Quick Guide

Information Security: why, what, how?

Why information matters

Information is important. Like any organisation we have documents that prove we own premises and goods, and have insurance, licences or accreditation that enable us to function. As individuals we need information to do our jobs whether that’s having the right information about people, or the right policy or procedure. We need to be able to find the right information quickly and easily, and make sure we don’t share it inappropriately.

Some of our information we can share freely, but some of it we need to keep carefully, because it’s personal, confidential, or information that give us a competitive edge.

If we get things wrong with information it could mean that we’re unable to confirm that someone is a graduate, pay someone the correct salary, or prove our ownership of assets. We could have to pay fines for wrongly sharing or losing information about individuals.

Help and advice

- The Information Security webpages have policy, guidelines and further information.
- Your Section’s or Department’s Information Champion is your go to person for front-line support and signposting for information matters, so make sure you know who your local Champion is.
- The Information Assurance Manager can always offer help and advice, including providing tailored training sessions for individuals or groups.

What do I need to do?

Make sure you are informed about your responsibilities around information. Take our Moodle course on information security, read the Information Security Policy and the IT Guidelines for the Use of IT Facilities.

Support staff to understand their responsibilities. Encourage staff to ask for help, and to report problems with information, whether that’s incorrect data, out of date versions or emailing personal information to the wrong person.

Use your local Information Champion to help with sharing best practice in looking after our information.

Information Security

Information Security might sound like something technical that gets done in IT Services, but the biggest risk to our information is us - the people who handle and use information.

Information security simply means everyone knowing how to protect and manage the information in their care, whether that’s paper or electronic, in a central system or a shared folder, and whether it’s accessed through a PC, tablet or mobile phone.

Contact your HR manager or officer for support. Information Security Policy
How will I know I have got it right?

Information Security is about stopping and thinking before you use information, and especially before sharing personal information about staff or students. If we get it right then:

- Staff understand their role in keeping our information safe
- Staff are comfortable asking for advice on using information and know where to go to find it
- Staff use appropriate tools to store and share information
- Staff feel comfortable challenging misuse, and reporting problems

What practical steps can I take?

Inform yourself: make sure you’ve read the IT Security Policy and the Guidelines for the Use of IT Facilities and know where to find our Information Security webpage.

Awareness: have information security on agendas for team meetings. Make sure that staff are properly trained and have refresher training as required.

Support to report: as with health and safety it’s important to report incidents and near misses so that we can avoid full blown problems in the future. Staff need to feel supported to report problems, whether that’s incorrect information or information being wrongly shared.

Information Champions: each Section and department should have at least one Information Champion. This is your local expert for information issues. Make sure you know who your Information Champion is and find out how they can help you.

Contact your HR manager or officer for support. Information Security Policy

Top tips for keeping information secure

- Lock PCs, filing cabinets, desks and offices when they are unattended
- Have paper-based information shredded – buy a shredder or ask Estates to collect paper for shredding
- Double check that you’ve got the right address before you send personal information by email
- Password or passcode protect mobile phones and tablets
- Always share the least amount of personal information necessary for a task
- Take care when clicking on links and attachments in emails (don’t fall for phishing)
- Avoid carrying information around – use the OpenVPN system to remotely access your PC and shared folders.
- Report all incidents and near misses as soon as possible
- Stop and think before using information, especially personal information or anything marked as restricted.