



Microsoft Office 365 for education – Privacy FAQ

Concordia University is offering its students the power of cloud productivity via Microsoft's Office 365 for education. You will be offered services:

- Office Web Apps (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook)
- IM & Presence (Instant Messaging)
- Conferencing
- Email, calendar, AV/AS, Personal Archive (including a 25GB inbox)

If you choose to use this offering, it is important that you be aware of the following:

What is the cloud?

The cloud is a metaphor for the Internet that goes beyond just using the Internet. Cloud computing is a deployment model for applications that is used by organisations in order to reduce infrastructure costs and/or address capacity/scalability concerns. Effectively these organisations are saying that they don't want to own the assets or to operate the system in their own data centres. They are buying results not assets (of course, it is still possible to own the intellectual property in the software and to have it operating in the cloud).

When using cloud services, where will my emails and data be stored?

Your emails and data will be stored on the cloud, which means that they may pass through and be stored anywhere in the world. However, as Microsoft is a US company, your emails and data will be subject to the *PATRIOT ACT*. Additionally, your data may travel through or be stored in other countries which may have different, potentially less stringent, privacy laws than Canada.

Should I be concerned about the effect the *PATRIOT ACT* will have on the privacy of my emails or data?

No emails or data are ever truly secure, regardless of where they are stored.

Canada has laws similar to the United States' *PATRIOT ACT* and Canada has international agreements with the United States that allow the transmission of information about Canadians (including emails and data) and people in Canada to American authorities. In other words, regardless of whether your emails

are stored on servers or on the cloud, Canadian and American authorities could potentially gain access to your emails or data without your consent or knowledge.

Are emails that I send and receive secure?

Emails sent through any email provider are never secure. The privacy of your emails can be compromised in many different ways, including: (i) if an email is unencrypted, it can be intercepted while en route to its intended recipient; (ii) the recipient of your email may not store their emails in a secure manner; or (iii) the recipient of your email can forward your email to others.

Before you send any email, you should consider the confidentiality of the contents of that email. You should never assume that any email, sent using any email service, is private, nor should you ever send information that you believe is confidential by email.

What do I do if I do not want my emails or data stored on the cloud?

If you do not want the Office 365 offering of Concordia University, you must provide Concordia University with your current, personal email address.