Policy: Passwords

Department: ITIS

Date: 1st Aug 2016   Review Date: 1st August 2017

1. Introduction

A password policy is a set of rules designed to enhance information security by encouraging people to employ strong passwords and use them properly.

A password policy is often part of an organisation's official regulations and may be advisory or enforced by systems. The wording of this policy clearly indicates that it will be enforced.

Cyber security threats are increasing daily and Goldsmiths is under constant attack. In the past year, several successful attacks have exploited weak passwords to gain entry to our systems.

The policy proposed below is not as stringent as best practice would suggest, particularly in terms of the frequency of change, where monthly is common. It is believed that moving from no forced change to six-monthly is a significant and positive step.

2. Effective Date

This policy is effective from 1st August 2016

3. Approval Status

Approved by Goldsmiths Senior Management Team, April 2016

4. Policy

- Password must be between 8 and 15 characters long (maximum character limit to prevent SQL injection attempts etc).
- It must be different from passwords previously used in the past 6 months (suggested test that at least 2 characters differ).
- It should not contain any word spelled completely.
- It must contain characters from the four primary categories, including: uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters.
- It must be changed at least every 6 months.

5. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, associates, students and visitors of Goldsmiths ("customers") who have a Goldsmiths IT or Campus account.

6. Review of Policy

This policy is owned by the Chief Information Officer and will be reviewed on an annual basis. Amendments will be made in response to feedback from customers; changes in technology etc. and the policy will be reissued.

7. Contact list for queries related to this policy

AD Operations IT&IS
Chief Information Officer

8. Authority for this policy

Goldsmiths Senior Management Team