



Area of Responsibility:	Information Technology
Responsible Contact:	Chief Information Officer
Policy Identification:	Password Policy
Effective Date:	07/01/2021
Last Revised:	04/26/2021

POLICY

Virginia Union University is committed to providing a secure technology environment in support of its mission. This requires the use of a strong password policy. Many systems at the University require the use of passwords including but not limited to e-mail, academic and administrative applications, computer labs, and VPN.

PROCEDURES

Password Rules:

1. Your login ID and password authenticate you as an authorized user of the Virginia Union University's computing environment. A strong password is key to the University's overall systems security. You must protect your files and University resources by choosing a good password and protecting it.
2. You are responsible for safeguarding the passwords for your computing accounts. Passwords must not be shared or disclosed to anyone including friends or family. If another person learns your password, that individual can access your e-mail, your personal files, and your online network identity, and accounts. Sharing passwords are grounds for suspension or termination.
3. A knowledgeable person could use your account to attempt to gain unauthorized access to other networked resources, putting them at risk. No one should be given your password—not even someone from Information Technology. If you become aware that someone else has learned your password, you should change it immediately.
4. Hackers gain access to systems by "cracking" accounts. They typically accomplish this using automated processes to discover account IDs and passwords. Using a dictionary word or your account ID for a password puts your system (and the University's systems) at higher risk of attack by hackers.
5. It is strongly recommended that you change all your passwords regularly, at least once per year.
6. Do not use the password that you choose for your Virginia Union University accounts with other off-campus services such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google and Yahoo.
7. This is to protect your VUU accounts in case those services are breached or in case your service provider does not encrypt passwords during the authentication process. You must change your password immediately if you notice unusual activity on your system or account. If you suspect that someone is accessing computing resources using your identity, please contact the Help Desk at (804) 257-5630 or report it to the Information Technology at itc@vuu.edu.



One of the goals of this policy is to create a strong password that you will remember, but unpredictable for others. As such, your password is less likely to be guessed and your account hacked into. Rules for length and complexity of passwords are outlined below.

Password Length:

- 1) Minimum password length: 8 characters
- 2) Maximum password length: 30 characters

Password Complexity

- 1) Characters limited to: a-z, A-Z, 0-9 and [] & + * @ ! % ? = ~ #
- 2) Password must contain at least one lowercase letter, one uppercase letter, and one number.
- 3) Password should contain at least 5 unique characters and no more than four characters can be in a "sequence". For example, a password of "A1a1a1a1a1a1a1" or passwords containing "aaaaa", "abcde", "55555", "12345", "54321", etc. are not recommended.
- 4) Disallow usage of the following personal information embedded in your password:
 - Name (first, middle, or last)
 - Birth year (YYYY)
- 5) Example: "presidentAlincoln1809" not allowed (if you are Abe Lincoln).

Password Maintenance:

- 1) Passwords must be changed at least once every 180 days (about 6 months).
- 2) Successive passwords must differ by at least 3 characters.
- 3) Passwords that have been used within the last 18 months cannot be re-used.

If You Forget Your Password:

1. Contact the Help Desk at (804) 257-5630 for assistance or visit the Help Desk in Ellison Hall, Room 116 (with your picture ID) to have your password reset.
2. In addition to the traditional method of resetting a forgotten network password by calling or visiting the IT (Information Technology) Helpdesk, you can register for the password reset tool which allows you to reset your password or unlock your account without IT assistance.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (if applicable)

GLOSSARY

Documented Approvers:



Name, Title

Date

Name, Title

Date

Name, Title

Date

Name, Title

Date