



Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy

Version Control Table

Version	Maintained by	Amendment date	History of changes
0.1	G Livingstone	30/06/2005	Final
0.2	P Wildman	30/06/2014	Reviewed
0.3	P Wildman	13/02/2018	Reviewed
0.4	ITWG	31/10/2018	Reviewed
0.5	ITWG	02/12/2019	Reviewed
0.6	ITWG	20/01/2021	Reviewed
0.7	ITWG	03/02/2022	Reviewed
0.8	ITWG	27/01/2023	Reviewed and Electronic Communications Policy incorporated

CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD: ACCEPTABLE USE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Policy Statement

This policy is written to ensure that all users of Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board's electronic communications and computing resources do so in a manner consistent within the values and objectives of the Valuation Joint Board, whilst ensuring the security of the Valuation Joint Board's data and telephone network systems. The policy describes the scope, roles, responsibilities, and risks associated with the use of these resources, and that all users are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy when using the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) resources of Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board.

This policy will apply to all users of the resources, including employees, agency staff, contractors, consultants, or any other person working for or on behalf of the Valuation Joint Board. This policy, together with the guidelines attached, is intended to act as a comprehensive guide and to serve as a single reference point for identifying the range of controls in relation to electronic communications.

Line managers and supervisors are responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy and for ensuring that those for whom they are responsible use the systems and networks in the appropriate manner and follow the Valuation Joint Board's policies and procedures on the use of ICT.

The scope of this policy is defined in the following sub-sections:

Acceptable Use

This section defines the boundaries for the "acceptable use" of the Joint Board's electronic resources, including software, hardware devices, and network systems. Hardware devices, software, contracted cloud services and network systems purchased and provided by the Joint Board are to be used only for creating, researching, and processing Joint Board-related data. By using the Joint Board's hardware devices, software, and network systems you assume personal responsibility for using them appropriately and agree to comply with this policy and other applicable Joint Board policies, as well as legal regulations. (e.g. Computer Misuse Act, Data Protection Act).

Software

All software acquired for or on behalf of the Joint Board or developed by Joint Board employees or contractors on behalf of the Joint Board is and shall be deemed Joint Board property. Only software provided or authorised for use by the VJB must be used on VJB systems. All such software must be used in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy

Users must not engage in illegal copying of any software products that are protected by copyright, database rights or privileges, or other protection, nor may users make available copies of such software.

All users are responsible for observing copyright and licensing agreements that may apply to files and documents that they may wish to download. Users must obtain approval from Systems Administrators before downloading any software or request the download via the help desk.

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable license, notice, contract, or agreement, any duplication of copyrighted software, except for backup and archival purposes, may be a violation of the law. In addition to violating such laws, unauthorised duplication of software is a violation of this policy.

Software standards

A list of software that is approved by Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board is compiled and maintained by the Systems Administrators. This list is available from the Systems Administrators and on the Assessor's SharePoint site. Employees should only use software that appears on the approved list. All such software must be used in compliance with applicable licenses, notices, contracts, agreements and VJB policies.

Hardware

All hardware devices acquired for or on behalf of all Joint Board services are and shall be deemed Joint Board property. All such hardware devices must be used in compliance with applicable licenses, notices, contracts, agreements and VJB policies.

Sending/receiving electronic communications

Where electronic communication is sent to an external organisation and the sender is representing the Assessor, Electoral Registration Officer, or Valuation Joint Board, it should be treated as if it were correspondence on the respective headed paper. All users should be aware that exchange of electronic communications may enter into or vary contractual relationships on the Valuation Joint Board's behalf, and such exchanges must therefore be made only with the appropriate authorisation.

Inappropriate language, obscenity, and libelous or defamatory statements are prohibited at all times. Words should be chosen carefully as they might be misunderstood or misconstrued, either by the initial recipient or by others to whom it may be forwarded. Language that may be misunderstood or misconstrued as harassment, racial bias, abusive, defamatory, age or gender discrimination should never be used. Derogatory statements and language should never be used in relation to internal or external matters, as this could render the Valuation Joint Board liable to third parties if any statement is untrue, misleading or offensive.

Electronic communications must not be used for any illegal purpose or for accessing, receiving or transmitting any material deemed illegal, indecent, offensive or otherwise unacceptable under U.K. law.

Electronic communications should not be forwarded or further disseminated except where it is required for an identified Valuation Joint Board business purpose.

Access to the Internet

Internet access must not be used for accessing, receiving, transmitting, downloading any material deemed illegal, pornographic in nature, indecent, offensive or otherwise unacceptable under U.K. Users are also prohibited from using CSVJB identification or related CSVJB accounts to subscribe to non CSVJB authorised systems and services and from posting information relating to the Valuation Joint Board or on the Valuation Joint Board's behalf without specific authorisation. Non CSVJB identification or accounts should not be used for CSVJB purposes. This includes a specific prohibition, other than for I.T. support testing purposes, if used for IT support purposes no reference should be made to CSVJB in any communication. Users should also have regard to the CSVJB Social Media Policy.

Access to the internet on CSVJB owned devices should only be via approved CSVJB controls e.g. as detailed in the Mobile Device Protocol.

Monitoring

The Valuation Joint Board may engage in monitoring of all ICT systems and equipment for valid Valuation Joint Board security purposes, including employee misuse. All users are made aware of such monitoring and will be required to consent to such monitoring as a condition of access to ICT systems and equipment.

