

## Donegal Education and Training Board Email Policy

**Version 1.0**

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## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the proper use of email by Donegal ETB “Users”. Usage of Donegal ETB email resources is a privilege that is extended to, but not limited to Employees (both full and part time), Learners, contractors, interns, partners and / or consultants, external individuals and organisations as appropriate, to be referred to as “Users”. Email users must follow the same code of conduct expected in any other form of written or face-to-face business communication and have a responsibility to use email in an efficient, effective, ethical and lawful manner.

Donegal ETB may supplement or modify this policy for users in certain roles. This policy for Email Usage complements similar Donegal ETB policies, such as the Technology Acceptable Usage Policy. A comprehensive list of ICT policies may be located in the [ICT Policy Framework](#).

## Scope

This policy applies to all “users” of Donegal ETB provided email systems either owned or managed by Donegal ETB. Individuals covered by the policy include (but are not limited to) Employees (both full and part time), Learners, contractors, interns, partners and / or consultants, external individuals and organisations as appropriate, utilising email facilities provided by Donegal ETB.

This policy applies to any corporate email system that Donegal ETB has or may install in the future. It also applies to employee use of personal email accounts via browsers, whilst using Donegal ETB I.T. resources as directed below.

## User Responsibilities

Donegal ETB email accounts are created and managed through Google Workspace for Education.

Usernames will be assigned by the ICT Department and will reflect internally mandated email naming conventions.

From a data privacy perspective. Any user whose email is accessed/read by a second person, i.e. a PA during normal business operations and where part of their role is to maintain a delegated email address that is not their own, the sender of the email should be made aware that communication to this account may be accessed and read by third parties, e.g. confidential sick certification, etc.

### Acceptable Uses

The following are a broad and non-exhaustive list of examples of acceptable usage of Donegal ETB's email resources.

- Communicating in a professional manner with other Donegal ETB users about work-related matters.
- Communicating in a professional manner with third parties for business purposes.
- Personal communications that are brief and do not interfere with work responsibilities.

## Unacceptable Uses

The following is a non-exhaustive list of actions or activities that would generally constitute unacceptable use. (**Note:** This list is intended to be a guideline for users when considering what is unacceptable use and is not comprehensive.)

- Creating and exchanging messages that could be interpreted as offensive, harassing, obscene, racist, sexist, ageist, pornographic or threatening.

- Creating and exchanging information that is in violation of copyright or any other law. Donegal ETB is not responsible for user(s) usage of email that breaks laws.
- Personal communication that interferes with work responsibilities.
- Opening file attachments from an unknown or untrustworthy source, or with a suspicious or unexpected subject line. Should any clarification be required, notify Donegal ETB's ICT Department immediately if a suspicious email / attachment is received.
- Sending confidential information to unauthorised persons or violating Donegal ETB's [Data Protection Policy](#). Otherwise using email in a way that increases Donegal ETB's legal and regulatory liability.
- Communications that strain Donegal ETB's network or other systems unduly, such as sending large files to large distribution lists.
- Communications to distribution lists of only marginal interest to members and replying to the entire distribution list when a personal reply is as effective.
- Communications with non-specific subject lines, inarticulate language, and without clear purpose.
- Forwarding work-related email messages to personal accounts, because of unacceptable risks associated with privacy, security and compliance. This does not include your personal pension, salary or HR information.
- Using an Donegal ETB email address for any internet subscription, unless there is an underlying organisational rationale. Should further clarification be required, contact your line manager.
- Using any email system, other than the corporate email system, for Donegal ETB-related communications.
- Circulating chain letters and/or commercial offerings.
- Promoting or publishing an employee's political or religious views, operating a business or for any undertaking that offers personal gain or benefit.

As a user of Donegal ETB's email resources, you are expected to uphold all Irish legislation and relevant legislation of the European Community. All users of the Donegal ETB's email resources should ensure that they are fully aware of and understand any of the relevant legislation, which applies to the sending of electronic communications. A comprehensive list of ICT policies may be located in the [ICT Policy Framework](#).

## Privacy Guidelines

Donegal ETB maintains ownership of all Donegal ETB emails which includes the right to monitor and review work email activity to ensure compliance with this policy, as well as to fulfill Donegal ETB's responsibilities under relevant laws and regulations of both Ireland and the E.U., for example, GDPR. Users should have no expectation of privacy to their use of corporate / work emails.

