



Louth Meath  
Education and Training Board  
**Clean Desk Policy**

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## 1. Overview

To improve the security and confidentiality of information, Louth Meath ETB has adopted a Clean Desk Policy for staff workstations.

The objective of the policy is to ensure that all personal and confidential information, whether it is hard copy or soft copy, on a storage device, or a hardware device, is promptly and securely stored or disposed of properly when they are not in use or when the workspace is vacant.

This policy will reduce the risk of unauthorised viewing, access, loss of, and damage to information during and outside of normal business hours or when workstations are left unattended.

This policy should not be viewed in isolation. Rather, it should be considered part of Louth Meath ETBs suite of Data Protection policies and procedures (see Appendix A).

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all permanent, temporary, and contracted staff, whether paid or unpaid, and whether employees or agency staff, working in Louth and Meath ETB.

## 3. Policy

The following requirements must be followed by all Louth Meath ETB staff members.

- Personal and confidential information should not be left unattended at a workstation. When not in use, or when you need to leave your desk, e.g., break time, lunch, meetings, and at the end of the day, this data should be returned to its original secure location or locked away securely at your workstation.
- Staff who do not have sufficient lockable storage space for their work documentation and records should bring this to the attention of their manager. Managers should firstly ensure that records are being deleted in accordance with LMETB's Record Retention Schedule and that records are not being created to an excessive degree.
- Mass storage devices such as CDs, DVDs, USB drives or external hard drives are not recommended as storage media as they present a potential threat to all information stored on our systems. OneDrive and SharePoint are the recommended method of storing information for access away from your desktop/workstation. If used in exceptional circumstances, with prior written manager approval, they must be encrypted and treated as sensitive material and locked away when not in use, as per the policy.

- Filing cabinets and drawers with personal/confidential information must be kept closed and locked when not in use or when unattended.
- Keys for accessing drawers or filing cabinets should not be left unattended at a desk, they should be secured in a locked key box or cabinet.
- Any wastepaper which contains personal or confidential information must be placed in the designated shredding bags or shredded regularly using an appropriate a cross cut, micro or crypto shredding device.
- Staff are encouraged to think twice before printing a document – consideration should be given to scanning paper items and filing them electronically in Office 365. Documents should be viewed, shared and managed electronically whenever possible.
- If printing of a document is required, copies should be securely destroyed when no longer needed by being shredded using an appropriate cross cut, micro or crypto shredder or placed in shredder bins/bags. Under no circumstances should this information be placed in regular wastepaper bins.
- It is best practice in Louth Meath ETB that, on leaving your desk, staff members lock their screen by pressing Ctrl, Alt, Delete and selecting Lock.
- Computer workstations must be completely shut down at the end of the workday. As well as securing data this also reduces energy consumption.
- Portable devices such as laptops and tablets that remain in the office overnight must be shut down and locked away.
- Print outs containing personal/confidential information should be immediately removed from printer.
- Personal details such as contact numbers must not be left on sticky notes or in an accessible location. Passwords must not be written down or stored anywhere in the office.
- Information stored in either hard copies or soft copies should be disposed of in line with the Records Management Policy/Records Retention Schedule.
- If you notice that any of your devices or documents have gone missing, or if you believe your workspace has been tampered with in any way, you must notify the Data Protection Officer immediately.

It is useful to apply the three Ps in relation to office organisation - ***Plan, Protect and Pick up.***

***PLAN***

At the start of the day, staff members should plan what documents will be required and file away any others.

***PROTECT***

Staff members should ensure their device has a password protected screensaver and never leave personal/confidential data around without storing it correctly.

***PICK UP***

At the end of each day, staff members are asked to clean and clear their workstation and file or shred any printed documents that may be on their desk. This will ensure that all data is secured.

## 4. Policy Compliance

**Compliance:**

This policy will be monitored for compliance. Managers / Principals / Co-Ordinators must verify compliance with this policy which may include random and scheduled inspections of work areas.

Breaches of this policy may result in data breaches under data protection legislation, reputational damage to Louth Meath ETB and an infringement of the rights of employees or other relevant third parties.

The Data Protection office is available to give practical assistance with any difficulties complying with this policy.

**Non-Compliance:**

All policies require the participation of staff to be successful. Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary action being taken in accordance with Louth and Meath ETB's disciplinary procedures. Non-compliance shall be reported to the Director of Organisation Support and Development.

## 5. Review of Policy

There will be a review of this policy two full years after its introduction or at an earlier date if deemed necessary by Louth Meath ETB management.

## APPENDIX A

The below is a list of a suite of policies and procedures that may be used in conjunction with this policy.

- Louth Meath ETB Data Protection Policy - [Link to Policy here](#)
- Louth Meath Records Retention Schedule - [Link to Schedule here](#)
- Louth Meath ETBs Records Management Policy - [Link to Policy here](#)
- LMETB ICT Acceptable Usage - [Link to Policy here](#)
- LMETB ICT – LMETB Encryption Policy [Link to Policy here](#)
- LMETB ICT – Password Policy [Link to Policy here](#)
- LMETB ICT – Technology Acceptable Policy [Link to Policy here](#)

The above list is not exhaustive, and other Louth Meath ETBs policies, procedures, standards, and documents may also be relevant.

