



## Libraries & Information

# Use of digital devices in Libraries

Type of Document	Policy
Department	Libraries and Information
Owner(s)	Digital Services Manager
Sign off	Head of Libraries and Registration
Publication	Website
Review Date	September 2025

Document Amendment Record			
Issue	Amendment detail	Author	Date
V1.0	Published policy	Digital Manager	13/11/2017
V1.1	Minor amendments	Digital Manager	18/12/2020
V1.2	Minor amendment	Digital Manager	25/09/2023
V1.3	Minor amendment	Digital Manager	18/10/2024

This page is intentionally blank

# Policy

The provision of digital access is a key element of the 2012 Library Strategy recognising libraries as key places in the community to access the Internet and use computers. We support people with accessing digital public services, communication, and information. The library service can play a pivotal role in ensuring that the gap between the information rich and information poor is reduced and that the digital economy is inclusive and available to all.

Gloucestershire County Council provides computers and interactive digital equipment for use by the public in libraries. In addition, Wi-Fi is available in Council run libraries for use by customers using personal portable digital devices.

Digital access is provided for a range of activity including:

- Research/Study/ School work/homework
- Email & communication & social networking
- Council and government transactions
- Retail and other customer transactions

This policy sets out the terms by which digital access is offered. It sets out how use is defined, what is deemed inappropriate and how filtering and monitoring occurs. In addition, this policy sets out conditions of use for Gloucestershire Libraries' members and visitors and explains the actions if customer misuse is suspected.

## **Exclusions:**

Community Libraries provide Wi-Fi for customers. This policy does not cover the provision of that service. For more information please refer to the terms and conditions of use at each Community Library.

## **Digital access and Unacceptable Use**

All customers are required to act responsibly when accessing digital content within Gloucestershire Libraries. Our libraries are public spaces where all members of the community meet and access services together. Therefore, we expect all customers to respect fellow customers and staff and not cause offense by accessing inappropriate and unacceptable content or make inappropriate use of digital communication within libraries.

## **Unacceptable Use, including but not limited to:**

- The displaying, sending or retrieving of material that is illegal
- The displaying, sending or retrieving of material that may reasonably be deemed obscene, violent or offensive (text, image or sound).
- Participation in any activity which violates licensing or copyright law.
- Any activity which seeks to gain unauthorised access to the Gloucestershire County Council Network or any external networks nor any activity which seeks to damage or destroy computer hardware, peripherals, software or data belonging to Gloucestershire County Council or any devices connected to the Wi-Fi network

- Use of the Internet for any threatening or illegal activity, e.g. libel or personal harassment or phishing, spam or nuisance activity
- Causing a disturbance whilst using a computer, digital device, Wi-Fi or a plug in point or whilst waiting for a computer, digital device, or access to a plug in point

If customers access information or receive information accidentally that is illegal or will cause offence they must disconnect immediately.

### **Managing digital access:**

In order to manage provision of digital services, Internet access on the library computers, digital devices and public Wi-Fi is filtered. However, no filter can guarantee 100% coverage. In addition, all activity is monitored and recorded, and further action will be taken if a breach of this policy is suspected. To support the policy, library staff are authorised to monitor public use of digital equipment and intervene if inappropriate use is suspected.

Misuse may result in personal access to library facilities being withdrawn or permission to use portable digital devices within the library suspended. Library staff are authorised to disconnect users from the library computers or block devices from Wi-Fi if they suspect that illegal or offensive information is being accessed. In cases of criminal or disruptive behaviour customers may be evicted/ excluded from Library premises and have their membership suspended. The Police will be informed if illegal activity is suspected.

### **Respecting Copyright**

Permission from the rights holder has to be sought if copying sound recordings or film (including use of such material in presentations, broadcasts, and websites). If you are unsure as to the law, please consult library staff.

