

CASE STUDY A

THE SCHOOL HACKER

This is the case of a 15-year-old student at a secondary school somewhere in the South-East of England. They were a well-respected student who was doing fine at school.

The student was getting help from one of their teachers one day and watched over the teacher's shoulder as the teacher typed in their username and password to log on to the computer. The student remembered the username and password.

A little while later the student was on their own, sat down at a computer. They logged in using the teacher's username and password. They had a look around the teacher's account.

The student found an email which contained the GCSE results for all of the students who had just left, well before GCSE result day had come.

The student published some GCSE results for students they did not know on Twitter. They asked if anyone wanted to see more results.

Fortunately, someone told the school staff what was going on. The student was identified and the Tweets taken down before many people saw them. The account compromise was locked down with the teacher's password changed.

The Police were called and the student investigated for a criminal offence. The school expressed a desire not to ruin their student's future with a criminal record.

Nobody whose GCSE results had been published wished to have the student prosecuted.

The student was given a form of restorative justice – 'Conditional Caution'. This is a low-level criminal record. They had to apologise to their Victims and write an essay on the Computer Misuse Act.

Think About The Case

- What was the Crime?
- Who was the Victim?
- What was the Harm?
- Was the punishment right?

CASE STUDY B

THE DDoSER

This is the case of a 17-year-old student studying at a Further Education College. They were studying a number of courses including Computing.

The student was one of several who felt disgruntled about the level of support they were receiving on a key piece of Computing coursework.

The student in question decided to act in revenge. They found, paid for and used an online website to target the College with a Distributed Denial of Service (DDoS) attack. This is where a massive number (thousands to millions) of tiny electronic data packages are fired at the College's internet connection every second, overwhelming it and stopping it from talking to anything else on the internet.

The attack caused disruption. The student repeated it several times and increased the scale of the attack (number of packages per second) until they had not only knocked the College off the internet but, without meaning to, also the local housing estate the College was in because the attack was that big it knocked out the local telecoms substation.

The Police were called and the student identified and interviewed under caution. They admitted the attack, showed remorse and expressed that it had got out of hand.

The College suspended the student and only allowed them back for final exams. They did not want to criminalise the student as they had a potentially bright future.

The student was given a 'Community Resolution' – a low-level criminal record that requires some restorative actions to make up for what they did. The student had to apologise as well as learn the Computer Misuse Act and return to the college to present this to the other students.

Think About The Case

- What was the Crime?
- Who was the Victim?
- What was the Harm?
- Was the punishment right?

CASE STUDY C

THE CYBER TERRORIST

This is the case of a 15-year-old who became a Cyber Criminal. They were fairly competent with computers and good at manipulating people – known as social engineering.

The 15-year-old became the leader of a Cyber Organised Crime Group on the internet. The other members were from all over the world including others in the UK and in the USA.

They attacked various targets and bragged about it on Twitter.

The 15-year-old ended up targeting members of the US Government. They managed to get access to the home broadband and telephone account of senior members of the Department of Homeland Security and became abusive to their children.

They then got access to the US Law Enforcement Portal system which gave all Police and FBI in the USA access to criminal records and details of Officers and Agents. They found and leaked the details of 20,000 undercover Police and FBI onto the 'Dark Web' – a questionable part of the internet used by criminals only accessible with extra technology.

All of the members of the Organised Crime Group were arrested including the 15-year-old. It took a long time to bring their case to Court as there were lots of arguments about various parts of the case.

They were 18 years-old when convicted. They were sent to **prison for 2 years** and went to HMP Belmarsh – one of the worst in the UK – and called a Cyber Terrorist by the Judge.

For 5 years everything they do on the internet is monitored and controlled by Police. If they ever travel to the USA they will be arrested and imprisoned by the US Police.

They are unlikely to ever work in Cyber and getting any job may be difficult.

Think About The Case

- What was the Crime?
- Who was the Victim?
- What was the Harm?
- Was the punishment right?

CASE STUDY D

THE HISTORIAN



This is the case of a 22-year-old with Autism. They have lots of computer skills which were entirely self-taught. They decided to illegally hack their way into Microsoft – the computing company who make Windows which most of us use on our computers. Their intent was bizarre to most of us – they had read a book which suggested there were versions of Windows never released to the public and they wanted to preserve these for history.

They did not take long to break through Microsoft's security and before long they had made it to a very sensitive part of Microsoft – a computer called a server which was getting ready to release the next updates to all copies of Windows in the world. They were in a position that they could have done anything to that update such as putting a virus on every computer, or programming it to steal data from people.

They were sharing access with others they knew only on the internet. They believed that these other people had a similar interest in historic software. The Police investigation later found some of these people were from countries which are not the best friends with the USA or UK. A number of these people stole secret files from Microsoft and some were published for anyone to see. It cost Microsoft at least £1.5 million.

The breach was found and the FBI called. They worked out the person responsible was in the South of England and the UK Police arrested them.

They received 15 months in prison, suspended for 2 years, and an order for 5 years that lets Police monitor all their technology and anything they do online.

The talent they have was wasted as most Cyber companies now consider the risk to great to hire this person.

Think About The Case

- What was the Crime?
- Who was the Victim?
- What was the Harm?
- Was the punishment right?

CASE STUDY E

MARCUS HUTCHINS

This is the case of Marcus Hutchins, a 25-year-old British man from the South-West of England. He was working as a Cyber Security malicious software ('malware') investigator when in 2017 a computer virus called 'Wannacry' struck the world. This virus was something called ransomware – it locked up computers with encryption and demanded money to unlock the files and computer. The problem was that it hit 200,000 or more computers around the world including lots in the UK National Health Service (NHS).

Marcus investigated and found a solution to the ransomware which was incredibly effective. He was hailed a hero around the world and given awards, money and a year of free pizza!

Marcus became famous and was invited to talk around the world. He was working in the USA when it all went wrong...

It was discovered that 2 years before he became famous, he had been involved in writing computer viruses used by criminals and fraudsters to steal money from people.

Marcus was arrested very publicly at a big conference and put in prison awaiting trial.

Eventually he admitted to a number of charges and was sentenced to prison time which he had already served. He was deported from the USA back to Britain and will never be allowed back.



Think About The Case

- What was the Crime?
- Who was the Victim?
- What was the Harm?
- Was the punishment right?