- On termination or separation from Donegal ETB, Donegal ETB will immediately deny access to email, including the ability to download, forward, print or retrieve any message stored in the system, regardless of sender or recipient.
- Anyone who ceases to become a user of Donegal ETB's email resources, will have their mailboxes archived within 30 days of their leaving date. The employee's line manager may request that access be given to another user who may remove and utilise any needed information within the same time frame. Mailboxes will subsequently be deleted in line with Donegal ETB's data retention policy / Donegal ETB contractual obligations

- Donegal ETB reserves the right to intercept, monitor, review and/or disclose any and all messages composed, sent or received on the corporate email system. Intercepting, monitoring and reviewing of messages may be performed with the assistance of content filtering software, or by designated Donegal ETB employees and/or designated external entities.
- The [ICT Policy Framework](#) provides further detail on the type of monitoring that is possible to undertake. Should further clarity be required, contact Donegal ETB's Director of OSD
- Donegal ETB reserves the right to alter, modify, re-route or block the delivery of messages as appropriate. This includes but is not limited to:
  - Rejecting, quarantining or removing attachments and/or malicious code from messages that may pose a threat to Donegal ETB's resources.
  - Rejecting or quarantining messages with suspicious content.
  - Rejecting or quarantining messages containing offensive language or topics.
  - Re-routing messages with suspicious content to designated Donegal ETB employees for manual review.
- Electronic messages, including draft documents saved to or on Donegal ETB I.T. resources are potentially legally discoverable and admissible as evidence in a court of law.
- Any content created with the email system is considered the intellectual property of the Donegal ETB.

Any evidence of suspected or alleged illegal activity discovered during monitoring or reviews will be dealt with through Donegal ETB's disciplinary procedure and may lead to a further criminal investigation. See the "Compliance" section of this policy for further information.

## Security

As with any other type of software that runs over a network, email users have the responsibility to follow sound security practices.

- Email users should not use email services to transfer sensitive data, such as usernames, passwords, PPS numbers and account numbers over the Internet. Users should not use the email system to transfer sensitive data, except in accordance with Donegal ETB GDPR / Data Protection Policies. Sensitive data passed via email over the Internet could be read by parties other than the intended recipients, particularly if it is clear text. Malicious third parties could potentially intercept and manipulate email traffic.
- In an effort to combat propagation of email viruses, certain attachment types may be stripped at the corporate email gateway. Should this create a business hardship, users should contact Donegal ETB's ICT Department for further information.
- Attachments can contain viruses and other malware. Users should only open attachments from known and trusted correspondents. Donegal ETB's ICT Department should be notified immediately if a suspicious email / attachment is received.
- Spam communications are automatically filtered and added to Quarantine. Errors, whereby legitimate email can be filtered as spam, while rare, can occur. If business-related mail messages are not delivered, users should check their local spam folder. If the message is not there, users should call Donegal ETB's ICT Department.
- Due to the polymorphic nature of Spam communications, occasionally some of these spam communications may reach users email folders.
- Users should always be vigilant when clicking on web links embedded in an email, especially if any personal / sensitive data such as usernames or passwords are sought. Even if the sender is known to you, if you are suspicious about the information sought, either contact the

relevant person by phone or forward the email to Donegal ETB's ICT Department for further information. Such approaches may be a phishing attack and these attacks tend to be carried out for the purposes of unlawful exploitation.

## **Operational Guidelines**

Donegal ETB employs certain practices and procedures in order to maintain the security and efficiency of electronic messaging resources, to achieve Donegal ETB objectives. These practices and procedures are subject to change, as appropriate or required under the circumstances.

- For ongoing operations, audits, legal actions, or any other known purpose, Donegal ETB saves a copy of every email message and attachment(s) to a secure application, where it can be protected and stored. Recovery of messages from this archived store is prohibited for all but legal reasons.
- All written communication constructed using Donegal ETB's email resources should meet the highest level of professionalism, courtesy and respect. Please review our [Email Safety Guidelines](#)

## **Compliance**

Individuals found to be in breach of this Email Policy, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Should an investigation regarding compliance with this policy determine that there may be a case to answer by the User, the matter will be referred into the appropriate stage of the relevant disciplinary procedure as appropriate to that User.

For the avoidance of doubt, where questions remain as to what constitutes "appropriate use", contact Donegal ETB's ICT Department for full clarification.

## **Related Policies and Links**

### **[ICT Policy Framework](#)**

[Department of Education and Skills circular on Revised Procedures for Suspension and Dismissal of Teachers and Principals](#) (ETBs)

[Department of Education and Skills circular on procedures for Suspension and Dismissal of Principals of Community National Schools](#)

[ETBI & Unions Consultative Forum - Disciplinary Procedure for staff employed by Education & Training Boards](#)

[Procedures for principals relating to their work, conduct and matters of professional competence in their role as principals](#)