

Homework 4

1. What does the principle of least privilege say?
2. In which of the following situations can the access control mechanism of Unix file permissions be used?
 - (a) Alice wants to have her files readable, except for her office mates.
 - (b) Bob and Sam want to share some secret files.
 - (c) Root wants some of her files to be public.
3. Explain what is meant by *Kerckhoffs' principle*.
4. How can a system that separates between *users* and *root* be of any help with buffer overflow attacks?
5. What does it mean that the program `passwd` has the `setuid` bit set? Why is this necessary?
6. Which permissions does the program `login` normally have and why is this needed?
7. The variable `PATH` is a shell variable in UNIX which lists all directories that should be automatically searched for a program. For example if `PATH` contains the directory `/usr/bin` and the program `ls` is stored there, then a user does not need to type `/usr/bin/ls` to run this file, but `ls` suffices. The question is why is it a bad idea in general, but in particular for `root`, to have `.` as the first entry in ones variable `PATH`?
8. A Unix directory might look as follows:

```
$ ls -ld . * */*
drwxr-xr-x 1 ping staff 32768 Apr  2 2010 .
-rw----r-- 1 ping students 31359 Jul 24 2011 manual.txt
-r--rw--w- 1 bob students 4359 Jul 24 2011 report.txt
-rwsr--r-x 1 bob students 141359 Jun  1 2013 microedit
dr--r-xr-x 1 bob staff 32768 Jul 23 2011 src
-rw-r--r-- 1 bob staff 81359 Feb 28 2012 src/code.c
-r--rw---- 1 emma students 959 Jan 23 2012 src/code.h
```

with group memberships assigned as follows:

Members of group staff: ping, bob, emma
Members of group students: emma

The file `microedit` is a text editor, which allows its users to open, edit and save files. Note carefully that `microedit` has set its `setuid` flag. Fill in the access control matrix below that shows for each of the above five files, whether ping, bob, or emma are able to obtain the right to read (R) or replace (W) its contents using the editor `microedit`.

	<code>manual.txt</code>	<code>report.txt</code>	<code>microedit</code>	<code>src/code.c</code>	<code>src/code.h</code>
ping					
bob					
emma					

- In the context of which information flow should be protected, explain briefly the differences between the *read rule* of the Bell-LaPadula access policy and the Biba access policy. Do the same for the *write rule*.