19. Computer misuse

This chapter examines computer misuse, a collective term for a number of criminal offences committed by means of a computer, often through access to the internet, including computer hacking (unauthorized access), denial-of-service attacks, and the creation and distribution of computer viruses and other malware. It first discusses hacking, focusing on employee hackers and external hackers, and then looks at the political debate surrounding the UK’s Computer Misuse Act 1990, and extradition centred on the cases of hackers Gary McKinnon and Laurie Love. The chapter also considers ‘digital criminal damage’ associated with the creation and distribution of computer viruses, along with cases of web defacement and mail-bombing.
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