

Blackbaud Security Incident

Q: What happened and when?

On 16th July 2020, Maynooth University received notification of a security incident from a third-party service provider, Blackbaud. They advised that they were the victim of a ransomware attack in May 2020.

Blackbaud advised that they discovered and stopped a ransomware attack on 20th May 2020. Blackbaud's cybersecurity team along with independent forensics experts and law enforcement were successful in preventing the blocking of system access and the full encryption of files. However, before being locked out, the cybercriminal removed a copy of a backup file containing personal information including a subset of Maynooth University data.

Blackbaud paid the cybercriminal's demand with confirmation that the copy they removed had been destroyed. Based on the nature of the incident, their research, and a third party (including law enforcement) investigation, Blackbaud do not believe that any data went beyond the cybercriminal, was or will be misused, or will be disseminated or otherwise made available publicly and are continuing to monitor this.

Q: How is Maynooth University responding?

Blackbaud is accelerating efforts to further harden its environment and address the security gaps identified during the investigation and continues to monitor the situation.

On receiving notice from Blackbaud we launched an investigation and are taking the following steps:

- We are notifying affected parties of the Blackbaud security incident.
- We have informed the Data Protection Commissioner of the incident.
- We have continued to work with Blackbaud to understand the steps they have taken to address this and what actions they will take to increase their security.
- We are reviewing our relationship with Blackbaud as a service provider.

Q: What type of information was accessed?

Maynooth University data accessed by the attacker may have contained some of the following information:

- Basic details and contact information (e.g. name, date of birth, address, email)
- Education and professional information (e.g. qualifications received, profession)
- Details of engagement with the Development and Alumni Relations Office (e.g. event participation, donations, survey responses).

Q: Were password, bank account or credit card information affected?

No.

Blackbaud has confirmed that no bank account, credit card or social security numbers were among the data accessed. These files were encrypted, and that encryption kept that data secure.

Q: Why do you store information on alumni and supporters?

Upon graduation, the University transfers data, which you have consented to, such as contact information and degree attained to the Development and Alumni Relations Office. The office uses this data to coordinate engagement activities that allow alumni to stay in contact with the University, with one another and hear about news, events, and learning opportunities.

Q: What can I do to protect my data following this incident?

Blackbaud advises that there is no need for you to take any action. Blackbaud has assured us that no information has been disseminated. However, it is important to always remain vigilant and to report any suspicious activity to the proper authorities in your jurisdiction.

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An Garda Siochana have information resources available on their website accessible here:

<https://www.garda.ie/en/Crime/Cyber-crime/>

Q: Is my data safe? What is Maynooth's Data Protection Policy?

Yes. We regularly review our services, policies, and third-party providers to conduct due diligence and implement new measures to protect your data.

Maynooth University takes the security of your data seriously. You can read the Maynooth University Data Protection Policy here www.maynoothuniversity.ie/data-protection/

Q: Does this incident affect the Seanad register?

This incident relates to information stored with Blackbaud for use by the Development and Alumni Relations Office at Maynooth University. The Seanad Register is maintained by the NUI which is a separate entity.

Q: Where can I get more information about this incident?

See here www.blackbaud.com/securityincident to read more about the incident from Blackbaud.

Visit Maynooth University's website for more information www.maynoothuniversity.ie/daro/blackbaud-security-incident