ISC15D033

Title:	**Proposal to amend email display names**
Author:	Jon Woodley
Date:	7 June 2016
Circulation:	ISSC
Agenda:	ISC15A003
Version:	v1.0
Status:	Open

Issue

The email display name is a multi-purpose attribute applied to all users at UEA as part of the user account provisioning process. Although originally used to simply provide the display name for email and the email directory (the Outlook Global Address List) it's use is now intrinsically linked to both Skype for Business and OneDrive for Business directories. As such the display name is an important tool for locating and distinguishing individuals not just at a University level but also outside, particularly when using Skype for Business.

The attribute can contain whatever is deemed important by an organisation to distinguish people but is limited to 256 characters. In the University's context whilst the department acronym means little to recipients of messages outside the University, it is useful internally. It is not possible to have different approaches for emails sent internally and externally. Likewise, it is not possible to have a different display name for Skype for Business.

The topic of Email display names has been discussed on numerous occasions by the IT Forum; notably on 17th January 2007 and 25th January 2011. Following these discussions and ISSC sign off initially the username was removed and then the order in which a user's name is displayed was amended to the format of forename, surname and department in brackets.

This paper seeks to put forward a number of options for the display name taking into account the changes previously agreed and highlighting the pros and cons of each.

Recommendation

The IT Forum was asked to consider each of the following options at their meeting of 25 May 2016. No consensus was reached. We are now seeking the views of ISSC.

Recipients are invited:

- To consider the options.
- To seek agreement on the preferred option.

Discussion

Option 1 – Remove all distinguishing items

Format	Forename Surname
Example	Fred Bloggs
Pros	- Removes ambiguous department acronym from being visible to external users
Cons	- Unable to distinguish internally between people with the same name. Although the Global Address List provides more information this would make it much more difficult to do so at a glance. - When sharing content via OneDrive for Business this could lead to the incorrect person having access to documents and other content internally. Externally the email address would usually be used. - When communicating via Skype for Business this could lead to the incorrect person being contacted both internally and externally.

Option 2 – Replace department acronym with UEA for all users

Format	Forename Surname (Institution)
Example	Fred Bloggs (UEA)
Pros	- Replaces ambiguous department acronym that is visible to external users. - Maintains UEA branding.
Cons	- Unable to distinguish internally between people with the same name. Although the Global Address List provides more information this would make it much more difficult to do so at a glance. - When sharing content via OneDrive for Business this could lead to the incorrect person having access to documents and other content internally. - When communicating via Skype for Business this could lead to the incorrect person being contacted both internally and externally.

Option 3 – Replace department acronym with full department name

Format	Forename Surname (Department Name)
Example	Fred Bloggs (IT and Computing Service)
Pros	- Replaces ambiguous department acronym that is visible to external users. - Continues to allow the distinguishing of users with the same name in all scenarios where the display name is used.
Cons	- External users may not know or understand what the department is or what organisation it forms part of.

Option 4a – Prefix department acronym with UEA

Format	Forename Surname (Institution – Department acronym)
Example	Fred Bloggs (UEA - ITCS)
Pros	- Continues to allow the distinguishing of users with the same name in all scenarios where the display name is used. - Clearly distinguishes that the sender is from UEA putting the department name in to context. - May help with efforts to combat spoofing of email as all email from UEA will contain this. - Maintains UEA branding.
Cons	- Ambiguous department acronym remains visible to external users.

Option 4b – Replace department acronym with full department name and prefix with UEA
(Recommended option)

Format	Forename Surname (Institution – Department Name)
Example	Fred Bloggs (UEA - IT and Computing Service)
Pros	- Replaces ambiguous department acronym that is visible to external users. - Continues to allow the distinguishing of users with the same name in all scenarios where the display name is used. - Clearly distinguishes that the sender is from UEA putting the department name in to context. - May help with efforts to combat spoofing of email as all email from UEA will contain this. - Maintains UEA branding.
Cons	- Creates a long display name.

Option 4c – Replace department acronym with full department name and prefix with University of East Anglia

Format	Forename Surname (Institution – Department Name)
Example	Fred Bloggs (University of East Anglia - IT and Computing Service)
Pros	- Replaces ambiguous department acronym that is visible to external users. - Continues to allow the distinguishing of users with the same name in all scenarios where the display name is used. - Clearly distinguishes that the sender is from UEA putting the department name in to context. - May help with efforts to combat spoofing of email as all email from UEA will contain this. - Maintains UEA branding.
Cons	- Creates a very long display name that will likely be truncated in many cases by clients displaying it.

Option 5 – Do nothing

Format	Forename Surname (Department Acronym)
Example	Fred Bloggs (ITCS)
Pros	- Continues to allow the distinguishing of users with the same name internally.
Cons	- Does nothing to address ambiguity of department acronym to external users.

Conclusion

Option 4b is considered to be the best and most pragmatic option, addressing most of the concerns often expressed by IT Forum whilst continuing to help distinguish people at a glance.