How You Can Protect Your Educational Facility from Security Breaches and Fraud

Shred-it

Making sure it's secure.™

The news reports regularly on information security breaches. In fact, the number of breaches and associated damages – in monetary penalties and to organisations' reputations – continues to rise each year. **Over £6 million** in financial penalties have been handed out by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) since its powers were increased in 2010.[1]

The following statistics may be surprising and worrying for education providers:

Last year the education sector reported the third highest number of data breaches to the Information Commissioner's Office.[2]

40% of security breaches experienced by UK organisations are caused by simple human error and **37%** are caused by malicious attacks.[3]

The average cost of a data breach to UK organisations has more than doubled since 2008.[4]

A government survey estimates that more than a quarter of the UK's adult population have fallen victim to identity theft.[5]

A Department for Business Innovation & Skills survey showed that the majority of large organisations **(81%)** had a security breach last year (the corresponding figures for SMEs was 60%).[6]

Every educational institution needs a plan to protect confidential information.

It's likely you have sensitive information in your files that includes student, pupil and staff names, addresses, medical information and birth dates, as well as reports, banking and financial data. Unless you take steps to properly protect this information, you may be opening the door to prosecution and monetary fines, identity theft and even criminal fraud. Today, it's more than just good practice to protect sensitive data – it's the law. **A sound data security plan should include these five essential elements:**

- ✓ **Take stock:** Establish what types of confidential information your organisation holds.
- ✓ **Scale down:** Keep only the information you really need. The Data Protection Act specifically states that personal information should only be gathered and used for legitimate purposes and not be kept beyond its useful life.
- ✓ **Lock it up:** Make sure information you hold is kept secure at all stages of its life, whether in electronic or hard copy.
- ✓ **Plan ahead:** Create a plan in the event a security breach does happen. The ICO provides specific guidance on its website ico.org.uk.
- ✓ **Destroy it:** The ICO recommends shredding confidential paper documents when no longer needed. Make sure you use a secure and documented shredding process conducted by security experts.

The ICO has published extensive information and guidance on information security and Data Protection specifically aimed at the education sector on its website ico.org.uk. This includes a handy video on information rights for schools.

0800 028 1164 or visit us at shredit.co.uk

ISO Certified
Shred-it Limited has been assessed and certified as meeting the requirements of ISO 9001:2008, ISO 14001:2004 and BS EN15713.

Make Shred-it Your Partner Against Security Breaches

Whether a small primary school or a major university, one of the best moves you can make to protect your organisation is to work with a professional information destruction company. It's important to make sure the paperwork, hard drives and other confidential materials you discard won't find their way into fraudsters' hands, and secure disposal of that information is key.

✓ Shred-it's confidential destruction service offers a secure chain of custody for your documents and data, from the moment you place them in the secure console until they're destroyed.

✓ As the world leader in information destruction, Shred-it's security experts will help to keep your organisation compliant with data protection regulations, protect you against identity theft, and help you maintain your good reputation with current and prospective students, pupils and parents.

✓ Shred-it uses industrial multi-edge cross-cut shredders, to reduce confidential data to fine 'confetti', so that your documents and data can never be reconstructed.

Take these additional steps to safeguard your education facility.

Here's what we advise our clients in order to guard against fraud and protect their reputations.

✓ **Stay informed:** Learn about current laws and legislation that impact your organisation, and how to stay compliant. Visit **shredit.co.uk/resource-centre**, for the latest legislation fact sheets, and sign up to receive automatic updates.

✓ **Establish a security plan:** Make sure you have formal security policies in place.

✓ **Educate and enforce:** Everyone in your school, college or university needs to know, understand and follow your information security policies. Update staff, governors and other key stakeholders on a regular basis and post your policy and guidelines around your facility.

✓ **Limit access:** Only authorised personnel should handle confidential information.

✓ **Create a retention policy:** Determine which documents you must keep and for how long. Clearly mark a destruction date on all records in storage.

✓ **Eliminate risk:** Introduce a "shred-all" policy for ALL documents (confidential/sensitive and general) so that individual members of staff don't have to decide what is – or isn't – confidential. All shredded paper is recycled, so you'll be doing your bit for the environment!

✓ **Partner with Shred-it:** Our business is to make sure that no one knows yours.

When it comes to protecting your confidential information, the security experts at Shred-it can carry out a free Data Security Survey and risk assessment to help you put together the processes your education facility needs to keep information safe.

Sources:
1 ICO 2014, *Monetary Penalty Notices*
2 ICO 2014, *Trends: Data Breach Incidents by Quarter*
3 Ponemon Institute, *2014 Cost of Data Breach Study: United Kingdom*
4 Ponemon Institute, *2014 Cost of Data Breach Study: United Kingdom*
5 Gov.uk, *Annual Fraud Indicator 2013*
6 PWC, Department for Business Innovation & Skills, *2014 Information Security Breaches Survey*

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