

Data Protection Policy

1. Overview

The College's reputation and future growth are dependent on the way the College manages and protects personal data. Protecting the confidentiality and integrity of personal data is a key responsibility of everyone within the College.

As an organisation that collects, uses and stores personal data about its students, prospective students, alumni, parents / guardians, employees, job applicants, visitors, Corporation Members and contacts for a wide range of external stakeholders and partnerships, the College recognises that having controls around the collection, use, retention and destruction of personal data is important in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and, where applicable, the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 (as amended) ("PECR")

The College has implemented this Data Protection Policy to ensure all colleagues are aware of what they must do to ensure the correct and lawful treatment of Personal Data. This will maintain confidence in the College and will provide for a successful working and learning environment for all.

Colleagues will receive a copy of this Policy when they start and may receive periodic revisions of this Policy. This Policy does not form part of any member of the College Staff's contract of employment and the College reserves the right to change this Policy at any time. All colleagues are obliged to comply with this Policy at all times.

If you have any queries concerning this Policy, please contact our Data Protection Officer,

2. About this policy

This Policy (and the other policies and documents referred to in it) sets out the basis on which the College will collect and use Personal Data either where the College collects it from individuals itself, or where it is provided to the College by third parties. It also sets out rules on how the College handles uses, transfers and stores Personal Data.

It applies to all Personal Data stored electronically, in paper form, or otherwise.

3. Definitions

3.1. College – City of Bristol College

3.2. College Staff/colleagues – Any College employee, worker or contractor who accesses any of the College's Personal Data and will include employees, consultants, contractors, and temporary staff hired to work on behalf of the College.

3.3. Controller – Any entity (e.g. company, organisation or person) that makes its own decisions about how it is going to collect and use Personal Data.

A Controller is responsible for compliance with Data Protection Laws. City of Bristol College will be viewed as a Controller of Personal Data if it decides what Personal Data the College is going to collect and how it will use it.

3.4. Data Protection Laws – The UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018, the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025, and, where applicable, the Privacy and Electronic Communications (EC Directive) Regulations 2003 (as amended) ("PECR")

3.5. Data Protection Officer – Our Data Protection Officer is Lynette Wilson, who can be contacted via email: lynette.wilson@cityofbristol.ac.uk

3.6. EEA – Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

3.7. ICO – the Information Commissioner's Office, the UK's data protection regulator.

3.8. Individuals – Living individuals who can be identified, *directly or indirectly*, from information that the College has. For example, an individual could be identified directly by name, or indirectly by gender, job role and office location if you can use this information to work out who they are. Individuals include employees, students, parents, visitors and potential students. Individuals also include partnerships and sole traders.

3.9. Personal Data – Any information about an Individual (see definition above) which identifies them or allows them to be identified in conjunction with other information that is held. It includes information of this type, even if used in a business context.

Personal data is defined broadly and covers things such as name, address, email address (including in a business context, email addresses of Individuals in companies such as firstname.surname@organisation.com), IP address and also more sensitive types of data such as trade union membership, genetic data and religious beliefs. These more sensitive types of data are called "Special Categories of Personal Data" and are defined below.

3.10. Processor – Any entity (e.g. company, organisation or person) which accesses or uses Personal Data on the instruction of a Controller.

A Processor is a third party that processes Personal Data on behalf of a Controller. This is usually as a result of the outsourcing of a service by the Controller or the provision of services by the Processor which involve access to or use of Personal Data. Examples include: where software support for a system, which contains Personal Data, is provided by someone outside the business; cloud arrangements; and mail fulfilment services.

3.11. Special Categories of Personal Data – Personal Data that reveals a person's racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data (i.e. information about their inherited or acquired genetic characteristics), biometric data (i.e. information about their physical, physiological or behavioural characteristics such as facial images and fingerprints), physical or mental health, sex life or sexual orientation and criminal record. Special Categories of Personal Data are subject to additional controls in comparison to ordinary Personal Data.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. All College Staff must comply with this policy.

4.2 Colleagues must take all steps to ensure there is no unauthorised access to Personal Data whether by other College Staff who are not authorised to see such Personal Data or by people outside the College.

Colleagues should keep all data secure, including taking sensible precautions and following the guidelines below:

4.2.1. College data should not be disclosed to unauthorised people, either within the College or externally.

4.2.2. Appropriate controls should be considered for any data sharing

4.2.3 Colleagues should request help from their line manager or the Data Protection Officer if they are unsure about any aspect of data protection.

