

Data Protection Policy

Introduction

The National University of Ireland Maynooth needs to collect and use data (information) for a variety of purposes about its staff, students and other individuals who come in contact with the University. The purposes of processing data include the organisation and administration of courses, research activities, the recruitment and payment of staff, compliance with statutory obligations etc. Data Protection is the safeguarding of the privacy rights of individuals in relation to the processing of personal data. The Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003 confer rights on individuals as well as responsibilities on those persons processing personal data. Personal data, both automated and manual, are data relating to a living individual who is or can be identified, either from the data or from the data in conjunction with other information.

Purpose of this policy

This policy is a statement of the University's commitment to protect the rights and privacy of individuals in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and the Data Protection (Amendment) Act 2003.

Principles of the Acts

The University will administer its responsibilities under the legislation in accordance with the eight stated data protection principles outlined in the Act as follows:

1. Obtain and process information fairly

The University will obtain and process personal data fairly and in accordance with the fulfilment of its functions.

2. Keep it only for one or more specified, explicit and lawful purposes

The University will keep data for purposes that are specific, lawful and clearly stated and the data will only be processed in a manner compatible with these purposes.

3. Use and disclose it only in ways compatible with these purposes

The University will only disclose personal data that is necessary for the purpose/s or compatible with the purpose/s for which it collects and keeps the data.

4. Keep it safe and secure

The University will take appropriate security measures against unauthorised access to, or alteration, disclosure or destruction of, the data and against their accidental loss or destruction. The University is aware that high standards of security are essential for all personal information.

5. Keep it accurate, complete and up-to-date

The University will have procedures that are adequate to ensure high levels of data accuracy.

The University will examine the general requirement to keep personal data up-to-date. The University will put in place appropriate procedures to assist staff in keeping data up-to-date.

6. Ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive

Personal data held by the University will be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose/s for which it is kept.

7. Retain it for no longer than is necessary for the purpose or purposes

The University will have a policy on retention periods for personal data.

8. Give a copy of his/her personal data to that individual, on request

The University will have procedures in place to ensure that data subjects can exercise their rights under the Data Protection legislation.

Responsibility

The University has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with the Data Protection legislation. However, all employees of the University who collect and/or control the contents and use of personal data are also responsible for compliance with the Data Protection legislation. The University will provide support, assistance, advice and training to all departments, offices and staff to ensure it is in a position to comply with the legislation. The University has appointed a Data Protection Officer who will assist the University and its staff in complying with the Data Protection legislation.

Procedures and Guidelines

This policy supports the provision of a structure to assist in the University's compliance with the Data Protection legislation, including the provision of best practice guidelines and procedures in relation to all aspects of Data Protection.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed regularly in light of any legislative or other relevant indications.

Freedom of Information Office

Subject to review in 2015