Laws related to security and privacy

Computer Misuse Act

Thus act deals with the act of hacking and with this focuses on the main three areas to it such as having a hacker gain unauthorised access to a computers’ material, for example if a hacker were to gain access into a computer system by using another’s’ log in details without their concern, and accessing programs and using data stored onto the computer. This also involves the hacker being able to alter and delete files as well as copying or moving data and using it without authority. Another area the computer misuse act deals with is hackers having unauthorised access to a computer systems with the intention to make it easy to commit further crimes, for example a hacker could gain access into a computer system by creating a backdoor, being able to access files and data unknowingly to the user. The third area that is also dealt with is unauthorised modification of computer material, for example distribution of viruses (sending emails with viruses attached to them), being able to change data on the system and gaining advantage by viewing and accessing data such as bank details. Overall the computer misuse act covers all issues to do with hacking, system access and network use, protecting (for example) an organisations computer system from a treat like hacking, due to the fact that the act is comprehensive.

Copyright, Designs and Patents Act

The act allows creators the right to keep the possession of their intellectual property and to seek action for damage if their work has been distributed and used as those persons own without their concern. The Copyright, Designs and Patens Act covers music (CDs, MP3s, and podcasting) visual media (DVDs, videos and streaming and AVI files), written material (work that is submitted as an assignment to avoid plagiarism, or any written material from other websites), designs (systems, applications, structures or machines which impacts on the duplication of some computer hardware technologies), software and images such as works of art. In order to make sure that someone is not the subject of legal action, one must quote where they have gotten their source and state who it is and when it was created and also get their permission in writing.

Data Protection Acts

There are eight principles within the Data Protection Acts which must be followed:

* Data stored is to be fairly and lawfully processed
* Data processed is limited and clearly declared purposes
* Data is to be adequate, relevant and not excessive
* All data is accurate and is maintained as such
* No data is kept longer than necessary
* Data about a person is processed in accordance with the individual’s rights
* All data is kept secure
* Data is not transferred abroad without adequate protection

The data protection act is made to protect a person’s personal details that are entered into an organisation’s computers; this could be a company, school or college. The act ensures that all data stored in an organisations computer is accurate and kept securely. This also goes for personal details that are written on paper which is stored in paper filing system.

Freedom of Information

This act deals with the access to official information. It allows people of the public the right to request for copies of official information or communication whether it is to be electronic, paper based or published. Information requested can be from the government, schools, the NHS and even police. People are able to apply for copies of information, although this may be an issue with the organisation’s system security for example an individual publishing information without consent from the organisation that it came from. The act also allows an organisation to refuse disclosure for example if a person were to use the information contrary to the interests of national security and defence.