

Guidelines for appropriate use

Common computing violations

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Since UBC adopted the guidelines for Appropriate Use of Information Technology in 1993, Computing and Communications has received numerous complaints regarding violations. Most of the complaints are about chain mail, spamming, and e-mail harassment. Other common

violations include sharing subscriptions or accounts and using a student or staff subscription for commercial purposes.

Any of these violations can result in suspension or loss of your subscription or account. Some may result in prosecution.

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Common computing violations (cont.)

Chain mail

Many of us have received chain mail—letters that you're supposed to make copies of and send to dozens of people to avoid bad luck—through regular mail delivered by the postman. Now chain mail believers are using the convenient forward and carbon copy features of e-mail to meet their quota and save money on postage stamps.

We receive numerous complaints from recipients and system

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administrators around the world regarding chain mail that originates at or is forwarded from UBC.

Chain mail is considered a nuisance and is an inappropriate use of UBC computing facilities. Furthermore, any chain mail involving money is illegal according to Section 381 of the Criminal Code of Canada. For these reasons, we immediately suspend *all* accounts and subscriptions that participate in chain mail.

Spamming

Spamming—when an individual posts irrelevant material to various and numerous Usenet newsgroups—is another common violation. We recommend that you be selective when

posting. If you are not sure which newsgroup is appropriate for your message, spend some time reading postings and reactions. Use your common sense.

E-mail harassment

We have fortunately received very few complaints regarding e-mail harassment. Remember that people may consider themselves harassed if they receive unwelcome e-mail, such as e-mail on subjects in which they have no interest. If someone asks to be removed from a mailing list, please remove them. If they do not wish to receive e-mail, do not post any messages to them.

Unauthorized use

Also remember that student and staff subscriptions must not be used for commercial or business purposes. If you wish to use your subscription in this manner, you must obtain a commercial subscription and pay commercial rates.

Sharing accounts

Occasionally we receive complaints about something a subscriber claims they did not do. In many cases, this results from sharing a username and password with a friend. We have heard the refrain "my friend would never do this" many times; unfortunately sometimes they do. You are responsible for all activities on your subscription. Sharing a subscription may result in suspension of your computing privileges, even though you did not directly cause the problem. □

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WHAT IS A SECURE PASSWORD?

Make your password a secure one. Follow these guidelines.

A secure password

- is at least six but no longer than eight characters
- contains numbers, punctuation and upper- and lower-case letters
- does not contain a colon (:)
- does not contain your user ID or anyone's name, either forwards or reversed
- does not contain any string of characters associated with you (your licence plate, your telephone number, etc.), either forwards or reversed
- is not a word that can be found in any dictionary (English, French, Spanish, biographical, specialized, etc.), either forwards or reversed

A secure password that you can remember easily may contain one or more misspelled or combined words, numbers or punctuation marks (but not a colon). Some examples: brkFst42, OKBlu'Js, Big&gr8. Don't use these examples — invent one of your own.

Change your assigned password the first time you log in. Change it again every three months.

Following these guidelines helps defend you and others from unauthorized use of your account, your files and your computing funds.

THANK YOU
for your cooperation