Acceptance of this policy will be deemed to be consent for these purposes.

Employees should be aware that all Internet site visits are logged.

Security

The Internet and other external communications are not secure. Any message sent via the Internet may potentially be intercepted and altered by anyone, and Internet communications are not anonymous. Email notes can easily be forwarded to others or printed and made available to individuals not on the network. For more information see the CSVJB Information Handling Policy.

Non CSVJB equipment

No non-CSVJB owned equipment or software application may be connected/installed into the Joint Board's system or hardware without prior permission from the Systems Administrators.

Violations and penalties

Penalties for violating the Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy vary depending on the nature and severity of the specific violation. Any individual who violates the Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy may be subject to:

- (i) Being barred from using the Joint Board's hardware or software systems.
- (ii) The Joint Board's disciplinary procedures.
- (iii) Civil or criminal prosecution.

Electronic Communications & Computer Use - FAQs

What are Electronic Communications?

The term covers any electronic transfer of data, within CSVJB systems or externally where data moves from one system to another. Examples include but are not limited to Social Media, Customer Accounts, Emails, Fax.

What security rules do I need to comply when using electronic communications and computer resources?

CSVJB has a range of policies that cover the use of ICT, these are located on SharePoint.

How should I use electronic communications in accordance with the Policy?

Where electronic communication is sent to an external organization and the sender is representing the Assessor, Electoral Registration Officer or Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board, it should be treated as if it were correspondence on the relevant headed notepaper. Users should be aware that exchange of electronic communications may enter into, or vary, contractual relationships on the Valuation Joint Board's behalf, and such exchanges must therefore be made only with appropriate authorisation.

Users should also be aware that advice given by electronic communication is subject to the same risk of claims for negligence as through other means of communication, and care should always be taken.

Information received by electronic communication will be treated in the same manner as all other written correspondence, and therefore electronic communication should not be forwarded or further disseminated except where it is for an identified business purpose.

Users must ensure that the correct electronic address is used. Any message received in error should be notified to the person who sent it and then deleted. An electronic communication sent to the wrong address could constitute a data breach and employees should refer to CSVJB's Data Breach Policy immediately.

Users should check their mailbox regularly and should follow email minimization policies. The content of the electronic communications will determine the retention period and the Board's Retention Policy should be applied. Communications relating to the Valuation Roll or List entries should be stored in the DMS section of Best Value. Communications relating to the Register of Electors should be stored in the EROS system. Other types of communication should be stored in the relevant area of SharePoint or the network.

Words should be chosen carefully, as they might be misunderstood or misconstrued, either by the initial recipient or by anyone else to whom it may be forwarded. Language that may be misunderstood or misconstrued as harassment, racial bias, age or gender discrimination, or any other improper treatment should never be used.

If you receive a suspicious email, you should not open it or any attachments and contact a Systems Administrator immediately.

How should I use Internet Access?

Technical controls are in place to control access to inappropriate sites and content. If you access a site you believe should not be accessible, this can be raised through helpdesk for review.

It is important to remember that the availability of materials on the Internet should not be construed as meaning that these materials are "free issue". Copyright and other laws still apply to the Internet and you must have valid authorisation from the owner of such materials before downloading and/or using materials such as executable code, graphics, sound effects, music and any other items. You also should be aware that downloading materials from the Internet poses the threat of introducing a virus or malicious code into the Valuation Joint Board's computer network systems.

Can I use electronic communication and computer resources for personal use?

Access to email and the Internet are via Valuation Joint Board owned assets and computer systems, the Valuation Joint Board does not permit the use of email accounts or other means of electronic communications for personal use. The internet may be browsed for limited, reasonable and occasional personal purposes but only in the employees' own time. This does not include uses requiring substantial expenditure of time, uses for profit or commercial benefit, or uses that would otherwise violate Valuation Joint Board policies.

Acknowledgment of the Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy

This form is used to acknowledge receipt of and compliance with the Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy.

Procedure

Complete the following steps:

1. Read the Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy.
2. Sign and date the attached declaration in the spaces provided below.
3. **Return the attached declaration** to the Executive Assistant, Hillside House, Laurelhill Business Park, Stirling, FK7 9JQ.

**DECLARATION IN RESPECT OF THE CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION
JOINT BOARD ACCEPTABLE USE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS
POLICY**

By signing and dating below, I agree to the following terms:

- (i) I have received and read a copy of the Acceptable Use and Electronic Communications Policy and agree to comply with its stated provisions and terms.
- (ii) I understand and agree that any software and hardware devices provided to me by the Joint Board remain the property of the Joint Board and are licensed for the use for which they are deemed.
- (iii) Unless authorised to do so, I understand and agree that I am not knowingly to modify, alter, install or upgrade any software programs or hardware devices provided to me by the Joint Board nor knowingly use any software programs without the appropriate license.
- (iv) Unless authorised to do so, I understand and agree that I shall not copy, duplicate or allow anyone else to copy or duplicate any software provided for use by Central Scotland Valuation Joint Board to allow me to carry out my Joint Board duties.
- (v) I understand and agree I must make reasonable efforts to protect all Joint Board provided software and hardware devices from theft and physical damage and not to disclose any passwords allocated to me.
- (vi) I understand that failure to adhere to the policy may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

**CENTRAL SCOTLAND VALUATION JOINT BOARD:
ACCEPTABLE USE AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY
SIGNED DECLARATION**

User Signature

User Name

Date
