Document retention | Electoral Commission Data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers You are in the Data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers section Home Data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers View the navigation tree Go to main guidance section: Data protection guidance for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers Registering as a data controller Lawful basis for processing personal data Special categories of personal data Data protection impact assessments (DPIAs) Privacy notices - the right to be informed Inspecting council records as ERO Document retention Document retention policy Retention of election notices published on your website Data storage Using contractors and suppliers Data sharing agreements with external organisations Subject access requests Data protection breaches and sanctions Resources for Electoral Registration Officers and Returning Officers - Data protection Document retention Personal data processed for any purpose must not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose. Once the purpose for collecting the data has passed, you need to consider if there is a reason for you to retain that data. Data protection legislation does permit personal data to be stored for longer periods if, subject to the implementation of appropriate safeguards, the data will be processed solely for: archiving purposes in the public interest scientific purposes historical purposes statistical purposes Examples might include old electoral registers held to determine the eligibility of overseas applicants, or election results. You should practice data minimisation – don't ask for, and process, personal data if you don't need it. For every document you possess, ask yourself "for what reason am I keeping this document?" Last updated: 22 February 2023 Book traversal links for Document retention Inspecting council records as ERO Document retention policy