

# Telephone Acceptable Use Policy (ISP05)

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## Document Control

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## 1. Policy Statement

The purpose of this Policy is to describe the service standards to be applied and the operational procedures to be followed by all employees of the College when using landline or mobile telephones for internal and external calls, and for personal use.

Any queries arising from this Policy or its implementation can be taken up directly with the IT Infrastructure Services team at [itis@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:itis@rvc.ac.uk)

The College is the Owner of this document and has approved management responsibility for its development, review and evaluation.

- This policy is intended to be read by all staff and students for general information and awareness.
  
- The policy is relevant to the use of all mobile telephones and landline telephone systems throughout the College whether as part of a corporate telephone system or a stand-alone system within a College establishment.

## 2. Introduction

2.1 This policy provides guidance on when to use telephones, making and responding to calls in a way which reflects positively on both the individual employee and the College.

2.2 Any incoming (or outgoing) telephone call is potentially the first point of contact with members of the public or other customers of the College. The first impression given when making, and in particular when answering, a call goes a long way towards influencing the perception of the College's level of performance and quality of service. It is therefore important that all employees are aware of and follow these guidelines.

2.3 The College recognises that the use of mobile telephones is an essential part of many employees' working lives and access to a mobile phone is necessary for certain roles. The advantage of mobile phones to lone workers and those working in remote areas is recognised. Landlines and, where there is a business need, mobile telephones are provided for business use, and this Telephone Usage Policy includes guidance on how they should be used and managed.

## 3. Responsibilities

3.1 In making use of College landline and mobile telephones all users are expected to act responsibly and keep costs to a minimum. Wherever possible College receptionist staff should be requested for directory enquiry numbers and premium directory enquiry services such as 118 118 should be avoided.

3.2 Managers are responsible for ensuring that existing and new members of staff are made aware of the content of this policy and for monitoring compliance with it.

- 3.3 The College expects value for money (VfM) in its telephony provision and therefore employees will not be able to select specific mobile phone handsets or types and may not be given a choice Unless there is a specific business reason for a specific type of phone which must first be approved by the Head of Department.
- 3.4 When making or receiving any calls, internal or external, employees should aim to be pleasant, informative, helpful and brief.
- 3.5 Employees are responsible for all calls made on a College mobile phone, and for the safe-keeping of the phone.
- 3.6 Users are responsible for any fine or other penalty incurred for breach of legislation if using a mobile phone or “hands free” device whilst driving.

It is illegal to make or receive a call using a mobile telephone whilst driving if the phone is held in the hand during any part of the operation. Users should also be aware that they can be prosecuted for using “hands free” devices if they fail to properly control their vehicle.

- 3.7 College mobile phones remain the property of the College and must be returned if the user leaves the College’s employment. Failure to do so may result in the employee being charged an amount equivalent to the rental of the phone and any other charges made against the account. The College may also apply an administrative charge to cover costs incurred in recovering the phone and terminating the contract.
- 3.8 If a College mobile phone is lost it must be reported to a line manager as soon as possible. If a College mobile phone with (work emails synchronised to the device such as iPhone, Windows Mobile etc.) is lost then it must be reported to a line manager and IT Infrastructure Services Team [itis@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:itis@rvc.ac.uk).
- 3.9 If the lost mobile phone is a smartphone staff may be required to purchase replacement handset themselves, if this loss is due negligence on the part of the user or if they would need a similar mobile phone.
- 3.10 College mobile phones are provided for college related use only. While the College recognises that occasional personal use may be necessary, this should be kept to a minimum. Apps should not be purchased for personal use at the College’s expense and may not be replaced or refunded if bought from personal funds and downloaded to a College handset.

#### **4. Breach of Policy**

- 4.1 All employees are responsible for their compliance with the Policy, and for reporting any policy violation or other abuse of the telephone system. Any breach of this Policy will be dealt with in accordance with the College’s disciplinary procedure. If abuse of a mobile phone is suspected, in addition to any other sanctions imposed the phone will be withdrawn.

