

Email Relaying Policy

Introduction.

This document outlines the change of policy with regard to email relaying recently approved by the IT Board. Some technical details are also included.

The University email system.

Most of the University's network is firewalled, so no email can get in from outside the campus. Several mail hubs, or mail routers, sit between the campus and the rest of the internet, providing a restricted channel for email. When a message arrives at the University, the "envelope" (strictly, the results of the SMTP level dialogue) is examined to determine where the message should be sent. It may be addressed simply to someone at the University (e.g. Paul.Harness@manchester.ac.uk), in which case the mail hub can verify that the person exists and forward the mail. The old policy also allowed messages to be addressed more specifically, to a personal address existing on a particular department's computing facility (e.g. mxxxyzz@fs1.mcc.ac.uk), in which case the mail hub can only verify that the facility exists, not the person, and must forward (relay) the mail on for further validation and eventual delivery.

Refusing to Relay.

The new policy is that only addresses which are known by the mail routers are acceptable for email arriving from outside the University. The mail gateway servers **shall refuse to relay to any central or departmental facilities**, except by translating incoming addresses to personal addresses.

Specifics and Technical Details.

Each user presently has at least two email addresses associated with them. Each student has at least three, including <library-card-number>@manchester.ac.uk.

We intend to continue external email addressing to the following top-level domains:

postgrad.manchester.ac.uk	student.mbs.ac.uk
student.manchester.ac.uk	postgrad.mbs.ac.uk
manchester.ac.uk	mba.mbs.ac.uk
umist.ac.uk	
man.ac.uk	
mcc.ac.uk	
mbs.ac.uk	

An example; Professor William Argyle Eckerslike in the Department of Cryonics, has an ICON account, an email drop on the Cryonics fileserver, and two name-based addresses. His username is MCRYWAE2, so his ICON account is:

mcrywae2@icon.man.ac.uk

The Cryonics fileserver is departmentally controlled, and the Professor's email drop there is:

willy@disney.cry.man.ac.uk

Officially, the Professor's email address is:

william.argyle.eckerslike@manchester.ac.uk

It is University policy that people use their official email addresses for external communications. Tightening up of this policy by re-writing headers on outgoing messages would mean that in the long term only this official University email address will carry on working off-campus.

However, Prof. Eckerslike has been around for several decades, so he has been using the address:

willy.eckerslike@umist.ac.uk

since the mid 1980s. This isn't a problem, since umist.ac.uk is one of the top-level domains.

Within the department the professor is often emailed as "willy@disney". This will continue to work, but only within the department.

In the majority of cases, any domain looking like "something.man.ac.uk" (or "something.umist.ac.uk"), or any individual machine (e.g. "fs1.mcc.ac.uk") will no longer be accessible from off-campus. Hence email addresses of the form "someone@fs1.mcc.ac.uk" will be rejected by the boundary email hubs. One exception to this rule is those domains which are handled by our virtual domain service, since we have full alias lists for these domains in much the same way as we have for the top-level on-campus domains. Within the campus, all email addresses will continue to be available.