

Code of Practice for the World Wide Web

(adapted from a report by Andrew Charlesworth for the Advisory Group on Computer Graphics as part of the SIMA (Support Initiative for Multimedia Applications) Report Series entitled: 'A Comprehensive Survey of the Legal Issues Relating to the Development and Use of World Wide Web Technology at Educational Sites' July 1996).

1. Birkbeck College has the following Code of Practice and Guidelines with regard to the setting up and use of Webservers and Webpages, which should be read in conjunction with the JANET Acceptable Use Policy and the College Computing Regulations.
2. Staff and students may not set up Webservers, or place Webpages on any College Computing equipment, other than that designated by CCS or Head of School. All staff and students wishing to place Webpages on designated College Computing equipment must have read and understood both the Code of Practice and Guidelines. All pages should include the name of their author (real name, not just username), and be linked (by means of ``) to the hypertext tree that has the staff member's or student's home page at its root.
3. There must be a clear separation between institutional Webpages and personal Webpages, to this end, only official institutional Webpages may use the College logos, or other copyrighted or trademarked College materials, and when users leave the official institutional pages, they should be informed of this fact by a notification and disclaimer. Authors of personal homepages have no authority to designate, represent or hold out such pages as being official institutional College webpages, to use such pages for official College business, or to use such pages to enter into contracts which purport to bind the College.
4. Institutional and personal webpages may not:
 - contain, or be used to distribute, or have direct links to, material which is sexist, racist, homophobic, xenophobic, pornographic, or similarly discriminatory and/or offensive.
 - contain, or be used to distribute, text or images to which a third party holds a intellectual property right, without the express written permission of the rightholder.
 - contain, or be used to distribute, or have direct links to, defamatory material, that is, they may not contain material which falsely states or implies something about an identifiable individual that will result in that individual being held in lower esteem by others as a result.
 - contain, or be used to distribute, or have direct links to, material that could be used in order to breach computer security, or to facilitate unauthorised entry into computer systems.
 - contain, or be used to distribute, or have direct links to, material which is likely to prejudice or seriously impede the course of justice in criminal or civil proceedings.
 - contain personal data (as defined by the Data Protection Act 1984) about third parties, unless their explicit permission has been given and the information is properly registered with the Data Protection Registrar, or the information is covered by a relevant exemption under the Data Protection Act 1984.

In particular, institutional and personal webpages may not contain, or be used to distribute, or have direct links to, material which breaches, or is likely to likely to breach: The Obscene Publications Act 1959, The Sex Discrimination Act 1975, The Race Relations Act 1976, The Protection of Children Act 1978, The Contempt of Court Act 1981, The Data Protection Act 1984, The

Telecommunications Act 1984, The Public Order Act 1986, The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, The Computer Misuse Act 1990, The Trademarks Act 1994.

5. Personal webpages may not be used for placing and distribution of commercial advertisements.
6. The College has an internal structure of responsibility for the administration of institutional, departmental and personal Webpages. Complaints and comments should be directed to the CCS Manager who will ensure that, they are promptly dealt with by the relevant responsible individuals named below and, if necessary, refer the case to College authorities to be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate disciplinary procedures for students and staff.

The following are responsible for dealing with queries and complaints about their respective areas. They have the authority to remove webpages within their respective areas of responsibility which infringe, or may infringe, the College Code of Practice, or College Computing Regulations:

CCS Systems Team Leader - CCS web servers

CCS Webmaster - CCS web servers

Departmental Chairmen - Department web servers

7. The above sections notwithstanding, the College does not exercise direct editorial control over personal Webpages, and accepts no liability for material contained in them, or links which are made from them to other material either at, or outside, the College. However, in the event of a complaint, the College will act to ensure that the material or link in question is removed, as soon as practically possible, until the complaint is either substantiated or dismissed.
8. Failure to observe this code of practice by either students or staff will be considered a serious matter by the College. Where College regulations are breached the College will invoke the appropriate disciplinary procedures. For students this could involve suspension of access to computing facilities or, in extreme cases, termination of their studies. Breaches of the criminal or civil law are beyond the remit of the College, but where criminal offences have been committed, the College will report these to the authorities. If the DPP decides upon a criminal prosecution this will be a matter for the department or individual concerned. Similar considerations apply to any civil law cases.