**An individual’s rights to their personal information.**

**Introduction**

Data protection legislation provides individuals with a number of specific rights. One of these is the ‘right of access’ as detailed in Article 15 of the General Data Protection Regulation which allows individuals to access the personal data held about them by the University.

**Submitting a request**

Individuals can make a request by contacting the University’s Compliance Unit who deal with ‘Subject Access Requests’ or SAR’s. Requests for information from individuals should be directed to dataprotection@southwales.ac.uk.

It is helpful if, when making a request, individuals are as specific as possible in respect of the type of information they are seeking e.g. by naming individuals who could hold information, identifying locations where information could be held and providing enough context to make a search meaningful.

To ensure that information is only provided to those entitled to receive it, the University requires photographic identification to verify the identity of the individual. Valid identification would include – copy of passport, driving licence, student/staff ID cards.

There is no charge to the individual in making a SAR however if a request is unfounded or excessive the University is able to charge a reasonable fee for the administrative cost in complying with the request.

**University actions**

Upon receiving a request the University will, in the first instance, acknowledge the request and log it internally. Acknowledgement will be made within 10 days of receipt of the request.

Once the identification has been received the University will then undertake the task of locating and retrieving information. The University will contact relevant staff, identified as likely to hold information or those staff members who are responsible for key data systems. Staff will be asked to search their systems and will be provided with a guide to assist them.

It may be necessary for staff handling the request to ask for further details or clarification, the purpose of this communication will be to ensure that the University is able to undertake the appropriate searches and that the requestor receives the information that they are seeking.

Staff will be provided with a deadline to provide the information and the responses will be collated by staff within the Information Compliance Unit. It will then be necessary for staff to sift through the responses to identify any information that the individual is not entitled to receive which will have to be redacted or removed.

It is worth noting that individuals only have the right to access their personal data and there is no right of access to the information of friends, family or colleagues.

**Responding to Subject Access Requests**

The University will provide the information as soon as possible and within 1 month of the request. Where a request is complex the University may require an extension of up to 2 months and will, if this is necessary be in touch to confirm this with the requestor.

Responses to SAR will normally be sent electronically either by email or, if the file size is too big, on a memory stick via the postal mail.

In all instances, the information sent will be encrypted.

**Complaints**

In the event that individuals are unhappy with the way their SAR has been handled they may complain to the University’s Data Protection Officer. Complaints must be made in writing to dataprotection@southwales.ac.uk.

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