

## QUFA Caution about Office 365 Email (December 23 2014)

Dear Members,

You will have received a message from Information Technology (IT) Services at Queen's announcing an e-mail and calendar service upgrade to Microsoft Exchange Online (part of Office 365). This announcement suggests that this is a secure platform for academic, research and administrative needs.

According to QUFA Members who are IT experts -- from the School of Computing and from Electrical and Computer Engineering -- both OneDrive for Business and Office 365 do not encrypt data at rest on Microsoft servers, they only encrypt data that are in transit. In the case of Office 365, Microsoft has promised not to look at document content.

While Microsoft promises control in the geographical region where data resides, the fact that our region is "The Americas" means that everything can be subject to surveillance by the United States National Security Agency (NSA). You can read more on this issue at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/12/08/us-eu-privacy-nsa-idUSKBN0JM1M220141208>.

Please note that this lack of encryption is not an oversight on Microsoft's part; it is, in fact, part of their business strategy. In order to manage a shared calendar, the contents must not be encrypted, a practice which appears to violate the Faculty of Arts and Science's privacy policy that was e-mailed to some faculty members last week. The policy includes the sentence "You must not remove any confidential student record in electronic format from the campus if they are on a non-encrypted device". Microsoft also inserts extra management content into documents, thus breaking their integrity.

QUFA urges caution and is working to organize information sessions about the proposed move of Queen's email and calendar functions to Microsoft Office 365 in the New Year. Please stay tuned.

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