

CIPD

GOSHA

It's Personal Getting Employee Data Right

 THE OFFICE OF THE
**Data Protection
Authority**

HR, Health & Safety and Trust

Trust affects:

- recruitment outcomes
- staff engagement
- whistleblowing and reporting
- dispute resolution



Recruitment & Selection

Getting it right from the start

What personal data is collected in recruitment



Common examples:

- CVs and application forms
- interview notes
- references
- right-to-work checks
- diversity monitoring information

Key risks in recruitment

Common pitfalls:

- collecting “nice to have” information
- retaining unsuccessful candidate data for too long
- informal notes or emails becoming part of the record
- sharing candidate information too widely



Fairness & transparency in recruitment



Good practice :

- Tell candidates what you're doing with their data
- Be clear how long you'll keep it
- Only collect what you genuinely need
- Remember: opinions and notes **are still personal data**

Special categories & background checks

Examples:

- health data (reasonable adjustments)
- criminal records (where applicable)
- diversity data



Employment

Managing staff data day to day

The “HR file” is not one thing



Employee data exists across:

- HR systems
- email inboxes
- managers’ notes
- shared drives
- H&S records

Key principles that matter most

Lawfulness: is it right to use this data for this purpose?

Fairness: would the employee expect this use?

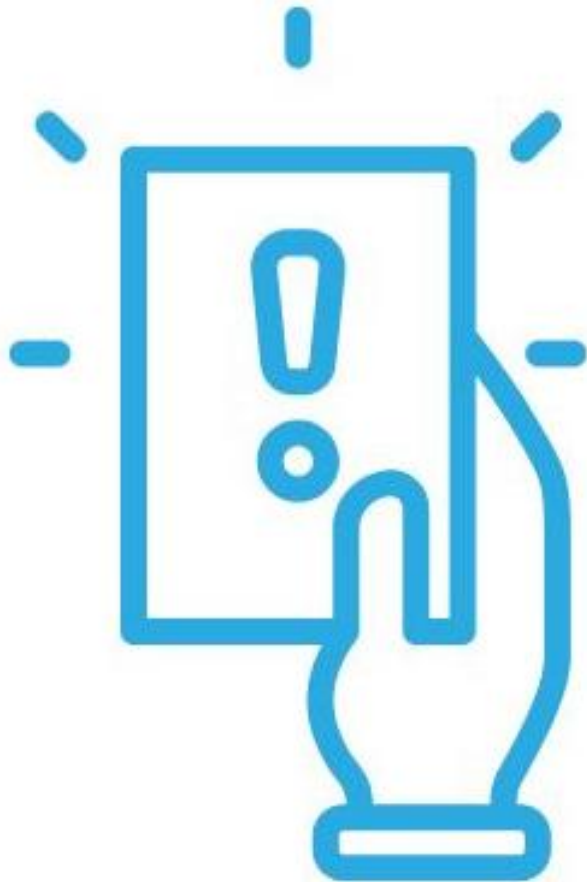
Minimisation: do we really need this data?

Accuracy: is it up to date?

Security: who can see it?



Disciplinary matters



Common data protection issues:

- excessive sharing of allegations
- poor handling of investigation notes
- mixing opinion with fact
- long-term retention “just in case”

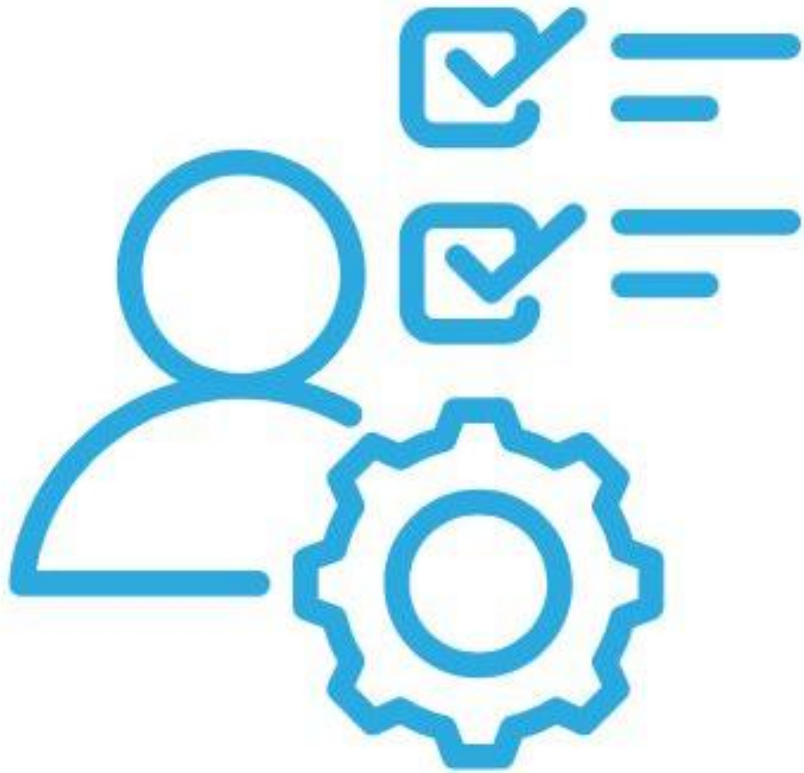
Data Subject Access Requests in HR

Employees can request:

- emails about them
- notes, reports, HR records
- disciplinary and grievance materials



Managing DSAR risk practically



Good habits:

- write notes professionally
- avoid unnecessary commentary
- keep records structured and searchable
- don't hold data “just in case”

Health & Safety
Protecting people

Special category data

Examples:

- accident reports
- medical assessments
- stress and wellbeing records
- occupational health advice



Common Health & Safety data risks



- Over-sharing incident details
- Storing medical data insecurely
- Unclear access controls
- Retaining records longer than necessary

Balancing safety & privacy

- Share what is needed to keep people safe
- Avoid sharing diagnoses or unnecessary detail
- Anonymise where possible



End of employment
Closing the loop properly

What happens at the end of employment?



Common activities:

- References
- Records retention
- Ongoing investigations
- System access removal

Retention & deletion

- Not all employee data can or should be kept forever
- Different records have different retention needs



References & former employees



Good practice:

- be factual and consistent
- share only what is necessary
- document decision-making

Common themes &
practical takeaways

What HR & H&S teams do well

- Strong people focus
- Structured processes
- Clear accountability



Small improvements make a big difference



- Clearer retention rules
- Fewer informal records
- Better access controls
- Earlier conversations about data protection

Good data protection supports fair workplaces, safer environments and better decision-making — it's part of good people management.



Call us: +44 (0) 1481 742074

Visit our website: www.odpa.gg

Email us: info@odpa.gg