

Guidelines 2

Staff leavers - working practices and procedures

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1. What's the problem?

Most members of staff need to use IT Systems in the course of their work. They will often store information, critical to LSHTM business in a password-protected account. When they leave, someone else will usually have to take over their work and require access to their files/emails without violating the person's privacy and/or the Data Protection Act.

Consider when someone leaves, but IT Services are not told. The user account remains active and the user continues to send and receive emails (apparently on behalf of LSHTM), access confidential information and use software applications and systems which are licensed only for LSHTM employees.

Such situations can usually be avoided by changes to working practices and by simple procedures to be followed when staff leave.

2. Recommended working practices/procedures relating to paper and electronic data

2.1 Use shared drives and mailing lists or role accounts for essential email and data.

2.1.1 Email

An example of this is the IT Services helpdesk contactable as helpdesk@lshtm.ac.uk. This is a shared mailbox currently accessible by several people which means that there are no privacy issues when one member is away and someone else needs to deal with the work. Access to this can easily be changed when there is staff turnover.

Another recommendation relates to role accounts for individuals in certain functional roles - e.g. ITSadmin@lshtm.ac.uk which is used by the administrator in IT Services for departmental emails, but there is no associated expectation of privacy as there would be on their personal named account. This makes it easier when there is a change of personnel in that the role account can simply be handed over, while a new administrator would get a new personal account.

2.1.2 Shared user areas

Use provided (possibly departmental, shared) filestore to store non-personal files (i.e. those related to the work of the section). Consequently, when a member of staff leaves, all the files required by colleagues are already accessible.

2.2 Include the handover of data and emails in departmental procedures

Most, if not all, departments have procedures in place to ensure that keys are handed in, passes are returned etc. when people leave. These procedures should also consider IT issues relating to files, email and any continuing access to electronic resources. Prior to

account closure, the user should be reminded to copy then delete any personal data held in their filestore and asked to sign an acknowledgement that anything remaining is for departmental use (see Appendix 1 for an example form). Formalizing such transfer arrangements protects both LSHTM and the individual.

2.3 Formalize, document and review any continuing access for leavers

It is recommended that exceptional requests for continued access be considered by Heads of Departments and a record kept of whether or not this has been approved. IT Services will expect a signed letter from the Head of Department to maintain access. Continued access to financial systems or to root/administrator accounts should not be permitted without a risk assessment. Any root/administrator password known by the leaver should be changed as soon as they leave.

It is understood that collaborations often continue as researchers move between institutions and that allowing continuing access is to mutual benefit. In these cases, the need for continuing access should be reviewed, at least annually. There is usually a better solution to this such as using an LSHTM guest account.

2.4 What if no proper handover has taken place?

An out-of-office message can still be placed on the email account to indicate that the person has left and who the sender should contact instead.

2.5 Records management

Staff leaving the School are responsible for ensuring that their records are sorted, destroyed or transferred before their departure to ensure that:

- important information remains accessible to the School (the replacement/department) when they leave;
- information can be easily located should it be required to respond to Freedom of Information or Data Protection requests;
- the School does not incur unnecessary expenditure on records storage and staff time sorting and managing the records of ex-staff;
- key information that the School requires is retained.

2.5.1 Paper records

The leaver and their line manager are responsible for organising the leaver's records as soon as notice of leaving is given - this should **not** be left until the last day.

The leaver and/or the line manager should:

- identify who will be taking over the leaver's responsibilities - there will either be a replacement or the line manager should ensure appropriate handover to themselves if there will be a gap before a permanent replacement is in post - and handover relevant documents;
- review all the leaver's documents and dispose of unnecessary material, see *Selecting records for the records management service* (<http://intra.lshtm.ac.uk/recordsmanagement/documents.html>) for further advice;

- ensure that all files are organised in a logical way and correctly labelled so the successor can identify relevant records;
- if time allows, produce some brief guidance notes to the records, this will be especially useful if there is a gap until the successor starts;
- semi-current records, eg those that need to be retained for operational, regulatory or operational reasons such as research data from a completed project or superseded policy documents that are not referred to on a regular basis can be transferred to the records management system (please contact the Archivist & Records Manager to arrange this);
- identify any material that is in a shared area eg unit or department storage areas, the vaults etc, review and dispose of unwanted material and then contact the Archivist & Records Manager to arrange storage for the remaining material;
- if you have material that you think is of historical importance, please see *Archival selection criteria* (<http://intra.lshtm.ac.uk/recordsmanagement/documents.html>) and contact the Archivist & Records Manager to arrange for these to be transferred to the Archives.

2.5.2 Electronic records

Many of the same principles apply as with paper records.

Leavers should:

- delete obsolete information from personal and shared drives and email system;
- ensure that a successor will have access to the necessary files by placing these on a shared drive;
- ensure that files are named correctly and organised in a way that the successor will be able to identify required documents (e.g. if a code has been used to name files, ensure that the index is readily available);
- transfer information stored on a home computer or a mobile device to the School system;
- if deleting personal or sensitive information, contact IT Services or your Departmental computing staff for to ensure that the data has been deleted correctly and securely;
- duplicates of records may be removed with permission, normally, of the line manager or grant or contract holder or Head of Unit. Original material must remain in the School. Check with IT staff in your department for arrangements on copying authorised records for personal use after they leave the School.

Leavers must:

- fill in the form below and ensure it is signed by their line manager

Leavers Electronic Data Checklist

To be completed by the leaving member of staff and their line manager. Please return the completed form to your Head of Department and a copy to IT Services.

Leaver's Name	Department
ITS Username	Email address

Data Handover:

Please ensure that the following are carried out before departure:

- relevant emails are forwarded to colleagues
- relevant files are moved from your personal filestore to a shared area (with appropriate security restrictions) or to a colleague - including any other electronic resources for which you are responsible (e.g. web pages, mailing lists, wikis)

Your mailbox will be archived and then deleted when your account is closed (i.e. when you leave the employment of LSHTM).

Authorisation *(delete as applicable)*:

1. I confirm that all official email and files have been passed to a colleague. I acknowledge that my user account will be disabled and the mailbox and personal filestore will be deleted. I also confirm that my email account has a vacation message on it to say I have left and to whom LSHTM business email should be sent instead.

or

2. I confirm I have deleted any personal emails/files and anything that is left in my account/filespace may be used by LSHTM for business purposes. I also confirm that my email account has a vacation message on it to say I have left and to whom LSHTM business email should be sent instead.

Name of Staff leaver: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

I acknowledge that the above member of staff no longer requires access to the departmental IT system.

Name of Line Manager: _____

Signature: _____

Official Use by IT Services: Checklist:

**Account Removed
By:**

Date: