Security and Information Assurance

Registers of Scotland
Departmental Security Group
Policies and Procedures

Department	Security and Information Assurance (SIA)
Topic	Clear desk and screen policy
Number	SIA01
Amended	**By** SIA **Date** 11 July 2016

What is the clear desk and screen policy?

The clear desk and clear screen policy exists to ensure that all staff members are aware of their responsibility to handle the information they work with appropriately. This includes routinely conducting the simple steps below:

- Lock your computer screen every time you leave your desk.
- Always minimise/close documents/emails containing information of a sensitive nature on your computer screen when you are not working on it.
- All sensitive material or papers with a security classification marking must be placed in a locked cabinet and not left on an unattended desk at any time.

Why do we have a clear desk and clear screen policy?

- To reduce the chance of any information relating to our customers or internal business being lost or mislaid.
- To reduce the chance of an information security incident resulting in financial and/or reputational damage or distress to our staff or customers.
- To show the right image of efficiency and effectiveness when our customers visit us.
- To reduce the risk of accidental damage to information.
- To prevent individuals potentially gaining access to a logged in, unattended computer.

How do we comply with the clear desk and clear screen policy?

By locking your screen whenever you leave your work desk and by applying caution when you are dealing with sensitive information on screen so that it cannot be overlooked.

By clearing your desk at the end of the working day. This means that:

- All deeds and documents relating to an application for registration in the Land Register must be placed within a casebag. If the registration officer is still working on the application, the casebag itself should remain on top of their desk.
- All deeds and documents relating to an application for recording in any other register must be placed in the appropriate approved folder. If the registration officer is still working on the application, the folder itself should remain on top of their desk.
- In the Scan area, documents that have yet to be assigned to a casebag must be stored in a designated cupboard. All other papers and documentation relating to RoS business must be placed out of sight in an under desk locker or cabinet.
- Staff must place all sensitive material in locked storage whenever they leave their desk unattended.
- Procedures for inter-office transfers of information must be followed when casework is to be transferred between RoS offices.
- No applications presented for registration or other documents/papers relating to RoS business may be removed from RoS premises without permission of senior management.
- The only other papers which may be left on desks at the end of the working day are published documents, including books, manuals, trade magazines and printouts from public websites.

What happens if the clear desk and screen policy is not followed?

- Managers have responsibility for enforcing the Clear Desk and Screen Policy.
- Anyone who does not comply with this policy may be subject to the RoS Disciplinary Policy.
- If you notice any breach of this policy then you should speak to your line manager and / or the Area Information Manager (AIM).

Related Documents

Safeguarding RoS Information
Tips for a clear desk
Managers' responsibilities for enforcing the clear desk policy