

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

Introduction

The University of Gloucestershire recognises its responsibility and is committed to a policy of preserving the confidentiality of data as required by the Data Protection Act 1998.

The University retains and processes information about staff, students, research subjects and other users in order to fulfil its purpose and its legal obligations to funding bodies and government. To comply with the law, information must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and securely and not be disclosed to any third person unlawfully.

Status of Policy

The University's Senior Management Group has approved this policy. Any breach of the Data Protection Policy may result in the University's disciplinary procedures being instigated.

Any person who feels that this policy has not been adhered to in respect of their own personal data should raise this with their Head of Department or the University's Data Protection Officer.

Responsibilities

- The University is the Data Controller under the Data Protection Act, and is responsible for the implementation of the Act
- The University has appointed a Data Protection Officer to handle day to day issues which arise, and to provide members of the University with training and guidance on Data Protection issues to ensure they are aware of their obligations
- All staff and students are responsible for ensuring that any personal data supplied to the University is accurate and up to date. The University should be immediately informed of any changes to the information which they have provided
- Staff are to be aware of the University's Information Related Policies and Strategies (<http://www.glos.ac.uk/publications/irsp/index.cfm>). Staff will also sign and adhere to the System Security Agreement when registering to use Student Records on-line
- Research subjects are to be aware of Appendix 6 of the Research Ethics: A Handbook of Principles and Procedure, which provides information on Privacy and confidentiality and can be found at <http://resources.glos.ac.uk/currentstudents/research/ethics/appendix-10.cfm>

Consent

Students are informed about how their data will be processed when they agree to the Data Processing Consent Notice upon registration.

Upon the acceptance of employment at the university, staff consent to the processing and storage of their data as per the arrangements within the Personnel Handbook.

Data Security

All staff and students are responsible for ensuring that personal data is held securely and is not disclosed to any unauthorised third parties. This applies to electronic and paper records. Any unauthorised disclosure will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

Data Retention

The University will retain some items of information for longer than others. The following information about students will be kept indefinitely:

- Name
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Nationality
- Academic achievements, including coursework marks

The Department of Personnel and Staff Development will keep information relating to individual staff members for a maximum of 7 years from the end of their employment. Those individuals who were unsuccessful when applying for a position at the university will have their information kept for 6 months subject to any changes in existing legislation. Other information relating to Income Tax, Maternity Pay etc, will be retained for the statutory time limits. Certain Information required to meet the requirements of particular Health and Safety Legislation relating to particular medical tests will be kept for the statutory time limits.

The Right of Access to Information

The Data Protection Act 1998 provides an individual with the right to access personal data relating to him / her which is held by the University. This applies to data held electronically and also manual records that are in a relevant filing system.

Any individual who wishes to exercise this right should make the request to the Data Protection Officer using a Subject Access Request form. This is available on the University website at: <http://resources.glos.ac.uk/policies/dataprotection/> or by contacting the Data Protection Officer.

The University will charge an administration fee of £10 for each request received, and will only release any information upon receipt of the completed Subject Access Request form, along with proof of identity and the administration fee. The requested information will be provided within 40 days of receipt of the completed form, unless there is sufficient reason for delay.

The right of access applies to all individuals, both staff and students.

Certain information (for example confidential references given by a third party) will not be disclosed to staff without obtaining the referee's consent to disclose the information.

Notification

The University is required to notify the Information Commissioner with details of the personal data it is processing on an annual basis. The details of this notification can be found on the Information Commissioner's website.

This Policy was approved in June 2006 and will be reviewed on a regular basis.