



Drone Policy & Procedure

March 2026

History of Changes

Version	Description of Change	Authored by	Date
1	Document Created	K Fitzgerald	March 2026

Drone Use Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out the requirements for the safe and lawful operation of drones (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles – UAVs) on or above college property. The college recognises that drones may be used for educational, promotional or operational purposes however, their use must be carefully managed to ensure safety, legal compliance and the protection of privacy.

Scope

The policy applies to all students, staff, contractors and visitors who intend to operate a drone on college premises or in connection with college activities.

Authorisation

The operation of drones on college property is prohibited unless prior written consent has been obtained from the college. Requests to operate a drone must outline the purpose, location, the individual responsible for operating the drone, the date and time of operation.

Legal and Regulatory Compliance

All drone operations must comply with applicable aviation regulations and guidance issued by the relevant national aviation authority. Operators are responsible for ensuring that they hold any required registrations, licences or certifications and that the drone is operated within permitted operational limits.

Safety Requirements

Drone operators must not pose a risk to people, property or college activities. Operators must conduct a risk assessment before flying to ensure appropriate safety measures are in place. Drones must not be flown over crowds, near buildings without appropriate clearance, or in any manner that could cause disruption or harm.

Privacy and Data Protection

Any recording, photography or data collected by a drone must comply with privacy and data protection legislation. Individuals' privacy must be respected at all times and images or recordings must not be captured without appropriate consent where required.

Enforcement

Failure to comply with this policy may result in the withdrawal of permission to operate drones on college property and may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with college policies and procedures.

Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure continued compliance with legal

and regulatory requirements and to reflect developments in drone technology usage.

Drone Use Procedure

Purpose

This procedure outlines the process for requesting and operating drones (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles – UAVs) on or above college property. It ensures that all drone activity is conducted safely, responsibly and in compliance with aviation regulations, health and safety requirements and data protection legislation.

Scope

This procedure applies to all college staff, students, contractors and visitors who wish to operate a drone on college premises or in connection with college activities.

Approval Process

1. Any individual wishing to operate a drone on college property must obtain prior approval from the designated college authority (e.g. Estates, Facilities Management or Health and Safety Department)
2. A request must be submitted in writing in advance and include:
 - . Purpose of the drone operation
 - . Proposed date and time
 - . Location of the activity
 - . Details of the activity
 - . Details of the drone operator
 - . Evidence of operator competence and required registrations
3. Approval will only be granted where the activity can be conducted safely and without any disruption to college operations.

Legal and Regulatory Compliance

All drone operations must comply with the applicable aviation authority regulations and any relevant legislation. The drone operator is responsible for ensuring that:

- . The drone is registered where required
- . The operator holds any required certification or operator ID
- . The drone is operated within permitted flight limits and restrictions.

Risk Assessment and Safety

Prior to any drone activity:

- . A risk assessment must be completed where required
- . Appropriate safety measures must be put in place to protect staff, students, visitors and property
- . Drone flights must not take place over crowds or in areas where they may

create a safety hazard.

Privacy and Data Protection

Where drones are used to capture images, video or other data:

- All activity must comply with data protection and privacy legislation
- Individuals' privacy must be respected
- Any captured data must be used only for the approved purpose.

Operational Requirements

During drone operations:

- The operator must maintain control of the drone at all times
- The drone must be operated only within the approved area and timeframe
- Operations must cease immediately if safety concerns arise.

Non-Compliance

Failure to follow this procedure may result in the suspension of drone activity and may lead to disciplinary action in accordance with college policies and procedures.

Drone Policy & Procedure

Purpose

This policy outlines the safe and responsible use of drone (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles – UAVs) by the college for **marketing, promotional content, media production, site inspection and IT related operational purposes.**

The aim is to ensure that all drone operations are conducted **safely, legally and in compliance with UK aviation regulations**, while protecting the safety, privacy and wellbeing of students, staff and visitors.

