By answering this question you will understand:

* what is meant by information.
* your responsibilities for looking after it.

**We are all responsible**

You are responsible for collecting, storing and sharing information. This might include a project plan you are writing, a database of contact details, a handbook or a diary.

Information needs to be looked after, whether you’re at home or work. You would not want anyone to have access to your bank account details, in the same way it wouldn’t be appropriate for most people to see detailed information about your work.

You wouldn’t leave a letter from your bank on the bus or train. You need to treat the information you handle at work with the same care.

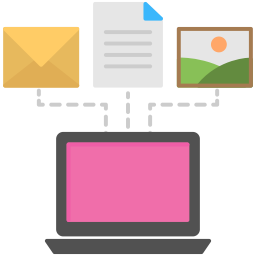
**More than names and addresses**

Information is a catch-all that covers other related words:

* data
* folders
* files
* research and surveys
* letters
* email
* costs, payments and accounting
* spreadsheets and databases
* video footage and photos

It is important you think about all the information you are responsible for at work. If we said ‘data’, you might only think about numbers and spreadsheets. Likewise, if we said ‘email’, you might only think about the security or number of emails that you send and receive.

Information is about any channel or document where the contents relate to individual people, processes or decisions.



Photos, email and post may contain personal information - not just data on a computer

Personal information is anything that might identify a living person:

1. The information may identify that person directly, such as a name and address
2. Two or more pieces of information may be used together to identify someone, such as a social media profile and a postcode

‘Special category data’ is information which is particularly sensitive. This information could create more significant risks to a person’s rights and freedoms, for example by putting them at risk of discrimination. Special category data includes information about someone’s race, religion or politics.

**Information you don’t need to look after**

Information that is publicly available (for example on our website) is not something you need to consider (although you should keep it up to date). For example, the address of Hackney Town Hall is public information. Information about the services Hackney Council provides is available on our website. The Council’s main contact details are also available for everyone.

Examples of information that would not be publicly known are personal contact details of staff, and details about what individuals or groups pay to Hackney, or the decisions we make on behalf of them. Any example like this should be considered information that needs to be looked after.

**Your responsibilities**

It is your responsibility to keep information safe. This includes:

* being careful to only collect or access information if you really need it to carry out your job.
* knowing what information you already have access to.
* knowing what information you should share, and with whom.
* reporting any security incidents.
* complying with individual rights by seeking advice or referring to the Information Management team as required.
* understanding an individual’s right to have personal data erased. This right to erasure is also referred to as the ‘the right to be forgotten’.

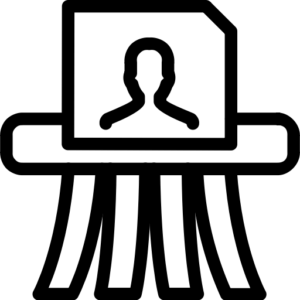
If you are managing a team, process, project or service where you are making decisions about personal information, it is important that everyone involved takes responsibility for their own information management.

There are some tools and processes available within the Council to help you with this. For example, the security that is in place for your work computer.

However, these tools and processes only cover a small part of the information you may be responsible for.

You need to ensure that an up to date record is kept of all the information that you manage or process. Dependant on the type of work you are doing, this record would form part of the Council’s Information Asset Register (IAR), or Application Register. These tools are a simple way to help you (and others) understand what information exists in the organisation and who can make decisions about it.

If you are responsible for a system or application within the Council, you would record details about the technical controls in place which safeguard personal information in the Application Register.



Keeping information safe includes understanding an individual's right to be forgotten and their data erased

**Knowing the difference between a data controller and a data processor**

The Council is categorised as a data controller, which means it is ultimately responsible for how information is processed. If you collect and process information in your role, you are required to ensure that the process is undertaken lawfully and for legitimate reasons.

On occasion, the Council may contract another organisation, a data processor, to process information on their behalf. This could be a commercial supplier or charity. If you work with third parties to process personal information, it is important you have confidence that they will handle the information in a lawful, professional and secure way.

It is the data processor’s responsibility to alert the Council of any breach.

As an employee of the Council you are not a data controller or a data processor, but an employee of the data controller.

**An example of a data processor and a data controller**

The Council wishes to create a calendar of events for children and young people over the summer holidays. An event management agency is contracted to assist in leading and running the activities.

In order to plan and deliver the events, the agency is given access to personal information about the children and young people. This access would be carefully managed but is necessary, in order for the events to be delivered successfully.

In this scenario, the agency would be the data processor, responsible for managing the personal information lawfully, and only as directed by the Council.

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**Tasks**

Basic

**Give an example of a data processor**

Can you give an example of a data processor (a third party) who might be contracted by the Council to process personal information?

If you are new to the Council, you may use examples from a previous role to answer the question.

Intermediate

**Decide whether or not to give access to information**

A colleague from another department has requested access to some information that you manage, which contains sensitive information.

What resource would you refer to and how would you decide whether to give them access or not?

Advanced

**Making changes to existing information**

An internal report relating to your department has recommended some changes to an application that you manage.

How would you approach making any changes to the application and assessing the associated potential risks to the information it processes?