



## DATA PROTECTION POLICY

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This document sets out the Society's policy on the protection of information relating to employees. It covers personal data relating to employees who can be identified from the data and which is either processed automatically, e.g. through a computer or else forms part of a filing system e.g. personnel records.

The Society will ensure that data is always processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

In processing data the following principles will be adhered to:

- Personal data will be processed fairly and lawfully. Normally, the Society will seek to obtain the consent of the employee to the processing of personal data. In relation to the processing of sensitive personal data (which is personal data relating to race/ethnic origins, political, religious or other similar beliefs, medical condition, commission of any offence, criminal proceedings or sentences, or trade union membership), explicit consent to any processing will normally be obtained.
- Personal data will be obtained for one or more specified and lawful purposes, and will not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
- Personal data will be adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- Personal data will be accurate and, where appropriate, kept up to date.
- Personal data will not be retained for longer than is necessary.
- Personal data will be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects as defined by the 1998 Act.
- Appropriate measures will be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.

### **Access to Data**

Employees have the right to request that the Society specify whether personal data of which he or she is the subject is being processed by the Society and to be given a description of the data, the purposes for which it is being processed and to whom it may be disclosed.

Employees have the right to obtain a copy of any personal data held. To exercise this right a written request should be made to the People & Performance Department specifying the information sought. A charge of £10 will be made for the information and in accordance with the 1998 Act, shall be provided within the 40 day period following the date on which the Society is in receipt of both the written request and the £10 charge. Note that information requested which contains details relating to another individual will not normally be released (except in amended form) without that individual's consent.

### **Processing of Data**

The Society will conduct regular reviews of the information held by it to ensure the relevancy of the information it holds. Data will normally only be held for a limited period of time. Where an employee leaves the Society, personal data will be kept only for such a period as may be necessary to protect the interests of the Society and the employee.

Employees are under a duty to inform the Society of any changes to their current circumstances. Where an employee has concerns regarding the accuracy of personal data held by the Society, the employee should contact the People & Performance Department to request an amendment to the data.

## Security of Data

The Society will take appropriate measures to prevent unauthorised access to personal data and in particular any sensitive personal data held.

In particular, access to personal data by managers and other employees of the Society will be restricted only to those individuals who have legitimate business reasons for requiring the information.

Not only could such an event cause adverse publicity for the Society but if the employee is the person responsible for the infringement, the employee could be the subject of a personal criminal prosecution and liable to a fine. If the employee follows the advice given below and takes sensible and reasonable precautions to protect information in the employee's case there should be few, if any, problems.

- Observe to the letter any instruction or guidelines issued by the Society in relation to data protection and your work.
- Observe the data protection principles set out in the 1998 Act at all times.
- Take confidentiality and security seriously whether the employee considers the information to be sensitive or not. In particular:-
  - do not disclose your password;
  - change your password regularly;
  - do not gossip about Society data;
  - do not leave Society data in the street, on the train, or on the bus etc.;
  - do not take computer scrap paper home; and
  - do not allow unauthorised use of computer equipment issued by the Society
- Always ensure that data is input correctly. Do not delay in inputting new data when available.
- Do not make any oral or written reference to personal data held by the Society about any individual except to employees of the Society who need the information for their work or a registered recipient.
- Take great care to establish the identity of any person asking for personal information. Make sure that the person is entitled to receive the information.
- If an employee is asked by an individual to provide details of their personal information held by the Society the employee should ask that they put their request in writing and send it to the People & Performance Department. If the request is in writing pass it immediately to the People & Performance Department.
- Do not use personal information for any purpose other than your work for the Society.
- If the employee is in doubt about any matter to do with data protection do not guess - refer the matter to your manager immediately.

## **Whistleblowing**

This policy will in no way affect the rights of disclosure of information under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Please see the Whistleblowing policy for further information.

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