### **Conditions of access to library computers and digital equipment**

- Customer access is subject to acceptable use as defined in this policy and as set out in the Terms and Conditions of Library Membership.
- Customers may only log in to computer sessions by using their own library membership or as an authorised 'visitor'. It is not permitted to use someone else's account to log in or access information.
- Access to interactive digital equipment does not require a log in process however by utilising this service customers are thereby agreeing to use it in line with this policy.
- Use by children aged under 16 years is the responsibility of the named Guarantor as set out in the Terms and Conditions of Library Membership.
- Customer use of library computers may be blocked owing to outstanding fines or overdue items.
- Customers who wish to listen to content must use personal headphones; Libraries cannot supply headphones.

## **Accessing television content**

Gloucestershire Libraries do not have TV licences.

Customers may watch live TV or BBC programmes on iPlayer on personal devices, provided the device is powered by internal batteries and not plugged in and when the customer has a current TV Licence at his/her home address.

Live television or BBC programmes on iPlayer should not be viewed using the library computers.

It is a criminal offence for anyone to watch live TV programmes on any channel or device, or to download or watch BBC programmes on iPlayer, without being covered by a licence. If a customer breaks the law, he/she risks prosecution and a fine. The maximum penalty is a £1,000 fine plus any legal costs and/or compensation that may be ordered to pay.

## **Private Study access to music or film soundtracks:**

Gloucestershire Libraries are not licensed for the recreational broadcast of music or film via the Public Access Computers Internet or library Wi Fi. Customers are permitted to listen to music or film soundtracks for private study purposes only and customers are required to submit a Private Study Agreement, found on the Libraries website

## **Guidance re storage of print jobs:**

- 1) In order to offer a print service there are two elements of storage that occur:  
Prior to printing, when a customer sends the file to print this is stored for up to 3 hours prior to the release of print. If a print job is not released for print after this period, the file is deleted.
- 2) After printing, in order to offer the facility to view and re-print documents, files may be stored for up to 24 hours after the print job has been released. After this period the file is deleted

## **Conditions of access to Wi-Fi**

- Customers must agree to the terms and conditions of use and register to access the Wi-Fi. Customers will be asked to identify themselves when registering and must not pretend to be anyone other than themselves.
- We strongly recommend that parents or guardians supervise their children's use of the Wi-Fi service.
- Devices may be blocked if misuse is detected as set out in this policy.
- Customers must not use the Wi-Fi in an unreasonable or excessive way. Limits may be applied to manage download levels or length of access available.

## **Conditions of use for portable digital devices:**

- Equipment can only be plugged into mains sockets identified as plug in points.

- No equipment can be plugged into library data points.
- The user is responsible for the security and safety of their own equipment and must not leave any items unattended. Gloucestershire County Council accepts no liability for any immediate or subsequent damage or problems relating to portable digital devices.
- Library staff cannot be responsible for handling or storing portable digital devices.
- Access to power sockets may be time limited dependant on demand by other customers.
- Library Health & Safety and Fire Evacuation procedures must be adhered to. In the event of a fire alarm the device should be unplugged immediately and taken with you.

## **Storage**

Customers are responsible for saving work to a removable device, typically a memory stick. Alternatively, customers should email work in order to save a copy. Customers should be aware that some makes of memory stick may not be accepted by the Public Access Computers. Gloucestershire County Council take no responsibility for work that is lost.

## **Disclaimer**

Gloucestershire County Council applies safeguards and end point protection including firewalls and security scans to detect viruses and database intrusions to the public access computer network provided. However, the council cannot guarantee that any transactions conducted over the Internet will be successful and the council accepts no liability for any goods or services requested or any breach to personal data. Neither will we accept any liability for identity theft that occurs during use of the Public Access Computers or Wi-Fi.

Personal Portable digital devices remain the responsibility of the user at all times. Gloucestershire County Council accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage to users' equipment.

## **Related Policies**

### Terms & Conditions of Membership

<https://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/media/2092872/2019-libraries-information-terms-conditions.pdf>

### Individual Library Membership Policy

<https://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/media/2090508/2019-individual-library-membership-policy-final.pdf>

### Customer Behaviour In Libraries

<https://www.goucestershire.gov.uk/media/2083495/2018-customer-behaviour-in-libraries-statement-reviewed-oct-2018-no-change.pdf>