

Distance Learning Policy



St Munchin's College

We have devised a new Distance Learning Policy to reflect the changed circumstances brought about by Covid-19 and the significant increase in the use of technology to continue learning. This policy does not introduce any new concepts; rather, it specifically outlines the various applications used for the delivery of online classes remotely.

This new policy operates alongside all of our existing policies.

Introduction

This document sets out the policy of the school in respect of use of technology for distance or remote teaching and learning during the current Coronavirus stay at home instruction, hereafter referred to as “Distance eLearning” – it operates in addition to our existing Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

Scope of this Policy

This policy covers any aspect of student distance learning as used by College Staff.

In all cases students must use their @stmunchinscollege.ie account to log in. Students are not to use any other account under any circumstances for the purposes of Distance eLearning within the College.

The list of applications that will be used for distance learning will primarily be:

- Office365, incorporating:
 - Microsoft Outlook (e-mail)
 - Microsoft Teams
 - Microsoft OneNote
 - Microsoft Forms
 - Microsoft Stream
- Zoom – for live online classes.

There may be some additional applications that teachers may use, and the teacher will provide the student with the information required to access them. This must, in all cases, use a @stmunchinscollege.ie account as the login.

eLearning Approach

eLearning will take what is known as a blended approach and some teachers may use different methods more than another teacher. For example:

- Some teachers may use regular live classes while others may not
- Some teachers may use live classes through Zoom while others may use Teams
- Some teachers may distribute work as weekly bulk assignments while others may do so as daily homework-style tasks.

In all cases the primary aim is to cover the required curriculum areas for their specific subject. The teacher will decide the most effective method to use to achieve this aim. Students should get in touch with their teacher right away if they are having difficulty with any aspect of their subject or if they are finding the workload unmanageable.

Everyone's Responsibilities while partaking in eLearning

For staff and teachers:

- Teachers have overall control of the online interaction of their class.
- Disruptive students will be removed in order to allow those who wish to partake a fair chance to do so. Repeatedly disruptive students may receive a temporary ban from all online access.
- Teachers will do their utmost to be available at the identified time on their timetable – this may be via a Zoom live video, through Teams chat or by e-mail.

For students:

- You are to communicate through your @stmunchinscollege.ie account only. The use of any other account or e-mail address is expressly prohibited
- Do not engage in communications with any account other than an @stmunchinscollege.ie account and report any such activity to your teacher or year-head's @stmunchinscollege.ie e-mail account
- You must always be civil and respectful to your teachers and fellow students
- You are not to record or forward any content within a Teams group – such as worksheets, exam papers, answers, solutions, videos, notes or Zoom links – to anyone else without the permission of the creator of that content
- You understand that all your online activity is recorded. This includes anything you send or say via e-mail, Teams, Zoom and OneNote, and whether you are checking regularly for assigned work.

For parents:

- You should ensure that your son is checking in regularly for assigned work
- Where live classes are being run, you should ensure your son is in an area of the house that is quiet and free from distractions. Please be mindful of Child Protection Guidelines, for example, bedrooms should not be used for live classes
- Live online classes should be viewed by your son only.

Live Online Classes

Teachers may deliver some of the course “live” using Zoom or Teams. This will use varying combinations of audio, video, virtual whiteboards and screencasts.

In the use of Teams or Zoom:

- Students must always follow the direction of their teacher just as in the classroom
- Students are not to turn on their video at any time
- Students are not to turn on their microphone unless the teacher invites them to do so. In any case, all microphones should be on mute when a person is not speaking to avoid distracting background noise being broadcast to everyone.

- A Zoom link is intended for the student only. The teacher will decide who should receive the link. Do not forward any link to anyone else.
- All Zoom sessions are recorded, and these recordings may be made available by the teacher to the class to watch back again later. This recording includes any video, screenshares, whiteboards and audio from the class.
- Only the teacher is allowed record a session. No-one else is permitted to record.
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Protocols for Online Classes

These protocols are designed to help and protect both students and teachers to engage with distant/remote learning.

Protocols for Online Classes for students:

- On time and fully prepared for class.
- Quiet working area free from distractions- Where live classes are being run, all students should ensure they are in an area of the house that is quiet and free from distractions. Please be mindful of Child Protection Guidelines, for example, bedrooms should not be used for live classes
- Desk and full class materials and books on hand
- Full uniform (Full working mode)
- Mute sound until asked specifically by teacher to unmute
- Disable camera unless asked by teacher to show image
- Raise hand if you wish to ask a question (Use raise hand icon)
- Do not message teachers after 3.30

Protocols for Online Classes for Teachers

- Teachers will only record the class after explicitly warning students that they are about to do so (GPDR)
- Teachers will change or cancel background if working from home (for the sake of privacy)
- Only teachers will have presenter rights
- Teachers will always end the meeting when the class is finished. Teachers will not let students continue the meeting when the teacher has left the online class.
- All work will be distributed through assignments in Teams

Data Privacy Statement

Our Distance Learning Policy operates in addition to the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for Internet Usage 2020, Data Protection Policy and Personal Data Retention Policy which are available from our website. For clarity, we will outline aspects specific to Distance Learning but this should be read alongside our existing policies mentioned above.

What we retain:

- Login activity, specifically, the last time a student logged in to their Office365 account
- Within Teams and OneNote, the date and time of if/when a student views any assignments or OneNote notebooks set for them and when they submit any work for same
- In live classes using Zoom or Teams, all audio, video, whiteboard, annotations and screenshare activity of both teacher and participants (audio/video is not recorded if the student is on mute and the video is not enabled).

Why we retain it:

- To assist us in making sure students are engaging in learning sufficiently and in good time
- To assist us in generating appropriate and relevant feedback to parents on progress
- To provide revision materials by means of replying topics covered in a live class, and to ensure those who might be unable to attend live classes can still cover the same content as the rest of the class
- To provide a record of activity in the event of a disciplinary or other issue arising during a live class.

Where we retain it:

- All recordings are kept within the College's own systems which requires a valid @stmunchinscollege.ie login to access
- The College's own systems are configured so that all data resides within an EU country only, which in the case of Office365, is Ireland.

How long we retain it for:

- Ordinarily this is cleared at the end of each exam session, i.e. at the end of 3rd Year and at the end of 6th Year. In any case, activity and content will not be retained beyond the students exit from the College, either through early exit or through graduation.

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management on 29th September 2020

Signed: _____
Chairperson of Board of Management

Signed: _____
Principal

Date: _____

Date: _____

Date of next review: Sept 2022