In addition to the responsibilities above relating to all colleagues, the following people have key areas of responsibility:

4.3.1 The Senior Management Team is responsible for oversight of how data is stored within their directorates and are responsible for maintaining the Information Asset Register for their directorate.

4.3.2 All College managers are responsible for:

- ensuring they are satisfied with the legality of holding and using the information collected by colleagues in their area;
- ensuring that the use of personal data complies with all appropriate College policies
- ensuring that colleagues they manage undertake appropriate training;
- ensuring any subject access requests and requests from individuals with regard to their rights over their personal data are notified to the Data Protection Officer;
- raise any concerns, notify any breaches or errors, and report anything suspicious or contradictory to this policy or our legal obligations to the Data Protection Officer without delay;
- checking and approving with third parties that handle the company's data any contracts or agreement regarding data processing.

4.3.4 The Data Protection Officer is responsible for:

- Keeping Corporation Board updated about data protection responsibilities, risks and issues.
- Reviewing all data protection procedures and related policies in line with an agreed schedule.
- Arranging data protection training and advice for the people covered by this policy.
- Handling data protection questions from colleagues and anyone else covered by this policy.
- Logging and overseeing Subject Access Requests
- Maintaining the College ICO Data Protection registration.
- Make recommendations regarding Data Protection/UK GDPR Policy and good practice and reviewing DPIAs

5. Data protection principles

5.1. When using Personal Data, Data Protection Laws require that the College complies with the following principles. These principles require Personal Data to be:

5.1.1. processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner;

5.1.2. collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes;

5.1.3. adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary for the purposes for which it is being processed;

5.1.4. accurate and kept up to date, meaning that every reasonable step must be taken to ensure that Personal Data that is inaccurate is erased or rectified as soon as possible;

5.1.5. kept for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is being processed; and

5.1.6. processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the Personal Data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

5.2. These principles are considered in more detail in the remainder of this Policy.

5.3. In addition to complying with the above requirements the College also has to demonstrate in writing that it complies with them. The College has policies, procedures and guidance in place, including this Policy and the documentation referred to in it, to ensure that the College can demonstrate its compliance.

6. Lawful use of personal data

6.1. In order to collect and/or use Personal Data lawfully the College needs to be able to show that its use meets one of a number of legal grounds: [UK GDPR guidance and resources | ICO](#) The College processes data under various legal grounds which are listed in the individual privacy notices.

6.2. In addition when the College collects and/or uses Special Categories of Personal Data, the College has to show that one of a number of additional conditions is met: [Special category data | ICO](#)

6.3. The College has carefully assessed how it uses Personal Data and how it complies with the obligations set out in paragraphs 6.1 and 6.2. If the College changes how it uses Personal Data, the College needs to update this record and may also need to notify Individuals about the change. If College Staff therefore intend to change how they use Personal Data at any point they must notify the Data Protection Officer who will decide whether their intended use requires amendments to be made and any other controls which need to apply.

7. Transparent processing – privacy notices

7.1. Where the College collects Personal Data directly from Individuals, the College will inform them about how the College uses their Personal Data via the privacy notice. The College has adopted the following privacy notices:

- Privacy notice for students
- Privacy notice for staff
- Privacy notice for employers
- Privacy notice for General Public
- Privacy notice for Corporation (College Governors)
- Privacy notice for candidates

7.2. If the College receives personal data about an Individual from other sources, the College will provide the Individual with a privacy notice about how the College will use their personal data. This will be provided as soon as reasonably possible and in any event within one month.

7.3. If the College changes how it uses Personal Data, the College may need to notify Individuals about the change. If College Staff therefore intend to change how they use Personal Data please notify the Data Protection Officer who will decide whether the College Staff's intended use requires amendments to be made to the privacy notices and any other controls which need to apply.

8. Data quality – ensuring the use of accurate, up to date and relevant personal data

8.1. Data Protection Laws require that the College only collects and processes Personal Data to the extent that it is required for the specific purpose(s) notified to the Individual in a privacy notice (see paragraph 7 above) and as set out in the College's record of how it uses personal data. The College is also required to ensure that the Personal Data the College holds is accurate and kept up to date.

