who does any of these things without the permission of the author or designated agent infringes copyright and is engaging in an illegal activity.
- b. Learners may not download, view or store copyrighted material while using the school network or computers or by using the school's internet connection.
- c. Should content that is not of the users' own design and efforts be included in any works, these should always be referenced suitably to meet the obligations held in the Copyright Act 98 of 1978.

7. SOCIAL NETWORKING AND WEB 2.0

- a. Social Networking/Web 2.0 sites are those that allow users to publish digital information quickly and easily and make it available to other internet users. This includes applications like forums, blogs and wikis such as Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp or Facebook. As a general guide, it is any website/app that allows the publishing of information which is not immediately removed when the user leaves the site.
- b. Learners and parents need to be aware that publishing text, images or video via social media places it in the public domain and that, even after it has been deleted by you, it may still be able to be accessed by others. Careful consideration must be given to any information published online and the following guidelines may be useful:
 - i. Never publish your contact details on a publicly accessible service.
 - ii. Exercise great caution when publishing other personal details such as name, gender, age, etc.
 - iii. Understand that you are an ambassador for the school in all online activities. Material published on social networking websites should not reflect negatively on fellow learners, educators or the school. You will be held responsible for how you represent yourself and your school on the internet.
 - iv. Don't publish anything that could cause you future embarrassment.
- c. Just as a real life relationship between a member of staff and a pupil would be inappropriate, online relationships (e.g. Facebook friends) between members of staff and current Rustenburg pupils are not permitted.

8. ENCOUNTER OF CONTROVERSIAL MATERIAL

- a. In their use of the RGHS Computer Network to access the internet, users may encounter material which is controversial and which learners, parents, teachers or administrators may consider inappropriate or offensive. By its size and nature, it is impossible to control all the content available on the internet.
- b. Although the school takes precautionary measures to impede learners' ability to access controversial material, it is impossible to provide full protection for users from all material which may be considered inappropriate or offensive, and an industrious user may find such material.
- c. It is the user's responsibility not to initiate access to such material and to withdraw from access to such material as quickly as possible should an encounter occur unintentionally.
- d. Any decision to filter access to content by the school shall not be deemed to impose any duty on the School to regulate all content of material on the internet. Should an encounter be cause for concern, this should be reported to the relevant authorities such as the ICT Manager or counsellors who may offer assistance and support.

9. SCHOOL WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

- a. Rustenburg Girls' High School will use the school website (www.rghs.org.za) as well as accounts with various social media providers (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) to reflect the activities and spirit of the school. To this end, anyone that is linked to the school could have their digital photographs displayed on the website. Any member of the Rustenburg Girls' High School community who does not want their daughter's photograph displayed on the school website must inform the school, in writing, to this effect. This correspondence must be handed in to Reception and should clearly indicate the name of the person whose photograph should not be displayed on the school website.
- b. Websites or social media accounts that are directly linked to the school or operated in the name of the school may not be created without approval, in advance, from the school's marketing office. Permissions or access to the site should also allow for designated access or administrator status for the school to support the site. A link to and from our school page is essential for it to be an official site. Sites or accounts created without approval may be closed or taken down.

10. WARRANTIES

- a. Rustenburg Girls' High School makes no warranties of any kind, whether express or implied, for the service it is providing.
- b. While every effort is made to maintain and sustain the quality and a reliable level of access, the service is offered on a best effort basis. Any adoption of alternative technologies or services now or in the future should be observed in the same light.
- c. The school will not be responsible for any damages a user suffers through the use of these services. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by the school, its service provider or by the user's errors or omissions.
- d. Use of any information obtained via the internet is at the user's own risk. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services. All users need to consider the source of any information they obtain, and consider how valid that information might be.

DOCUMENT CONTROL (FOR OFFICE USE ONLY):

DATE	DESCRIPTION
October 2019	
November 2020	General review
November 2022	Reviewed – no changes
November 2023	Reviewed – included procedure for applying to use personal devices on school network
November 2024	Reviewed – changed LO teacher to Counsellor (8 d)