## APPENDIX B

Posters which should be displayed throughout your school/centre/office to serve as a reminder of LMETB's Clean Desk Policy

### Poster 1



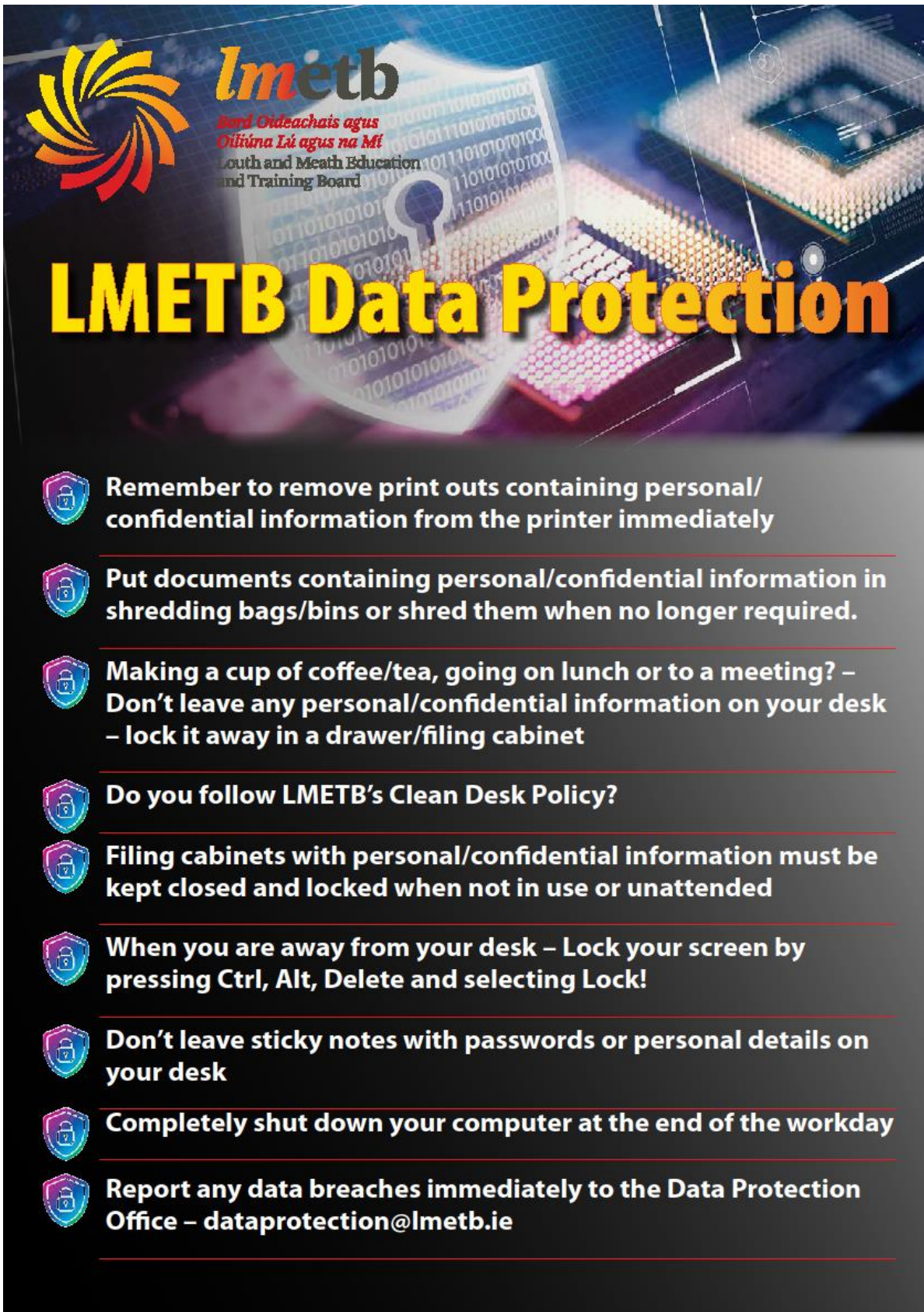
***Clean  
Desk  
Policy***

**Before you leave at  
the end of the day...**

- ✓ Tidy your desk
- ✓ Lock away personal and confidential documents
- ✓ Computer workstations must be shut down completely



**lmetb**  
Lancashire Maritime Education Trust  
Lancashire Maritime Education Trust  
Lancashire Maritime Education Trust

The poster features a dark background with a grid pattern and glowing blue and yellow light effects. In the top left, there is a logo consisting of a stylized sunburst in yellow and orange. To its right, the text 'lmetb' is written in a bold, lowercase font. Below this, in smaller text, is 'Bord Oideachais agus Oiliúna Lá agus na Mí' and 'Louth and Meath Education and Training Board'. The central focus is the title 'LMETB Data Protection' in large, bold, yellow and orange letters. Below the title, there is a list of ten data protection tips, each preceded by a small shield icon with a lock symbol. The tips are: 1. Remember to remove print outs containing personal/confidential information from the printer immediately. 2. Put documents containing personal/confidential information in shredding bags/bins or shred them when no longer required. 3. Making a cup of coffee/tea, going on lunch or to a meeting? – Don't leave any personal/confidential information on your desk – lock it away in a drawer/filing cabinet. 4. Do you follow LMETB's Clean Desk Policy? 5. Filing cabinets with personal/confidential information must be kept closed and locked when not in use or unattended. 6. When you are away from your desk – Lock your screen by pressing Ctrl, Alt, Delete and selecting Lock! 7. Don't leave sticky notes with passwords or personal details on your desk. 8. Completely shut down your computer at the end of the workday. 9. Report any data breaches immediately to the Data Protection Office – [dataprotection@lmetb.ie](mailto:dataprotection@lmetb.ie)