

IT Security - Polices, Procedures and Related Guidance

(Formally the Electronic Information Security Framework)

Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) has approved the IT Security - Polices, Procedures and Related Guidance for publication, which is available at:

<http://eisf.shu.ac.uk>

Please take the time to read through the IT Security - Polices, Procedures and Related Guidance site, which contains information relevant to all members of the University. The policy sets out individual and post holder responsibilities in relation to electronic information security. Whilst all members of staff and those authorised to access the IT systems and facilities of the University are required to abide by these responsibilities, there are also certain post holders who have more specific responsibilities and these are set out in some of the separate sections of the policy.

What is the IT Security - Polices, Procedures and Related Guidance?

The IT Security - Polices, Procedures and Related Guidance is a group of policy documents and legislative links which define the electronic information security policy at Sheffield Hallam University. As such, it is a sub-policy of the wider policies relating to Information Security more generally.

What exactly is Information Security?

Put in its simplest form, it is;

“The practice of ensuring information is only read, heard, changed, broadcast, or otherwise used by people who have the right to do so.”

- ISO27001 – Information Security Management

This is quite a sweeping statement, as it encompasses the use of all information throughout the University, including e-mail, documents, websites and other work related information sources that we use at work or at home. How we use this data, where it is stored, who we allow to view it and how we make it available for use, is all part of Information Security, and there are both legislative and institutional requirements on how to approach this.

Why do we need information security?

Security of data is often in the media, there are many anecdotal stories of data loss, including many well-known reported incidents involving laptops or memory sticks left on public transport. These are high profile reminders of the need for IT security, which is also evident in our daily work, and extends into our personal lives.

Increasingly we depend upon computers and mobile devices, the networks they use and information sources we access to conduct our work. The integrity and reliability of the information we access, from simple e-mail requests, to complex financial transactions, is essential to ensuring the business can operate and provide trustworthy services. The IT Security - Polices, Procedures and Related Guidance sets out to provide the high-level policies required in protecting the information at SHU.

There is also legislation on how we handle information, the records we keep and how we deal with the issues that arise from holding data in electronic form. This also drives the need for greater information security within SHU.

Along with the legislative and internal policies, many of the current and future contracts we have with external companies and other institutions require us to meet information security standards. The IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance is part of the SHU security declaration on how we meet these contractual requirements and conversely our security expectations of others in dealings with SHU.

Information Security Requirements

Most of us will have heard of the Data Protection Act which governs how we store sensitive or personal information, how we process it and who can see it. This is just one of many legal requirements which we must abide by, and which we have to integrate into our work at SHU. Links to the relevant legislative Acts are included in the IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance.

Along with the legal Acts by which we are bound, there are also contractual and institutional regulations which define our working practices and procedures. An example of these is the IT and Learning Resources Regulations Policy, which form part of our employment and user contracts with SHU. These determine acceptable use of the IT facilities provided but are also part of our legal contract with JANET, the University's internet provider. There are other policies which are equally important concerning issues such as third party contractors using the IT facilities.

The IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance is the combination of all the legal, contractual and institutional policies and how they need to be applied within SHU.

IT user responsibilities

The IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance apply to all users of the University IT facilities, including all staff, students, contractors and any other visitor using the networks. It is the responsibility of all users to be aware of the IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance and to comply with the policies and procedures it contains.

All users should also be aware of the necessity to report breaches of the IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance, even the simplest of which could provide unauthorised access into SHU systems and in turn could then be used to compromise local or remote systems.

The future of IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance

IT Security continues to be a prominent issue, and the intention is to ensure all users are aware of the SHU policies which affect them and the procedures they should be following.

Under-pinning the IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance are a series of lower-level standards and procedures, regularly reviewed, which will need to be adhered to. These are publicised and made available for information and guidance.

Presentations on IT security at SHU, and details of the mechanisms in place, are aimed at raising awareness and to provide users with an insight into how policies are monitored and enforced, are available on request.

Further information and questions

For further details on the IT Security - Policies, Procedures and Related Guidance, please contact:

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