

Website Access Policy

IT Policies

Introduction

Access to certain websites are restricted in British Council premises outside the UK. These sites contain material that neither staff nor customers should be viewing.

For the vast majority of our staff and customers this will have no impact at all. Categories and the sites they include have been scrutinised and the decision to allow or deny access carefully considered. But due to the nature of internet filtering tools and the vast number of sites to be categorised, it is possible that there may be occasions when we deny access to sites which need to be accessed for business reasons. You can request that a site be reinstated via your country director.

View the full list of the categories being blocked at the end of the document.

Guidance on whether or not to approve access to a restricted site when a decision isn't immediately obvious can be sought by contacting internet access team.

For further details about Internet usage see the appropriate use of the Internet in Acceptable Usage Policy.

Policy

1. This is a statement of policy about access to the Internet permitted by the British Council in its premises. It is intended to regulate access to sites on the Internet by staff and customers. It explains why the organisation allows or denies access to certain categories of site, how this is implemented, where flexibility exists and how senior managers may use that flexibility.
2. The organisation fully recognises the need to exploit the potential offered by the Internet to support engagement with its target audiences and achievement of its objectives. It regulates access to the Internet in order to manage:
 - Risks associated with accessing inappropriate sites from BC premises,
 - The corporate cost of its global connectivity.
 - The performance of business critical applications.
 - Opportunities to exploit Internet products effectively
3. One of the drivers for this policy is the negative impact experienced on the effectiveness of applications such as SAP when additional demand is made on connectivity which is not always aligned with corporate business objectives.
4. This policy applies to all BC premises. It is being implemented incrementally in all overseas premises initially and steps are being taken to enable implementation in UK premises. It will be re-issued once this work is completed.
5. The principle that underpins this policy is that the organisation recognises the importance of pro-actively managing Internet access on its premises; seeking to mitigate risks and exploit opportunities consistently globally.
6. Access is controlled globally by use of a corporate tool which enables ongoing monitoring and filtering of all Internet use on BC premises. Categories and the sites they include have been scrutinised and the decision to allow or deny access carefully considered. However this process indicated that the policy should contain an element of flexibility and this is explained below.

Request access to a website is unblocked

You or your customers know that access to a website is denied because a 'pop up box' appears on the screen which says either:

1. To staff in the Back Office: The website you are trying to access has been denied; if you have an issue with this please click here. The Link takes you to this Policy document.
2. To people (usually customers but could include staff) in the Front Office: The website you are trying to access has been denied under the British Council's Internet Policy. If you have any issue with this please speak to a member of staff.

There may be cases when the member of staff approached has to explain that access is denied because it is considered 'inappropriate'. View the full list of the categories being blocked below.

If you believe that an internet site has been blocked by mistake, you may seek approval via Country Director to get access re-instated.

CD approval procedure:

1. Ensure you have a valid business need for access to the site. Complete a copy of the Internet Request Form following the instructions on the form.
2. Save and rename the form using this naming convention: Country Site (i.e. Spain Madrid; India Chennai). Submit this version, via whatever route is appropriate in your country directorate, to Country Director
3. Country Director may:
 - a. Refuse access to the site, and return the form to you, because:
 1. There is not a valid business need for this site to be available.
 2. They consider the site to be inappropriate (for example, content that could damage the British Council's reputation, or because of widespread use, the content slows down network connections).
 - b. Approve access to the site.
4. When approval is given, the completed form will be emailed by CD (to designate her/his approval).
5. If this request needs further consideration before proceeding, Global IS will consult as appropriate, including with CD, before any action is taken.
6. If there is no need for further consideration Global IS will enable access to the required site.
7. Global IS will inform CD when the action is completed, which should be within 24 hours of Global IS receiving a correctly completed request.

Internet Policy: Access Restrictions

	Category	Examples	Other Back Office	Teaching Back Office	Teaching Front Office	Other Front Office	Access Denied/ Allow
1	Anonymizers/Translators (Socks/Tunneling)						D
2	Chat (Chat Rooms, Instant Messaging, & Message Boards)						A
3	Criminal Skills (Bomb making, Burglary and Murder)						D
4	Cults/Occult (All Cults, the Occult and Satanism)						D
5	Dating(Personal Ads, Dating Services and Dating Discussions)						D
6	Drugs (Marijuana, Cocaine and LSD)						D
7	Entertainment (Movies, TV, Internet Radio and Hobbies)						A
8	Extreme/Obscene/Violence (Bondage, Excessive Violence and Mutilation)						D
9	Gambling (Bingo, Bookmaker and Lottery Pages)						D
10	Games (Backgammon, Dungeons & Dragons and Chess)						D
11	Speech (Racism, Anti-Semitism and Sexism)						D
12	Lifestyle (Vegetarianism, Gay & Lesbian and Naturism)						A
13	Mature (Adult Humor, Tobacco and some Profanity)						A
14	MP3 Sites (Music files, Players, P2P File Sharing and Streaming Media such as Internet Radio and Movie Trailers)						A
15	Nudity (Non-pornographic images, Classic sculptures & Detailed medical illustrations)						A
15a							A
16	Online Storage (Secure, encrypted, off site backup and restoration of personal data)						A
17	Peer-to-Peer or 'P2P' (User to User file sharing)						D
18	Personal Pages (Individual Opinion & Student's Discussions)						A
19	Sex (Pornography and Sex Discussions)						D
20	Social Networking (Individual Opinion and Student's Discussions)	G					A
21	Usenet News (News Groups and Web Access)	G					A

Key:	
Access Denied	
Access Allowed	