University of Leeds

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LLM Cyberlaw: Information Technology, Law and Society

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SAFER DEVELOPMENTS

Security considerations within software development are beginning to make inroads, according to a poll of 902 certified information security professionals. When asked whether their organisation currently followed a secure software development process, 41 per cent said yes. Nearly 37 per cent said that while they did not, they followed established best practices for secure software development. This did however leave a significant 22 per cent with no formal measures in place to ensure security in software development.

"There is nothing that we do in our daily lives that doesn't employ some software or other. Further, end users and real customers are more dependent on software and applications nowadays. All of these make the need for better and more secure software and applications a pressing problem that needs to be solved," comments John Colley, managing director (EMEA, (ISC)²), which, following consultation with specialists worldwide, decided in 2008 to add the Certified Secure Software Lifecycle Professional (CSSLP) certification to its programme.

Does your organisation currently follow a secure software development process?

- Yes, 42% (91 of 217)
- No, 22% (47 of 217)
- No, not in place, but following best practice 37% (81 of 217)

Formal measures not in place, but following best practice 37%

Source: (ISC)²/SC Magazine survey

LEEDS CYBER LAW MA FOCUSES ON INFOSEC CHALLENGES

Over ten years ago, the University of Leeds’ law programme became the first in the UK to offer a masters course in cyber law. Now called ‘LL.M. Cyber law: Information technology, law and society’, the course continues to develop rapidly, each year attracting 12-15 graduate students from all over the world.

“They are a mixed group, interested in pursuing careers as IT practitioners, legal professionals, law enforcement, even in political science and sociology,” says programme leader Dr Subhajit Basu.

He describes the Leeds programme as unique in its breadth, given its insistence on stepping behind the legal framework to promote an understanding of IS challenges - crime, commercial and intellectual property, access - before examining the legal and technology solutions.

“This gives us the opportunity to look at what form of regulations should exist before discussing existing legislation, or whether technology should provide the solution,” says Basu, adding that the course covers UK and EU law, with aspects of Asian and US law too. Given the breadth of the subject, there are now five lecturers on the Leeds cyber law team.