

Data Protection Policy

[QP1.24]

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1.0 Policy

1.1 Introduction

The College needs to obtain and process certain information about its employees, students and other individuals to allow it to register students, organise courses, recruit and pay staff, and to comply with its legal obligations to funding bodies and the government, etc. To comply with the law, information must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and not disclosed to any other person unlawfully. The College must therefore adhere to the Data Protection Principles which are set out in the Data Protection Act 1998 (the 1998 Act). These Principles state that personal data shall:

- be obtained and processed fairly and lawfully
- be obtained for a specific purpose and not be processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose
- be adequate, relevant and not excessive
- be accurate and up to date
- not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose
- be processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- be kept safe from unauthorised access, accidental loss or destruction
- not be transferred to a country outwith the European Economic Area, unless that country has equivalent levels of protection of personal data

The College, all staff or others who process personal information must ensure that they comply with these principles at all times. In order to ensure that this happens, the College has adopted this policy.

1.2 Status of The Policy

This policy does not form part of the formal contract of employment but it is a condition of employment that employees will abide by the rules and policies of the College. Any failure to follow the policy may result in disciplinary proceedings.

1.3 Right of Access To Information

Staff, students and other users of the College have the right to access personal data held about them by the College, whether in manual or electronic format.

1.4 The College's Responsibilities

- The College is committed to protecting the right of individuals to privacy with respect to the processing of their personal data.

- Under the terms of the Data Protection Act, the College is the Data Controller and ultimate responsibility for compliance with the Act lies with the College.
- All staff in managerial or supervisory roles have a responsibility to ensure good information handling practice in College procedures.

1.5 Staff Responsibilities

- When processing personal data about students or colleagues, staff must comply with the Data Protection Principles and any detailed guidance in the Data Protection Procedure.
- Staff are responsible for the security of the data they process and for ensuring that it is not disclosed to anyone who is not entitled to it.
- Staff are also data subjects. They should ensure that any information they supply to the College in connection with their employment is accurate and up to date. The College cannot be held accountable for errors from changes about which it has not been informed.

1.6 Interpretation

All queries about the interpretation of the legislation which are not clear from the policy or associated procedures should be referred to the Director of Information Management.

2.0 Justification

This policy defines how the College meets its responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998

3.0 Link to Strategic Plan

This policy contributes to the achievement of Strategic Objective 4.

4.0 Exemptions

This policy sets out the responsibilities of staff in relation to the Data Protection Act 1998

5.0 Related Procedures

This policy is linked to the Data Protection Procedure and to the Staff Registration Guide: Data Protection – Guidelines for Staff and to the internet and e-mail Acceptable Use Policy and Procedure.