

Ras Al Khaimah American Academy				
Subject: Filtering Policy			SOP No: RAKAA-IT-07	Controlled Copy No: 2
			Revision No: 02	
Written by:	ICT Manager Asma Odawa	Date: Jan 6, 2021	Based on: Current practice	
Checked by:			Supersedes: Jan 6, 2021	Issued on: May 20, 2022
Approved by:	Principal Sandra Zaher	Date: May 20, 2022	Distributed to: Principal (Original)	Pages: 5
Authorized by:	Principal Sandra Zaher 	Date: May 20, 2022 	Effective as of:	
			Review date:	

Contents

Introduction	2
Scope	2
Procedures	2
Internet Filtering	3
Policy Statements	3
Exclusion from Web Filtering	4
Additional Web Blocks	4
Internet Filtering Disputes	4
Definitions	4
References	5

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to:

- ✓ Ensure that all internet use in school is legal and in accordance with school values and policies.
- ✓ Ensure that staff and students have legitimate access to websites and internet services required for their schoolwork

Scope

This policy applies to:

- ✓ All staff and students
- ✓ All users connecting to school's network from either personal device or school devices.

Guests/visitors are not allowed to connect to local area network or Wi-Fi.

Procedures

Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibilities
ICT Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grant exclusions to web filtering. - Resolve disputes regarding the classification, blocking or unblocking of applications, websites and internet categories - Keep record of logs and audit
Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report immediately to the IT department any violations of the school's filtering policy, as well as any sites that they believe should have been filtered - Users must not use any program or software that may allow them to bypass the filtering system

Internet Filtering

The internet has become an indispensable tool in education and research; however, some internet information and sites promote activities that directly contradict RAKAA values, standards, and policies.

Internet filtering can reduce the risk to the school from those who practice antisocial behavior like creating viruses, distributing spyware, attempting to break into computer networks and sending unsolicited commercial emails. Based on AUP all BYOD & BYOT should use the school network to support the filtering mechanism for personal devices, as the system will alert the misuse practices. Students can alert or report the misuse as per the following sequence: Teachers, Social Worker, OSL, ICT Manager (refer to the reporting policy)

RAKAA has Sophos firewall and filtration appliance which does the following:

- ✓ Secure data
- ✓ Filter online content
- ✓ Protect school's network and end users from the latest threats while accelerating cloud application traffic
- ✓ Maintain firewall log data with reporting tools that enable IT department to analyze network over time

All networks that allow the sharing of files containing audio, video, data, or any other digital form from one client machine to another will be blocked due to copyright concerns.

Policy Statements

Web content is filtered for all users whether they are using school or personal devices. Differentiated internet access is available for Staff and students. First level of filtering for inappropriate and illegal content is done through the ISP (Internet Service Provider). Second level of filtering is done through Sophos appliance in school. Applications and web filter categories and lists are updated in a regular basis.

Below are blocked through Sophos firewall for staff and students:

- ✓ VPNs, Ultra Surf, Hotspot, or any other program which serve the same purpose
- ✓ Illegal or inappropriate content, social media, gaming, online shopping, chatting, video calling and streaming (exception: Zoom and Microsoft Teams)

Filtering policy will be amended from time to time depending on the logs and incident reporting.

Exclusion from Web Filtering

Sometimes there will be a need to exclude partially certain websites for schoolwork or research from web filtering. This will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Exclusion requests for web filtering will require the approval of:

- ✓ The head of the relevant department
- ✓ The Principal

If the request is approved, a specific user group will be granted an exemption because the existing blocking system is based on user groups rather than individuals users.

Additional Web Blocks

RAKAA staff and students may request the blocking of websites that they have reason to believe violate legislation or school policies and values. The Principal must approve the blocking of these sites.

Internet Filtering Disputes

If there is a disagreement about how internet categories should be classified, blocked, or unblocked, the ICT Manager will be the final arbiter.

Definitions

- Spyware: Programs which can collect many different types of information about a user. More benign programs may attempt to track the types of websites visited by a user and send this information to an advertising agency. More malicious versions can try to record what a user types to try to intercept passwords or credit card numbers. Yet other versions simply launch popups with advertisements.
- Web filtering: A term used to describe content filtering, particularly when it is used to filter content delivered via the internet. Content filtering controls what content is

available on a specific network; the goal is to protect students or prevent employees from visiting non-work-related websites.

References:

- [Acceptable Use Policy \(AUP\) & Technology Usage Agreement](#)
- [Monitoring Policy](#)
- [Technical Security Policy](#)
- [Online Safety Policy](#)
- [Reporting Policy](#)