Skills and Training Services (STS)

Local Operating Procedure

Online Safety Statement

Serco

Version Control Sheet

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Version History

Version	Date	Summary of changes
V1.0	21/09/2023	First Issued
V1.1	17/10/2023	Rebranding only, no content changes
V2.0	21/06/2024	Additional information added around online delivery requirements for learners.

Approval

Name	Job Role	Date	Signature
Mike Hampton	Quality Improvement and Audit Manager	21/06/2024	M. Hampton

Change Control
Any requested changes to this document should be emailed to: mike.hampton@serco.com

Contents

Introduction

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of our learners is paramount when they are using the internet, social media, or mobile devices.
- Provide staff and subcontractors with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety.
- Ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

The policy statement applies to all staff, subcontractors, and learners.

This policy statement must be read in conjunction with the following:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Prevent Policy
- Behaviours, Disciplinary and Expectations Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Code of Conduct for staff and subcontractors.

Legal Framework

This policy has been drawn up based on legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect learners in England. The key pieces of legislation and guidance include:

- Education Act 2002
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023

We believe that:

No learners should ever experience abuse of any kind.

Learners should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are always kept safe.

We recognise that:

The online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges.

We have a duty to ensure that all people, involved in our programmes are protected from potential harm online.

We have a responsibility to help keep our learners safe online, whether or not they are using Serco network and devices.

All learners, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

Working in partnership with our learners, their employers, their carers (where appropriate) and other agencies is essential in promoting people's welfare and in helping people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.

We will seek to keep our learners safe by:
Appointing a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSOs).

Providing clear and specific direction to staff and subcontractors on how to behave online.

Supporting and encouraging our learners to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others.

Supporting and encouraging employers to do what they can to keep their employees safe online by:
- Never using the same password across multiple accounts.
- Ensuring passwords are strong and memorable, however ensuring they are not easily guessable.
- Observing Copyright and referencing rules.
- Always thinking carefully when posting on social media.
- Always think carefully before something is written and sent online.
- Not downloading anything unless you are confident it is safe to do so.
- Not opening and responding to suspicious looking emails and attachments. If at work, report this to your IT department.
- Always making sure that when sending emails, the correct recipients are listed, so sensitive information is not passed to unauthorised recipients.
- Ensuring software and systems being used have been updated with the latest updates.
- Ensuring that all devices are backed up, so work can be recovered if required.
- Avoiding using public Wi-Fi where possible.
- Ensuring any devices that are online have a good standard of antivirus software installed and this is updated regularly.

Reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly.

Ensuring personal information about all staff and learners is held securely and shared only as appropriate.

Ensuring that images of our staff and learners are used only after their written permission has been obtained and only for the purpose for which consent has been given.

Providing support and training for staff, subcontractors, and learners about online safety.

Examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

Where sessions are delivered online, such as through MS Teams/Zoom:

- the tutor will admit learners into the session and will check that the learner is visible on camera and their name is displayed correctly. This is to ensure the expected learners are within the session.
- Where a learner wishes not to use their webcam, due to privacy or technical issues (for example), the learner must raise this with the tutor at the earliest opportunity (ideally before the session starts).
- At times learners may be attending online sessions while at home, and it is recognised that at times distractions can take place in the home environment, such as children requiring attention. It is recommended that learners do not allow children to be visible on the webcam, in instances where this is unavoidable then the learner should turn off their webcam and inform their tutor.
- It is also recommended that all attendees (learners, tutors, staff, guests etc) on online sessions are to use an appropriate background when using their webcam. Many software's and organisations have a range of preset backgrounds that can be applied, or alternatively the backgrounds can often be blurred. Doing this can protect the privacy of the individuals in attendance.
- Controls are in place to ensure that control of presentations remains with the tutor or support staff. The only time that learners are permitted to take over the screen is when the tutor has given instruction to do so.
- Attendance registers for each session are recorded by MS Teams
- Transcripts of messages sent in sessions are recorded in MS Teams
- Where the integrity of a delivered session is at risk due to a learner's intervention, or the safety of learners and tutors is at risk from a learner the tutor will either remove that learner from a session and or end the session and report this as a safeguarding concern.
- Serco STS reserve the right to remove a learner from a programme where a breach of its policies has been committed and or other learners and tutors have been placed at risk by a learner.

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by:
Having clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse (including online abuse).

Providing support and training for all staff and subcontractors on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying/cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation.

Making sure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders, and our organisation, into account.