

Policy manual

Policy title:	Internet Access
Policy number:	1.4
Objective:	To outline the patrons their responsibilities when accessing the Internet at the library.
Link to Strategic Plan:	RTRL Strategic Plan
Policy created: 23/07/2015	Committee reviewed:
Last reviewed by staff: 24/07/2015	TRIM Ref: ED15/27910

1.0 STATEMENT OF INTENT

Richmond Tweed Regional Library is committed to providing the information and recreation needs of this community. The Library strives to provide a welcoming environment, and provides free public access to the internet to support lawful access to information and services, access to recreational material and avenues for community engagement and participation. A public library has a role as an unbiased source of information and ideas, including online content. It must accept responsibility for providing free access to materials and information presenting, as far as possible, all points of view on current and historical issues, including controversial issues.

The purpose of this policy is to clearly outline the user responsibilities for library clients in relation to access and use of Internet applications at Richmond Tweed Regional Library.

RTRL operates under the [NSW Library Act 1939](#) and the [NSW Library Regulation 2010](#).

2.0 APPLICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all RTRL branches. Richmond Tweed Regional Library branch libraries include: Tweed Heads, Murwillumbah, Kingscliff, Byron Bay, Mullumbimby, Brunswick Heads, Lismore, Goonellabah, Ballina, Lennox Head, Alstonville, Mobile Library and RTRL HQ.

3.0 POLICY CONTENT

3.1 General Principles of the Richmond Tweed Regional Library Internet Usage Policy

3.1.1 Members of the public who utilise internet applications within RTRL, whether on public access supplied computers or on personal internet ready devices such as laptops, smart phones or tablets via Wi-Fi, within or provided by the library, are not permitted to view or print material which is prohibited by law, or is deemed inappropriate or offensive by library staff. Continued viewing or printing of this type of material can lead to expulsion from library premises.

- 3.1.2 Members of the public who utilise internet applications within RTRL, whether on public access supplied computers or on personal internet ready devices such as laptops, smart phones or tablets, via Wi-Fi, within or provided by the library are not permitted to send messages or post items which are illegal or considered inappropriate including posting items that are slanderous or defamatory. These terms include not sending large amounts of spam or interfering with another person's email account.
- 3.1.3 Running, removing or copying software on library computers is forbidden.
- 3.1.4 Users are not permitted to interfere with, or alter the physical or electronic equipment.
- 3.1.5 RTRL does not take any responsibility for any business or personal transactions undertaken on library computers or on personal devices via WiFi, this includes items posted to social networking sites and financial transactions and Internet Banking.
- 3.1.6 RTRL does not take any responsibility for any loss of work undertaken on supplied public access computers and saved to removable storage devices such as thumbdrives (also known as memory sticks, keydrives, pendrives, jumpdrives or USBs).
- 3.1.7 Parents/guardians are responsible for supervising their children's access to the internet.
- 3.1.8 Library users are not permitted to view or print material which is prohibited by law, or is deemed inappropriate or offensive in the presence of children.
- 3.1.9 To protect staff and other library patrons while still providing an unbiased source of information and ideas including online content, filtering of internet content will be applied at all RTRL branches to prevent access to content classified as RC, X and R.

Online content is regulated in Australia by the [Broadcasting Services Act](#), which is a Commonwealth Act. The relevant classifications are:

RC (Refused Classification) content cannot be legally hosted on an internet site in Australia, just as a RC film cannot legally be brought into the country. For example, *material* that is *deemed* to deal with sensitive topics like sex, drug misuse, crime and violence in a way that offends against the standards of reasonable adults, or offensively depicts a person who is or appears to be under 16, will be refused classification.

X-rated material (depictions of actual sexual activity) is also prohibited on the internet, just as are X-rated films in most states (except the ACT and the Northern Territory). Content that contains real depictions of actual sexual activity between consenting adults, and is classified as unsuitable for a minor to see, and does not fall into the RC category, is classified X. However, some films can be exempt from classification; for instance where they might be screened in a particular film festival, or made for scientific purposes.

Other types of content may only be illegal if children can easily get access to them.

R content is material that is not RC or X but is unsuitable for a minor to see. Accordingly, there must be a Restricted Access System to prevent access to the content by people under 18. If there is not, this material can also be the subject of a complaint.