8.2. All colleagues who collect and record Personal Data shall ensure that the Personal Data is recorded accurately, is kept up to date and shall also ensure that they limit the collection and recording of Personal Data to that which is adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purpose for which it is collected and used.

8.3. All colleagues who obtain Personal Data from sources outside the College shall take reasonable steps to ensure that the Personal Data is recorded accurately, is up to date and limited to that which is adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purpose for which it is collected and used. This does not require College Staff to independently check the Personal Data obtained.

8.4. In order to maintain the quality of Personal Data, all colleagues that access Personal Data shall ensure that they review, maintain and update it to ensure that it remains accurate, up to date, adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purpose for which it is collected and used. Please note that this does not apply to Personal Data which the College must keep in its original form (e.g. for legal reasons or that which is relevant to an investigation).

8.5. The College recognises the importance of ensuring that Personal Data is amended, rectified, erased or its use restricted where this is appropriate under Data Protection Laws. The College has a Rights of Individuals Policy and a Rights of Individuals Procedure which set out how the College responds to requests relating to these issues. Any request from an individual for the amendment, rectification, erasure or restriction of the use of their Personal Data should be dealt with in accordance with those documents.

9. Personal data must not be kept for longer than needed

9.1. Data Protection Laws require that the College does not keep Personal Data longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes for which the College collected it.

9.2. The College has assessed the types of Personal Data that it holds and the purposes it uses it for and has set retention periods for the different types of Personal Data processed by the College, the reasons for those retention periods and how the College securely deletes Personal Data at the end of those periods.

9.3. If colleagues feel that a particular item of Personal Data needs to be kept for more or less time than the retention period, for example because there is a requirement of law, or if College Staff have any questions about this Policy or the College's Personal Data retention practices, they should contact the Data Protection Officer for guidance.

10. Data security

The College takes information security very seriously and the College has security measures against unlawful or unauthorised processing of Personal Data and against the accidental loss of, or damage to, Personal Data. The College has in place technical and organisational measures to maintain the security of all Personal Data from the point of collection to the point of destruction.

11. Data breach

11.1. Whilst the College takes information security very seriously, it is possible that a security breach could happen which may result in the unauthorised loss of, access to, deletion of or alteration of Personal Data. If this happens it is a Personal Data breach and colleagues must comply with the College's Data Breach Notification Policy. Please see paragraphs 11.2 and 11.3 for examples of what can be a Personal Data breach.

11.2. Personal Data breach is defined very broadly and is effectively any failure to keep Personal Data secure, which leads to the accidental or unlawful loss (including loss of access to), destruction, alteration or unauthorised disclosure of Personal Data. Whilst most Personal Data breaches happen as a result of action taken by a third party, they can also occur as a result of something someone internal does.

11.3. There are three main types of Personal Data breach which are as follows:

11.3.1. Confidentiality breach - where there is an unauthorised or accidental disclosure of, or access to, Personal Data e.g. hacking, accessing internal systems that a member of staff is not authorised to access, accessing Personal Data stored on a lost laptop, phone or other device, people "blagging" access to Personal Data they have no right to access, putting the wrong letter in the wrong envelope, sending an email to the wrong student, or disclosing information over the phone to the wrong person;

11.3.2. Availability breach - where there is an accidental or unauthorised loss of access to, or destruction of, Personal Data e.g. loss of a memory stick, laptop or device, denial of service attack, infection of systems by ransom ware, deleting Personal Data in error, loss of access to Personal Data stored on systems, inability to restore access to Personal Data from back up, or loss of an encryption key; and

11.3.3. Integrity breach - where there is an unauthorised or accidental alteration of Personal Data.

12. Appointing contractors who access the College's personal data

12.1. If the College appoints a contractor who is a Processor of the College's Personal Data, Data Protection Laws require that the College only appoints them where the College has carried out sufficient due diligence and only where the College has appropriate contracts in place.

12.2. One requirement of UK GDPR is that a Controller must only use Processors who meet the requirements of the UK GDPR and protect the rights of individuals. This means that data protection due diligence should be undertaken on both new and existing suppliers. Once a Processor is appointed they should be audited periodically to ensure that they are meeting the requirements of their contract in relation to Data Protection.

12.3. Any contract where an organisation appoints a Processor must be in writing.

12.4. You are considered as having appointed a Processor where you engage someone to perform a service for you and as part of it they may get access to your Personal Data. Where you appoint a Processor you, as Controller remain responsible for what happens to the Personal Data.