#### **5. Service Standards: Making Calls**

- 5.1 Employees should be aware that calls to mobile phones are expensive and therefore any calls should be clear, succinct and as brief as possible.
- 5.2 International Roaming is enabled by default on all College mobiles. If you travel abroad regularly on College business, it is advised to contact [itis@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:itis@rvc.ac.uk) to enable special roaming package which will reduce the cost.
- 5.3 The use of chargeable mobile services such as premium rate text messages, directory enquiries etc, is not permitted on College mobile phones without prior and specific written permission from a line manager.
- 5.4 Text or picture messages (SMS or MMS) must not contain, or have attachments that contain: defamatory, offensive or harassing language, fraudulent material, sexually explicit images or language, material that infringes copyright or other intellectual property rights of third parties, or offensive cartoons or jokes or otherwise involve lawful or wrongful conduct. Nor should they contain any remarks that might be potentially embarrassing to the College, its employees or the general public

## **6. Confidential Data and Information Security**

- 6.1 Information must never be given out over the phone unless it is absolutely clear who it is being given to and that they are entitled to the information and are ready and able to accept it.
- 6.2 Care must be taken to ensure that conversations involving confidential and/ or personal information cannot be overheard.
- 6.3 Voicemail messages containing personal information should only be left after due consideration has been given to any security and confidentiality risks involved.
- 6.4 Mobile phones must be kept secure at all times, and out-of-sight whenever possible.
- 6.5 All college and personal smartphones setup with college email accounts and/or internet based access to College data must be protected with four digit passcode. This is to protect your information and college data. After enabling passcode on your device, each time you turn on or wake up the device, it will prompt for the passcode before you can access applications or information on the device. Please contact LISD helpdesk [helpdesk@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:helpdesk@rvc.ac.uk) or 020 7568 5181 for assistance.
- 6.6 Mobile phones may not be used to store and/or transmit personal data for which the College is the Data Controller or any other sensitive data relating to the College and its activities.

## **7. Personal Use**

- 7.1 The College's telephones are provided primarily for business use in order to assist staff in carrying out official College business. College landline and mobile phones must not be used for any secondary business purpose unless approved as part of a formal College scheme.

- 7.2 It is accepted that there are occasions when making personal calls at work cannot be avoided. However, it should be remembered that calls are logged and abuse of a telephone system or mobile telephone may result in disciplinary action.
- 7.3 Such monitoring of telephone use will comply with the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998. It will be used to establish facts, confirm legitimate business use and compliance with this Policy, monitor standards of service and training, maintain effective operation of systems and identify unauthorised use. Call logs are kept for a period of 3 years so that they are available for inspection by Auditors
- 7.4 **Examples of acceptable personal use may include:**
- 7.4.1 Emergency calls to deal with domestic situations. For example making alternative arrangements for childcare or checking on an unwell family member.
- 7.4.2 Advising others of late working.
- 7.4.3 Returning important calls from a family member.
- 7.4.4 Calls to, for example, a bank or building society, or to arrange doctors or dentists appointments where the call cannot be made outside of the employee's normal working hours.
- 7.5 Where possible personal calls should be made during recognised break times thus minimising disruption to others. Where this is not possible call duration must be kept to an absolute minimum.
- 7.6 National rate personal calls and personal calls to any mobile network should only be made in exceptional circumstances and the duration of the call must again be kept to a minimum.
- 7.7 Where there is evidence of a high level of personal usage which is not compliant with this Policy the individual responsible will be liable to pay any excess call charges and may be subject to disciplinary procedures.
- 7.8 **Explicitly forbidden uses of College landline and mobile telephones include:**
- 7.8.1 Providing a College telephone number as a contact point in personal advertisements in the press, on the internet etc
- 7.8.2 Premium rate phone numbers such as those associated with competition lines, racing lines, chat rooms etc.
- 7.8.3 Transmission of any offensive material in either voice, text or image format from College supplied mobile phones.