

# Student Research: Data Protection Guidance for UWE Bristol Students

## Purpose

This guidance is intended for undergraduate and M-level students undertaking research as part of their studies at UWE Bristol that involves the collection and processing of personal data. The UK General Data Protection Regulation (the UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (the DPA) protect the rights of individuals when you process personal data about them which includes collecting, storing and disposing of data. Personal data is any information that relates to an identified or identifiable individual. This includes any opinion that may be expressed by or about the individual. You should ensure that you always adhere to the Data Protection principles when working with personal data. This is good practice and will be an ongoing requirement in working life. Please follow this guidance along with [UWE Bristol Research Ethics guidance](#).

## The UK GDPR Data Protection Principles

The UK GDPR is based on seven data protection principles which say that personal data must be:

### Processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner

You should tell people in writing why you are collecting their data, how you will use it and who you will be sharing it with (i.e. only the University). In accordance with your Ethics obligations, ensure you gain and record their explicit written consent before they participate in your research study. [See further guidance on lawfulness, fairness and transparency](#).

### Collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes

The personal data that you collect should only be used for the specific purposes (that you have informed the individual of before they participate) relevant to your research. You should **not** use their personal data in any other way. [See further guidance on purpose limitation](#).

### Adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it is processed

The personal data you decide to collect should be adequate, relevant and limited to only the data required to support your research study. [See further guidance on data minimisation](#).

### Accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date

You should ensure that the personal data you collect is accurate and kept up to date if necessary. [See further guidance on accuracy](#).

### Kept for no longer than is necessary for the purposes for which it is processed

You should delete and securely dispose of all personal data you have processed when it is no longer needed for the purposes of your research and/or to validate your research results. [See further guidance on storage limitation](#).

### Processed in a way that ensures it is appropriately secure

You should take appropriate measures to reduce the risks of unlawful or unauthorised access to your research data. You can find some helpful information and guidance via the [Information Security Toolkit](#). [See further guidance on security](#).

### Be accountable for what you do with personal data

You should take responsibility for what you do with personal data and be able to demonstrate how you adhere to the other data protection principles. [See further guidance on accountability](#).

## Steps to take to adhere to the UK GDPR Data Protection principles

First, you should always consider the possibility of collecting anonymised data as a preferred method of mitigating data protection risks.

Secondly, always adhere to the following during the conduct of your research:

1. Document what personal data you need to collect to enable you to complete your research project.
2. Obtain explicit consent from the data subject before they participate in your research study. For your research this will usually be documented in writing. Discuss with your supervisor how best to obtain consent prior to collecting any personal data. Further information on [consent and data collection](#) is available on the Research Ethics webpages.
3. Give a clear written explanation to potential participants of what you are going to do with their data (e.g. a participant information sheet) so they can make an informed decision on whether they give their consent and subsequently decide to participate in your research study.
4. Do not collect or keep data that is not necessary for your research. Anonymise data where possible by removing names and all other identifying information.
5. Ensure that all personal data, especially qualitative data, for example the participants' views given during conversation and/or an interview, is recorded accurately. If you are unsure of its accuracy, clarify what you have recorded with the participant to check that they agree with what you have collected.
6. If participants later approach you to request that you update or delete data you have collected, ensure you respect and act on their request until the data has been anonymised. Contact the participant after you have acted on their request to confirm you have done so.
7. Store personal data **securely** in your UWE Bristol Student OneDrive.
8. Do not share any personal data with anyone other than the participant concerned (or as required by UWE Bristol).
9. Securely dispose of all personal data when it is no longer necessary for your research. It's generally considered that your research data should be disposed of after you have received official confirmation of your marks from the University.

## Need more advice?

If you have any concerns regarding data protection, please discuss these with your supervisor.

## Relevant links

1. [UWE Bristol Research Ethics guidance](#)
2. [ICO Guide to data protection](#)
3. [UWE Bristol Information Security Toolkit](#)