What UK's Statement Says vs. What the Draft IT Regulation Says

Bottom line

UK's Nov. 16 statement offers reassurances that the draft regulation itself does not contain. On scope, personal devices, and political activity, the statement describes a narrower rule than the one actually written. A press statement is not binding; the regulation text is what would be enforced. If UK means what the statement says, it should put that language in the regulation before it is reposted. Comments are due **Nov. 30**.

Claim by claim

1. "Focuses on employees, not students or visitors"

The draft says otherwise. Its scope covers "all individuals interacting with the University's technology resources, including students, faculty, staff, contractors, visitors and authorized third parties, regardless of where resources are accessed or located."

The only nod to employees is in the sanctions section, which cites the Employee Code. But the use rules, monitoring, and no-privacy provisions apply to everyone. Loss of technology access can be imposed on anyone. And because only *employees* get a de minimis personal-use allowance, students and visitors arguably get none at all.

2. "Does not address incidental use of personal devices on university Wi-Fi"

The draft does address it. Its definition of university technology resources includes personal devices that use university networks or data. The prohibition list applies to any use of those resources, with no exception for incidental use. Read literally, posting to Instagram from your own phone on UK Wi-Fi falls within it.

The statement says this "was not prohibited before, and it is not prohibited" now. If so, an explicit exemption costs nothing.

3. Political activity: "repeats" existing HR policy

The draft is broader than the statement's description. The statement says employees can't advocate for candidates or political issues "unrelated to the institution." The draft bans "political activity of any types," with no definition and no "unrelated to the institution" limit.

The current AR on technology use does not mention political activity at all. UK's general counsel has described the new ban as covering advocacy for a cause, a candidate, or a referendum position. That is broader still, and could reach ordinary faculty work on policy questions.

4. "Largely mirrors existing policy"

Not on data access. Under the current policy, UK accesses a user's data with the user's and a senior official's approval, or with legal counsel's permission if the user refuses. The draft lets UK access or copy

content "at any time for any reason" and demand return of equipment. That is a substantive change, not a consolidation.

5. "Does not restrict the academic freedom of any member"

The draft is silent on academic freedom. The Governing Regulations protect it, but the draft never references that protection or carves out teaching, research, or public scholarship. Paired with an undefined political-activity ban and unrestricted data access, that silence leaves the question to whoever enforces the rule.

What to ask for by Nov. 30

UK says the draft will be revised and reposted, so specific wording requests matter. The ask: write the statement into the regulation.

1. **Scope:** state that the use restrictions apply to employees only, if that is the intent.
2. **Personal devices:** add an express exemption for personal devices on university Wi-Fi.
3. **Political activity:** replace "political activity of any types" with a narrow, defined ban on electioneering and candidate fundraising.
4. **Data access:** keep the current approval process instead of "at any time for any reason."
5. **Academic freedom:** add a clause stating that nothing in the regulation limits academic freedom under the Governing Regulations.

Comments: regs.uky.edu/campus-review-ars

Sources

- Draft AR: Technology Resources and Information Security and Privacy
- UK campus statement, Nov. 16, 2026 (email to campus community)
- Inside Higher Ed: Kentucky tech policy aims to restrict political activity
- Lexington Herald-Leader (via Yahoo): UK officials defend proposed change
- WUKY: UK extends comment period; FIRE weighs in
- Kentucky Kernel: draft raises concerns over political speech, privacy