

## **COMPUTER USAGE - EMAIL**

### **BASIC BELIEF**

This policy relates to the use of staff email at Mater Dei and is designed to provide guidelines for individual staff regarding their use. It encourages users to make responsible choices when using email thus the responsibility for appropriate use of the email at Mater Dei lies with the user.

While it is acknowledged that access to staff email by system administrators may be required in certain circumstances, it is unlikely that pervasive, systematic and ongoing surveillance of staff email and logs should be necessary.

Mater Dei is committed to fostering an environment where staff are assured that the privacy of their communications will be respected as long as they abide by the organisation's stated policy.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To promote awareness, encourage acceptable use and discourage the unacceptable use of Mater Dei's Internet technologies.
2. Mater Dei will ensure that students, families, staff and supporters are informed of the organisation's computer security policy.
3. Mater Dei will ensure that staff are given the opportunity to obtain accurate information and clarify their rights and responsibilities regarding the implementation of this and other related policies and procedures.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Mater Dei staff and employees, volunteers, contractors, subcontractors, consultants and related personnel who utilize Mater Dei's computer systems and other related policies and procedures.

### **RATIONALE**

- Maintain an ethical and amicable working environment.
- Guide staff in making informed decisions about the use of the email and Internet.
- Ensure the privacy and protection of Mater Dei students and staff.
- Inform staff about the right of Mater Dei to access emails and Internet.
- Ensure that computer and telecommunications systems in the workplace are not used improperly or illegally.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **A. CONDITIONS OF USE**

1. Staff shall not be granted access to Mater Dei's computer systems unless and until they have read and

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agreed to abide by these policies. Acceptance of these policies is implied in Mater Dei's conditions of employment for staff (including casual staff and volunteers), contractors and consultants.

2. Acceptable use of email includes
  - Facilitating, gathering and disseminating information
  - Encouraging collaborative projects and resource sharing
  - Assisting technology transfer
  - Fostering innovations
  - Building broader infrastructure in support of education and research
  - Fostering professional development
  - Undertaking administrative functions that support the organisation
  
3. Unacceptable use of email includes
  - Decryption of system or user passwords.
  - Any unauthorised attempt to secure a higher level of privilege on the Network.
  - Communicating information concerning any password, identifying code or other confidential information.
  - Interfering or disrupting networks users, services or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, distribution of unsolicited advertising, propagation of computer viruses in any form, and using the network to make unauthorised entry to any other machine.
  - Breaching copyright laws, including software copyright and reverse-engineering of software.
  - Copying of system files.

## B. USER RESPONSIBILITY

1. Whenever electronic mail is used the individual's name, User ID and subject identification are to be included in each message. The individual is responsible for all electronic mail originating from their User ID. Therefore
  - attempts at receiving or sending harassing, obscene, pornographic and/or other threatening email to another user is prohibited;
  - all email that makes reference to sex, race and disability discrimination activities and/or information is prohibited and should be deleted immediately;
  - attempted forgery of electronic mail messages is prohibited;
  - attempts to read, delete, copy or modify the electronic mail of other users is prohibited;
  - undertaking illegal activities is prohibited;
  - attempts at sending unsolicited junk mail, "for-profit" messages or chain letters is prohibited;
  - running programs sent as email attachments is prohibited;
  - sending macros as email attachments is prohibited;
  - all suspicious email or email from unknown sources should be deleted immediately.
  
2. Email delivered to Mater Dei is considered to be an open record, much like a written or printed document and can be requested. Email messages retained in staff's individual mailboxes would be regarded as readily available and must be supplied if requested.
  
3. Email may also become available to others under the following circumstances

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- Software or hardware failure.
- Systems management personnel may have access to data when
  - Performing routine operations or pursuing apparent streams or user problems.
  - Protecting the integrity of the organisation's computing system and the rights and property of the organisation.
  - Protecting the rights of individuals working in collaborative situations where information and files are shared.
- Systems personnel are required to report apparent improper or illegal activities that they discover.
- No guarantee of complete privacy is made or implied by this policy.

### C. WORK RELATED USE

Work related use of email and internet includes (and is not limited to) the following

- Curriculum related information and resources
- Student welfare and pastoral issues
- Professional and educational issues
- Inter-school and external communication with work colleagues and committees etc.
- Employment related information for example Occupational Health & Safety (OHS), union information.

### D. STUDENT AND PARENT COMMUNICATION

1. For the concern and safety of our students, Mater Dei reserves the right to review any incoming or outgoing email sent to or from the email system and reserves the right to view any email program on any computer owned by the organisation.
2. Mater Dei expects that staff will ensure that
  - The email is professional in nature.
  - The email communication maintains and promotes a professional student/teacher relationship.
  - Confidential information about our students will not be transmitted via email. Should any teacher have a question related to a student in a sensitive context they should make personal contact.
  - They use appropriate judgment when considering giving their personal email address to students or parents.
  - Students and parents are aware of the expected time frame of a reply.
  - They avoid over committing their time to replying to parent or student emails.
  - They inform executive staff should emails be inappropriate or excessive.
  - They inform executive staff should they become aware that a student is in need of pastoral care.