This policy applies to **all staff, contractors and authorised personnel operating drones on behalf of the college.**

Legal Compliance

All drone operations must comply with the rules and guidance provided by:

- Civil Aviation Authority
- UK Drone and Model Aircraft Code

Operators must:

- Hold the **required registration and operator ID where applicable**
- Follow all **UK drone flight regulations**
- Operate drones only within permitted airspace
- Respect all **height, distance and safety restrictions**

Failure to comply with these regulations may result in **disciplinary action and potential legal consequences.**

Authorised Use

Drone use is permitted for **approved college purposes**, including:

- Marketing and promotional photography or video
- Website and social media content
- Campus aerial photography
- Event coverage
- IT and Facilities inspections (e.g. roofs or infrastructure)
- Educational demonstrations (where authorised)

Drone flights must be **approved in advance by the Marketing or IT & Digital Team Leader.**

Authorised Operators

Only individuals who:

- Are trained in safe drone operation
- Understand UK aviation rules
- Have been approved by the college

may operate a drone on behalf of the college.

Where required, operators must be registered with the **Civil Aviation Authority** and hold a valid **Operator ID and Flyer ID**.

External contractors must provide evidence of certification and insurance before operating on college premises.

Safety Requirements

Drone operators must follow these safety requirements at all times:

Pre-Flight Checks

Before operating a drone, the operator must:

- Inspect the drone for damage or faults
- Ensure batteries are fully charged and safe
- Check weather conditions
- Confirm GPS and signal stability
- Ensure the flight area is safe and clear
- Check for **restricted airspace**

Operational Safety

During drone operation, operators must:

- Maintain **visual line of sight** with the drone
- Avoid flying directly over people
- Maintain safe distances from buildings and crowds
- Keep the drone **below 120 meters (400ft)** unless permitted
- Avoid flying near airports or restricted areas
- Immediately land if safety becomes compromised

Drone flights must be **stopped immediately if any risk to safety arises**

Privacy and Data Protection

Drone use must comply with **privacy and data protection requirements**.

Operators must:

- Avoid capturing identifiable individuals without permission
- Notify individuals where filming or photography is taking place
- Ensure recorded images and footage are stored securely
- Follow the colleges **data protection and media consent policies**

Special care must be taken when filming **students or members of the public**.

Location Restrictions

Drone flights should **not take place in the following situations unless specifically authorised**:

- Over large groups or crowds
- Inside buildings without risk assessment
- In poor weather conditions
- Near emergency services activity
- In restricted airspace

Additional permissions may be required when operating near public areas.

Risk Assessment

A **risk assessment must be completed** before drone use at:

- College events
- Open days
- Busy campus periods
- Public venues

The assessment should consider:

- Weather conditions
- Crowd size
- Obstacles and buildings
- Emergency landing areas.

Insurance

All drone operations must be covered by **appropriate public liability insurance**.

External drone operators must provide **proof of insurance before any work begins**.

Incident Reporting

Any incidents, accidents or near misses must be reported immediately to:

- The **IT & Digital Team Leader or Marketing Manager**
- The **Health and Safety Manager**

Where required incidents must also be reported to the **Civil Aviation Authority**.

Storage and Equipment Security

Drones must be:

- Stored securely when not in use
- Maintained according to manufacturer's instructions
- Used only with approved batteries and accessories

Only authorised staff may access the equipment.

Policy Breach

Failure to follow this policy may result in:

- Suspension of drone privileges
- Disciplinary action
- Reporting to relevant authorities if laws are breached.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually or following any changes in drone legislation** issued by the **Civil Aviation Authority**.

Key 2026 Regulations and Compliance

- **Registration:** If your drone has a camera and weighs 100g or more you must register as an operator and mark your drone with your Operator ID.
- **Competency:** Anyone flying a drone 100g or more must take the CAA's online test to get a flyer ID.
- **Flight Limits:** Maximum altitude is 120m (400ft) above ground level.
- **Distance Rules:** Maintain at least 50m distance from uninvolved people, vessels, vehicles and structures.
- **Crowds:** Never fly directly over crowds of people.
- **Visual Line of Sight (VLOS):** You must keep the drone in direct sight without binoculars or screen aids.
- **Night Flying:** If flying at night you must use flashing green lights.
- **Airspace:** Avoid restricted areas like airport flight restriction zones (FRZs).

Drone Class Markings & Categories (New 2026 Rules)

- **<250g (CO/UK0):** Can fly on A1 subcategory (over people but not in crowds).
- **<2kg (C1/UK1):** Can fly closer to people than 50m.
- **<25kg (C2/C3/C4):** Must stay 50m from uninvolved people (A3 Category)
- **Remote ID:** Mandatory for most drones from 1st January 2026.

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