

SECTION 3 - LOGGING ON AND OFF

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Edinburgh University Library network. To be able to use the pc you will need to logon. To apply for the appropriate logon id, please print out and complete the form on <k:/isd/systems/netreg> which must be signed by your Head of Department before being passed to Systems. After having received your username and temporary password, you will be able to log on to the network and change your password to something you will remember.

⇒ PASSWORDS

What is a password?

A password is a means of proving to a computer system that you are who you say you are. Most computer systems require 2 pieces of information before you can gain access. One is your username; this will be your surname and 1 or 2 initials. This tells the computer who you are. The other piece of information is your password - a collection of keyboard characters known only to you, which 'proves' to the computer that you are the person you have claimed to be in the username. Computers do not display passwords - you also need to keep your password secret. This is to prevent people from gaining access to your data, causing damage to your account or being malicious in your name.

How does a password work?

Your password is initially setup by the Systems Department staff who register you to use the Library network. You can then log on, and the first thing you should do is change your password to something you will remember.

The password is usually encrypted before it is stored. Encryption, often using complex mathematical techniques, converts the password into a gibberish pattern of characters. For example, 'fred' might encrypt to 6Fghj4uin2. This gibberish is then stored. The encryption is important. It means that the only record of your password is in an unreadable form, so your password cannot be looked up by anyone. A good password is one that is not easy to guess.

When you log in, the computer system does not decrypt the stored form of the password to check it against the one you type. Instead, it encrypts what you type and compares the result with the stored - encrypted - form of your password. If they match, you are allowed into the computer.

What if I forget my password?

Your password cannot be looked up by anyone. Systems can only set your password to something new, which you can then change. If you have forgotten your password contact Systems. You will be issued you with another password, which you will then need to change to something that you will remember.

How safe is my password?

Your password is, in general, as safe as you allow it to be. There are ways to 'hack' into a computer and obtain passwords, but system security in the Library is high and most of the methods are well known and watched for. Thus in general, the only ways that someone else can get your password are:

- you tell them it, accidentally or on purpose
- you write it down somewhere and it is found
- you choose an easily guessed password

Never tell anyone your password. If it is absolutely essential for Systems staff to know it to help solve a problem for you, make sure that your password is changed as soon as they have finished. If you suspect anyone has worked out your password by watching you type it in, then contact Systems and they will issue you another. Never send your password in an email message: email may go to the wrong person, or it may be read by several people.

Try not to write down your password, choose something that you can remember. If you can't remember your password without writing it down, disguise it in some way. You should not normally store passwords in a computer file.

When you are given a new password for your account, change it straight away.

Never leave yourself logged into the system, always make sure you have logged off from the computer. If you intend logging back on later you can leave your pc at the login screen, so when you choose shutdown, you should choose option 3 - close all programs and log on as someone else.

Your password will have to be changed every 100 days. This is a security precaution and it happens to everyone. You cannot use the same password again so if you remember your current password easily, maybe you could change it slightly, so it is still easy to remember but different from the previous password.

What is a good password?

A good password is at least 6 characters long (minimum of 5), with one or more non-alphanumeric character in it (such as punctuation symbols). It should be memorable - at least to you - but not guessable. Here are a few guidelines to help you choose:

- Do use some non-alphabetic characters such as punctuation, but don't use control characters.
- Do use non-dictionary words, such as the initial letters of the words in a line of a favourite song. If you add vowels between consonants you can make up words which are basically pronounceable and therefore easy to remember.
- Don't use your username in any form as a password, even backups or mixed up.
- Don't use your real name in any form, or any part of it.
- Don't use obvious personal information, such as your date of birth, phone number, national insurance number, address, etc.
- Don't use all digits, or just one letter: this reduces the amount of guesswork
- Don't use less than 6 characters.
- Don't use any word you might find in any dictionary in any language.
- Don't use character names from well known books or films (eg. Gandalf, Sherlock, Renton), band names, song titles etc.
- Don't use passwords that are too easy - or too difficult - to type: an easy password can be guessed by anyone who sees you type it, and you will only be able to type a difficult password slowly - with the same result. Also the harder it is to type, the easier it is to make mistakes typing it.

Do I really need to bother with this?

Yes. You might not be storing vital information in your account, but if a malicious person breaks into it, your files and mail may be read or deleted. A malicious person can also send mail to people in your name or post to usenet news from your account, normally without good intent, or cause other damage.

The University's Computing Regulations state that "users are required to take all reasonable precautions to maintain the integrity of their passwords and any other security mechanisms". Staff are bound by these regulations, as are students when they matriculate.

