Wigan Libraries Public Network Computers

Full terms and conditions - Acceptable Use of Public Network Computers in Wigan Libraries

1. Introduction

The internet enables access to valuable information resources in many different formats. The Library service does not deny legitimate access to information by any member of the public, but recognises that such a resource may be open to abuse or misuse.

The following policy has been produced in order to safeguard the interests of the library service and the community it serves.

2. The Internet & Your Responsibility

Whilst the internet contains a wealth information, some this information may be inaccurate, out of date, controversial, false, offensive and/or illegal.

Wigan Council accepts no responsibility for the quality, accuracy or availability of information accessed through the internet. Although we will try to signpost sites that appear to be authoritative, we do not necessarily endorse these sites. As a user, it is your personal responsibility to ensure the accuracy of information you discover. Wigan Council assumes no liability for any loss, damage or injury, direct or indirect, suffered as a result of using these computer resources.

You are responsible for the privacy of any information that you wish to transmit via the Internet (e.g. credit card details for online purchases). Remember libraries are public places, and someone could be looking over your shoulder. Log out properly from such services or it may be possible for the next computer user to access your information.

3. Conditions of access

Membership

To access computers in Wigan Libraries you must be a library member or provide details for guest user access.

All users will be asked to abide by the terms and conditions of the "Wigan Libraries Public Network Computers – Our Acceptable Use Policy" document.

Children and Young People

Children aged under 8 will be allowed Internet access only if accompanied by a parent or carer who must be over 18.

Children and young people between the ages of 8 and 16 will be allowed Internet access provided that a parent or carer has signed a consent form on their behalf.

Cost
The use of computers in Wigan Libraries is currently free of charge.

Booking a computer session
Sessions may be booked in advance, up to seven days ahead by telephone or in person.
Sessions can be booked for a maximum of one hour in the first instance.

For Health & Safety reasons it is recommended that computer users take regular half hour breaks. Children should take a half hour break after using a computer for 1 hour.

No more than two people may use a computer at any one time, at the discretion of library staff.

Please note: Adults using the computers must supervise their children (aged 8 and under) at all times. Failure to comply may lead to your session being terminated.

4. Your Session in Progress
Wigan Council and its ICT partners can and do monitor access to Internet sites, and any public access of illegal, offensive or controversial material will be subject to the penalties of misuse (see section 6 below,) We reserve the right to monitor and log all types of network activity including email and messaging services. We adhere to the data protection act and make every effort to protect your personal information. The police or other agencies in their investigations may request this and other information relating to your use of our services. We make consideration of such requests in the light of our Data Protection responsibilities but may have to release this information if the appropriate case is made.

5. Security
Filtering software is used in an attempt to screen out offensive and potentially illegal material. However, filtering mechanisms may also eliminate material that is perfectly acceptable. The library service is willing to consider releasing any such site after careful checking.
Virus-checking software runs on all computers.
Users may not download nor install their own software, nor connect their own computer hardware e.g. scanners to library computer equipment. Exceptions are possible for special equipment to help with general computer use (e.g. assistive hardware for users with special needs).
Phishing and scams - It is your responsibility to conduct your online life safely. Be wary of emails and other online services which ask for personal details, especially if they appear out of context.
Downloading - Information from the internet may be downloaded (within copyright restrictions) to USB.
Please note files stored on the hard drive are cleared after every session is ended. It is a user's responsibility to end their session when they have finished using the computer, to ensure all files are cleared.
You are responsible for the privacy of any information that you wish to transmit via the Internet (e.g. credit card details for online purchases). Remember libraries are public places, and someone could be looking over your shoulder. Log out properly from such services or it may be possible for the next computer user to access your information.

6. Prohibited Uses

Certain uses of the computers are prohibited. These are:

- Accessing, displaying, downloading or disseminating pornographic or other "adult" materials which could be considered obscene, offensive or abusive to other computer users or staff
- Accessing, displaying, distributing material or information that may disparage, harass or intimidate others on the basis of gender, race, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation or national origin
- Distribution of unsolicited advertising
- Bullying and harassment of any kind
- Chat rooms
- Inappropriate messaging of any kind via any platform
- Attempting to make unauthorised access to other computers or networks (Hacking)
- Alteration of the set-up of the computers or the software running on them, including the introduction of viruses
- Downloading, file sharing, using or distributing copyrighted materials from the Internet without proper authorisation from and/or payment of user fees to the owner of the intellectual property rights of the materials
- Participating in any form of gambling
- Downloading of any software to the computer hard disk or any other storage device is not allowed
- Black market trading

Please note:

- Online financial transactions are an increasingly common use of the Internet and are often conducted safely over secure connections. However, Wigan Council and its ICT partners cannot be held responsible for any losses resulting from sending confidential financial information via the Internet.
- Wigan Council reserves the right to restrict access for any other computer activities which are felt to be inappropriate in a library setting.

7. Penalties for misuse

Library staff will direct computer users to remove inappropriate images or text from the screen.

Wigan Council reserves the right to exclude any individuals who persist in accessing or distributing materials which are deemed to be illegal or unacceptable or have the potential to offend or disturb others. A decision on exclusion will be made by a Senior Officer of the Library Service and communicated in writing. As well as the loss of computer privileges, other options may be applied, including criminal prosecution.

In the case of a junior computer user who violates this Acceptable Use Policy, the parent or carer who signed the consent form will be notified.

Any instances of misuse will be recorded on a customer's library record with appropriate review periods applied.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains timely and relevant.