### E. LIMITED NON-WORK RELATED USE

Electronic communication is provided as a medium of expression for academic programs and operations and should not to be used for personal purposes or gain. Incidental personal use is acceptable however staff should not use Mater Dei resources for extensive or recurring communication not related to work purposes.

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### F. LIMITATIONS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES

All members of the Mater Dei community should recognise that email use may be limited for reasons related to the capacity or security of the system. In accordance, the following guidelines apply

- Do not allow anyone else to use your account. You will be held responsible for any correspondence originating from your account.
- Do not send an organisation wide mailing or a mailing to extremely large groups of people without first checking with the email administrator.
- Do not send chain letters. If you receive a chain letter, delete it.
- Do not post messages to large numbers of news groups.
- Do not post chain letters or money making schemes to any news group.

### G. MONITORING

1. Monitoring staff email and Internet usage is governed by the Workplace surveillance Act 1995 (NSW) and in keeping with this legislation Mater Dei may monitor and record employees' computer usage at work.
2. The objectives of the Workplace Surveillance Act are
  - To prohibit the surveillance by employers (Mater Dei) of their employees at work, *except by surveillance of which employees have been given notice*, and
  - To restrict and regulate the blocking by employers of emails and Internet access of employees at work.
3. Mater Dei's Network Administrator (CASTnet) may monitor and record email and Internet use and can also
  - block access to certain websites; and
  - restrict sending and receiving of email
  - BUT – blocked email must be accompanied by a notice to the employee eg a “delivery failure” email
  - In some circumstances, there is no need to notify blocked emails eg spam, threat to computer or computer network, the email or an attachment is menacing, harassing or offensive.
4. Mater Dei must inform employees of computer usage monitoring and recording
  - 14 days in advance or before the employees commences employment; and
  - In such a way that is reasonable to assume that the employee is aware of and understands the policy

*Note – This policy will be linked from a screen that the user sees when they log on to the network*
5. Mater Dei will obtain written acknowledgement from each employee that they have received and understood the following
  - **Storage and monitoring of email use**  
Staff email boxes will normally contain the emails they have sent and received. Mater Dei uses a back-up and archiving system that may also contain copies of emails that have been deleted by the user. As well as the actual content of messages, the date and time the message was transmitted,

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received and opened and the email addresses of the sender and recipients will normally be recorded. If required for legal purposes, email content can be retrieved from archived media. In addition to SPAM and Virus scanning, email is also scanned for words that would be considered offensive. Messages containing offensive language that are 'sent' by users are in fact captured by the system and forwarded to the Mater Dei IT Administrator for action in accordance with Mater Dei's Computer Usage Policies. All staff members need to be aware that they are subject to such monitoring of email use and ensure that they are acting at all times within Mater Dei's Computer Usage Policy.

- **Storage and review of computer files**

Staff computers will normally contain the files they have accessed. Mater Dei uses a back-up and archiving system that may also contain copies of computer files that have been deleted by the user. As well as the actual content of files, the date and time of access will normally be recorded.

- **Who will carry out the recording and monitoring**

CASTnet captures a record of all Email usage and provides the Mater Dei IT Administrator with the capacity to extract historical (current & previous month) reports for any user or user group.

- **How the monitoring and recording will be carried out**

Such reports are generated on an intermittent basis as part of our review of email usage. In addition to generating these reports, the Mater Dei IT Administrator also receives reports providing the detail concerning any attempt to visit sites that are on the 'blocked site' filter list. Historical records of email usage can be accessed at a systemic level.

- **When the monitoring and recording will be carried out**

All staff members need to be aware that they are subject to such monitoring of email use and ensure that they are acting at all times within Mater Dei's Responsible Use of Digital Materials Guidelines and Mater Dei's Computer Usage policies.

6. Mater Dei will only use and disclose information gathered during the monitoring and recording

- for a legitimate purpose related to employment
- for a legitimate business activity or function
- to a law enforcement agency for use in connection with the detection, investigation or prosecution of an offence
- for a purpose directly or indirectly related to bringing civil or criminal proceedings, or
- if it is reasonably believed to be necessary to avert an imminent threat of serious violence to persons or substantial damage to property.

## H. POLICY REGULATIONS

1. Violations of computing policies and/or contract of employment may result in

- loss of access to systems
- appropriate administrative sanctions
- disciplinary action
- termination of employment and/or
- referral to law enforcement agencies

2. Investigations into breaches of Computer Usage Policies will be in accordance with the Mater Dei Incident Reporting & Management Policy.

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### **I. POLICY EVALUATION**

This policy will be evaluated regularly to ensure that it is current and responsive to the need of the time.

### **LEGISLATION**

- Privacy Act 1988
- Archives Act 1983
- Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Crimes Act 1914
- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Privacy Commissioners Guidelines on Workplace Email, Web Browsing and Privacy
- Defamation Act NSW
- Workplace Surveillance Act 2005 (NSW)
- Copyright Act (CTH)
- Telecommunications Act (CTH)