Excerpts taken from Eucs Note on Passwords K.1.2-EN-2666-12/98

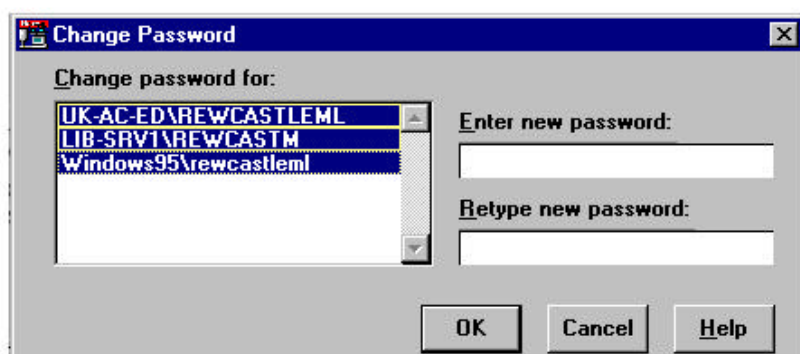
⇒ CHANGING YOUR PASSWORD

Every 100 days as a security precaution your login to lib-srv4 (win95) will expire and you will have to change your password. This password must not be anything you have used before and has to be at least 5 characters and should include a non alpha character such as a punctuation mark or a number. You will be advised to change your password by this screen:



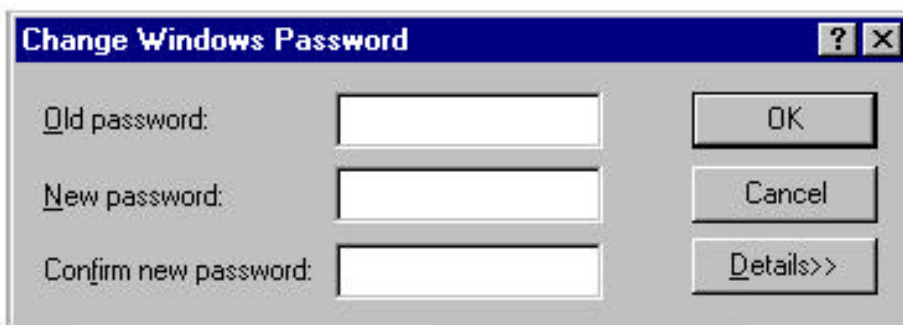
Choose **YES** or you might find you run out of grace logins and not be able to login at all.

Then the following box will appear:



Enter a new password in the first box. Use [tab] to go to the retype box and confirm your password (type it again). Then click OK to accept the password.

This box will then appear



You must CANCEL this box

We don't use a windows password so this is not needed. We have a lib-srv4 password only. If you have any further problems contact helpdesk@srv4.lib.ed.ac.uk

⇒ LOGGING OFF AND SHUTTING DOWN YOUR COMPUTER

You must ensure that your pc is properly logged off at any time during the day during which you might be absent from your desk. You will also need to make sure that your pc is shutdown at the end of the day before you go home.

How do I logoff from my pc?

To logoff you will need to click on the <Start> button then on the *Shutdown* menu item you will get this box



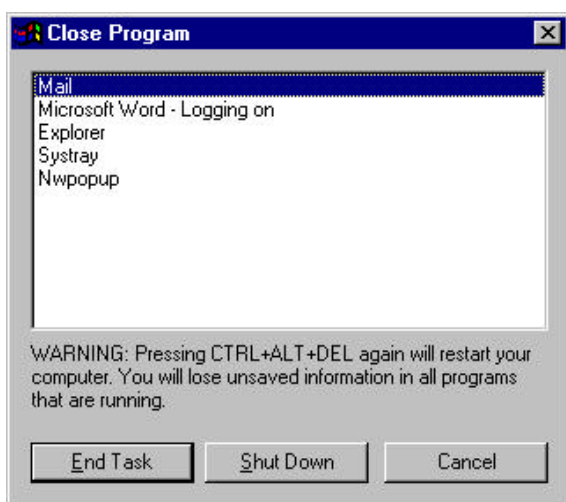
If you intend to use your pc again during the day or someone else will be using it, you should choose option 3 - Close all programs and log on as a different user. This will bring up the login box for the network.

Why do I need to shutdown my pc?

You need to shutdown your pc to avoid damaging files and to save files that possibly weren't saved already. You must always shutdown windows before you switch off your pc. To do this you should choose <Start> then choose shutdown, and choose the first option *Shutdown the computer*. After a few seconds a screen prompt will tell you it is safe to switch off your computer, or if you have a newer pc it will automatically switch itself off.

What do I do if my pc is hanging and I can't shutdown my pc?

Should you find that your pc is hanging and you can't use any applications (or anything that is open) you should first try to close some of the applications. To do this press <ctrl> <Alt> <Delete> simultaneously - a box like this will appear



- It will possibly say that a program is not responding and if you click on the <end task> button it should close the affected program. This may clear your hanging pc.
- It may bring up the programs as above. If you can choose <shutdown> it may close your pc down. Or you can press <Ctrl><Alt><Delete> again and this will restart your computer.
- Or you may not get this box at all. In which case you need to try pressing <Ctrl><Alt><Delete> again and if it still doesn't restart your computer, you will need to switch your pc off. Leave it off for about 10 seconds before turning it on again.

Because your pc has hung and you have had to either switch it off or reboot you may experience difficulty logging back on to the network. There will probably be an error message "You are trying to logon to too many stations simultaneously etc etc"

This will mean that your account has not been cleared by the system yet. You will need to wait at least 10 minutes before trying to logon again. If you still experience problems after that please contact Helpdesk by telephone.