

IS ADVISORY USB MEMORY STICKS

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Summary

What is this document about?

USB sticks are a convenient method of transporting high volumes of information between one computer and another. Unfortunately, they expose the University to the risk of data loss. They are small and can be easily lost or stolen. Their convenience and high storage volume increases the likelihood that people simply forget what data they have stored on the device.

Who is this for?

This IS Advisory is aimed at all staff of the University of Portsmouth

How does the University check this is followed?

Annual review of this IS Advisory will be performed to keep it up to date with new information on threats and how to handle them.

Who can you contact if you have any queries about this document?

Any questions about this advisory should be directed to servicedesk@port.ac.uk

1.0 The risks associated with USB Memory Sticks

1.1 Loss or Theft

The University may be exposed to the theft or loss of data through the use of USB sticks either through misuse (unauthorised access) or through stolen or misplaced devices.

1.2 Damage or Destruction

The storage of important data on USB sticks also exposes the data owner and the University to potential data loss through damage to the device

1.3 Gateway for malware onto the network

USB sticks can provide a pathway for malware infection which may then spread throughout the IT infrastructure.

1.4 Information theft

Deliberate theft of intellectual property is possible using these devices.

1.5 Failure to make a backup

Individuals have been known to forget to make regular backup copies of the information on the USB sticks. If a recent backup is not made, then a lot of effort, time and money could be wasted if the USB stick is lost.

2.0 Policy

2.1 All data held on USB memory sticks must be protected by using 256 bit AES encryption.

2.2 If restricted information must be held on a USB memory stick, then you must have the prior approval of your line manager or head of department.

2.3 Data on the stick cannot be accessed until a high strength password is entered – via a browser window or keypad on the stick itself.

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