12.5. UK GDPR requires the contract with a Processor to contain the following obligations as a minimum:

12.5.1. to only act on the written instructions of the Controller;

12.5.2. to not export Personal Data without the Controller's instruction;

12.5.3. to ensure staff are subject to confidentiality obligations;

12.5.4. to take appropriate security measures;

12.5.5. to only engage sub-processors with the prior consent (specific or general) of the Controller and under a written contract;

12.5.6. to keep the Personal Data secure and assist the Controller to do so;

12.5.7. to assist with the notification of Data Breaches and Data Protection Impact Assessments;

12.5.8. to assist with subject access/individuals' rights;

12.5.9. to delete/return all Personal Data as requested at the end of the contract;

12.5.10. to submit to audits and provide information about the processing; and

12.5.11. to tell the Controller if any instruction is in breach of the UK GDPR or other EU or member state data protection law.

12.6. In addition, the contract should set out:

12.6.1. The subject-matter and duration of the processing;

12.6.2. the nature and purpose of the processing;

12.6.3. the type of Personal Data and categories of individuals; and

12.6.4. the obligations and rights of the Controller.

13. Individuals' rights

13.1. UK GDPR gives individuals more control about how their data is collected and stored and what is done with it. Some existing rights of individuals have been expanded upon and some new rights have been introduced.

13.2. The different types of rights of individuals are reflected in this paragraph.

13.3. Subject Access Requests

13.3.1. Individuals have the right under the UK GDPR to ask a College to confirm what Personal Data they hold in relation to them and provide them with the data. The College is required to respond to requests by one month (with a possible extension if it is a complex request).

13.4. Right of Erasure (Right to be Forgotten)

13.4.1. This is a limited right for individuals to request the erasure of Personal Data concerning them where:

13.4.1.1. the use of the Personal Data is no longer necessary;

13.4.1.2. their consent is withdrawn and there is no other legal ground for the processing;

13.4.1.3. the individual objects to the processing and there are no overriding legitimate grounds for the processing;

13.4.1.4. the Personal Data has been unlawfully processed; and

13.4.1.5. the Personal Data has to be erased for compliance with a legal obligation.

13.4.2. In a marketing context, where Personal Data is collected and processed for direct marketing purposes, the individual has a right to object to processing at any time. Where the individual objects, the Personal Data must not be processed for such purposes.

13.5. Right of Data Portability

13.5.1. An individual has the right to request that data concerning them is provided to them in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format where:

13.5.1.1. the processing is based on consent or on a contract; and

13.5.1.2. the processing is carried out by automated means

13.5.2. This right isn't the same as subject access and is intended to give individuals a subset of their data.

13.6. The Right of Rectification and Restriction

13.6.1. Finally, individuals are also given the right to request that any Personal Data is rectified if inaccurate and to have use of their Personal Data restricted to particular purposes in certain circumstances.

13.7. The College will use all Personal Data in accordance with the rights given to Individuals' under Data Protection Laws, and will ensure that it allows Individuals to exercise their rights in accordance with the College's Rights of Individuals Policy and Rights of Individuals Procedure. Please familiarise yourself with these documents as they contain important obligations which College Staff need to comply with in relation to the rights of Individuals over their Personal Data.

14. Marketing and consent

14.1. The College will sometimes contact Individuals to send them marketing or to promote the College. Where the College carries out any marketing, Data Protection Laws require that this is only done in a legally compliant manner.

14.2. Marketing consists of any advertising or marketing communication that is directed to particular individuals. UK GDPR brought about several important changes for organisations that market to individuals, including:

14.2.1. providing more detail in their privacy notices, including for example whether profiling takes place; and

14.2.2. rules on obtaining consent will be stricter and will require an individual's "clear affirmative action"

14.3. Colleges also need to be aware of the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations (PECR) that sit alongside data protection. PECR apply to direct marketing i.e. a communication directed to particular individuals and covers any advertising/marketing material. It applies to electronic communication i.e. calls, emails, texts, faxes. PECR rules apply even if you are not processing any personal data

14.4. Consent is central to electronic marketing. The College will provide an un-ticked opt-in box.

14.5. Alternatively, the College may be able to market using a "soft opt in" if the following conditions were met:

14.5.1. contact details have been obtained in the course of a sale (or negotiations for a sale);

14.5.2. the College are marketing its own similar services; and

14.5.3. the College gives the individual a simple opportunity to refuse to opt out of the marketing, both when first collecting the details and in every message after that.

