

Computer Accounts and E-mail Access During Planned Absence

1. Introduction

This guide outlines the options available to handle email and network accounts for members of staff in the case of planned absence from the university. This may include:

- Maternity Leave
- Long Term Sick leave
- Sabbaticals
- Unpaid leave for caring responsibilities
- Career breaks

2. Email Access

If you have an @open.ac.uk mail address with associated Exchange mailbox (accessed via Outlook) you need to decide what is to happen to incoming email messages whilst you are on leave. The option to leave your mailbox with an Out of Office message without the mailbox being accessed is now inappropriate as certain emails received have to be replied to in a timely manner, to meet the University's legal obligations under the Freedom of Information Act. Although Out of Office messages can be set up, they are sent once only.

The options are:

Delegate Access

Your email address is retained and you grant another person delegate access to your mailbox to allow mail to be monitored and dealt with on your behalf, and to keep the mailbox size within limits. (Delegate access can be limited to your individual requirements, e.g. only the inbox and/or additional folder access. Please discuss the appropriate delegate access options with the IT helpdesk).

Suspension of Account

We suspend your email address and archive the contents of your Exchange mailbox to a secure area and then reinstate it when you are due to return to work. During this time your email address is invalid and cannot receive messages. Senders will receive a non-delivery report.

Full Access to Nominee

We give a person of your choice (or your Head of Unit) full access to your mailbox, leaving your email address live and delivering to your Exchange mailbox.

3. Guidance

Please raise a Service Request to IT via the online system <http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/it/main/> telling us the option you wish to follow or if you have any queries. We need to know how you want to proceed a few days before you go on leave. Normally those going on planned leave decide to suspend their account. Alternatively you can phone the IT Helpdesk on 01908 54321.

The University receives reports on network accounts that have not been used for three months and if mailbox limits are exceeded. If we have not received details of what is to happen to your email address during your absence we will seek Head of Unit authorisation for their preference on actions for your mailbox. This may include giving another person access to deal with work related e-mails.

4. Network Access

Please note that network access is required if you wish to view your online payslip using the Staff Self Service or TutorHome facility. Alternatively you may prefer to have hard copy payslips sent to your home address so that network access can be suspended. To request that your monthly payslips are sent to your home address please contact Staff Payments at: finance-staff-payments@open.ac.uk.

Staff who wish to keep Network Access

Access to The Open University network will continue as normal unless you inform IT otherwise.

Staff who do not wish to keep Network Access

If you do not intend accessing the Open University computer network whilst absent, your network account password will be expired at the close of business on your last working day. Please call the IT Helpdesk on 01908 54321 if this needs to be reactivated before your official return to work date.

5. Shared Resources or Data

We also advise that any data on your hard drive that may be required by colleagues during your absence should be copied to a shared area where they can access it. Please ask the IT Helpdesk to arrange this in sufficient time before your planned absence.

6. Useful References

Leave Policy Document
Maternity Leave Policy
Long Term Sick leave
Sabbaticals
Unpaid leave for caring responsibilities
Career breaks
[Intranet page on epayslips](#)