About spam detection at the University

The University's Mail gateway checks all incoming external Email for the particular keywords and characteristics that are typical of junk mail or spam.

Spam scores

The gateway calculates a total spam score based on the number of spam-like features found in an Email. That spam score is added to the headers of the Email in the form: **X-Spam-Score: ++++++++ (7)**

The number of + signs is a whole number equivalent to the spam score that appears in brackets (7, in the example above). You don't usually see such headers when reading your Email. To see them in Outlook, double-click on a message to view it in a full window, the File tab and click the Properties button. Then look in the Internet Headers part.

**SPAM**

If a spam score exceeds a threshold value set by IT Services, we add the phrase **SPAM** to the start of its Subject field.

This alerts you to any mail that we think may be junk. Detecting spam remains an inexact science. From experience, although we know that messages with a Spam Score of 6 or more are usually spam, we cannot be 100% sure. Hence we always deliver the message to you.

Rules based on spam scores and **SPAM**

In summary, messages we identify as spam have:

- A subject field starting with **SPAM**
- A spam score such as: X-Spam-Score: ++++++++ (7)

You can use these two markers to create Rules in Outlook for dealing with your Spam.

Set up a simple spam filter

This moves all messages with **SPAM** in the Subject to your Outlook Junk Email folder.

**Note:** You'll need already to have at least one such message in your Inbox.

1. From your Inbox, select a message with **SPAM** in its subject field
2. Right-click that message and select Rules > Create Rule... from the pop-up menu
3. In the Create Rule dialog box:
   - check the Subject Contains checkbox and edit that text field to read only the text **SPAM**
   - check the Move Email to folder checkbox
   - Click the Select Folder button
4. From the Rules and Alerts dialog box:
   - browse to and select Junk Email folder
   - click OK
   - click OK again
Creating Sophisticated Rules to Handle Spam

Start the Rules Wizard
1. From the File menu select Manage Rules and Alerts
2. With the Email Rules tab foremost, click the New Rule button
3. From the Rules Wizard dialog, under Start from a blank rule, select the option to Apply rule on messages I receive

Set the conditions to match
1. Click the Next button to view Which condition(s) do you want to check
2. Under Step 1: Select condition(s), check the options with specific words in the subject and with specific words in the message header
3. Under Step 2: Edit the rule description (click an underlined value), click on the first link, for specific words
4. In the Search Text field, type **SPAM**
5. Click Add, then click OK to return to the Rules Wizard
6. Still under Step 2, now click on the second link, for specific words
7. In the Search Text field, type ++++++++ Make sure there are 10 plus (+) symbols
8. Click Add, then click OK to return to the Rules Wizard
9. Click the Next button to view the What do you want to do with the message? Dialog

Choose what actions to take
1. Under Step 1: Select action(s), check the permanently delete it option
2. A warning message appears: Are you sure you want the permanent delete action?
3. Click Yes
4. Click the Next button to view the Are there any exceptions? dialog
5. Review the list of exceptions that you can set for the rule and check any that you wish to apply
6. Click the Next button
7. Give the rule an appropriate name, e.g. SPAM High
8. Click the Finish button
9. A warning message appears stating that the rule you have just created is a client-only rule, and will process when Outlook is running. Click OK.

Further information and help
Use MyIT to log calls with the IT Service Desk: https://myit.abdn.ac.uk
For IT training materials, see www.abdn.ac.uk/tad