15. Automated decision making and profiling

15.1. Under Data Protection Laws there are controls around profiling and automated decision making in relation to Individuals.

Automated Decision Making happens where the College makes a decision about an individual solely by automated means without any human involvement and the decision has legal or other significant effects; and

Profiling happens where the College automatically uses Personal Data to evaluate certain things about an Individual.

15.2. Any Automated Decision Making or Profiling which the College carries out can only be done once the College is confident that it is complying with Data Protection Laws. If College Staff therefore wish to carry out any Automated Decision Making or Profiling College Staff must inform the Data Protection Officer.

15.3. College Staff must not carry out Automated Decision Making or Profiling without the approval of the Data Protection Officer. The College does not carry out Automated Decision Making or Profiling in relation to its employees.

16. Data protection impact assessments (DPIA)

16.1. The UK GDPR includes an obligation to risk assess whether any type of data processing would be likely to result in a high risk. This must therefore be included as a consideration for acquiring a new service, product or process. If there is deemed to be a high risk, the College should produce a Data Protection Impact Assessment ("DPIA"). A DPIA should be started as early as practical in the design of processing operations. A DPIA is not a prohibition on using Personal Data but is an assessment of issues affecting Personal Data which need to be considered before a new product/service/process is rolled out. The process is designed to:

16.1.1. describe the collection and use of Personal Data;

16.1.2. assess its necessity and its proportionality in relation to the purposes;

16.1.3. assess the risks to the rights and freedoms of individuals; and

16.1.4. the measures to address the risks.

16.2. A DPIA must be completed where the use of Personal Data is likely to result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals. The College uses the ICO's standard DPIA template which is available from the [intranet](#).

16.3. Where a DPIA reveals risks which are not appropriately mitigated the ICO must be consulted.

16.4. Where the College is launching or proposing to adopt a new process, product or service which involves Personal Data, the College needs to consider whether it needs to carry out a DPIA as part of the project initiation process. The College needs to carry out a DPIA at an early stage in the process so that the College can identify and fix problems with its proposed new process, product or service at an early stage, reducing the associated costs and damage to reputation, which might otherwise occur.

16.5. Situations where the College may have to carry out a Data Protection Impact Assessment include the following (please note that this list is not exhaustive):

16.5.1. large scale and systematic use of Personal Data for the purposes of Automated Decision Making or Profiling (see definitions above) where legal or similarly significant decisions are made;

16.5.2. large scale use of Special Categories of Personal Data, or Personal Data relating to criminal convictions and offences e.g. the use of high volumes of health data; or

16.5.3. systematic monitoring of public areas on a large scale e.g. CCTV cameras.

16.6. All DPIAs must be reviewed and approved by the Data Protection Officer.

17. Transferring personal data to a country outside the EEA

17.1. Data Protection Laws impose strict controls on Personal Data being transferred outside the EEA. Transfer includes sending Personal Data outside the EEA but also includes storage of Personal Data or access to it outside the EEA. It needs to be thought about whenever the College appoints a supplier outside the EEA or the College appoints a supplier with group companies outside the EEA which may give access to the Personal Data to staff outside the EEA.

17.2 There may be occasions where personal data held by the College is processed or stored outside the UK. Where this occurs, the College must ensure that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect the data, in line with UK data protection legislation. These safeguards may include:

- UK Government-approved adequacy regulations for the destination country;
- Standard Contractual Clauses (SCCs) with the organisation receiving the data;
- Technical and organisational measures such as encryption and access controls.

The College will only use reputable service providers who can demonstrate robust data protection and security practices.

18. Linked policies, procedures and guidance

- Data Breach Policy
- Data Breach Procedure
- Image Use Guidance
- Information Asset Register
- Data Retention Schedule
- IT Policy and Acceptable Use Procedures
- AI Guidance
- Privacy Notices
- Police involvement on College Premises (Protocol)
- Rights of Individuals Policy and Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct

Version	
Approved by:	Main Corporation Board
Date of approval:	July 2026
Date for Review:	July 2027
Lead Officer:	Director of Governance & Clerk to the Corporation as Data Protection Officer
Senior Manager responsible:	Director of Governance & Clerk to the Corporation