

Privacy

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Version history

Version	Date	Section(s)	Change(s) made	Location
3.0	01/25	All	Major overhaul of previous versions of the policy	Secure Portal
4.0	07/26	All	Minor wording changes and branding	
4.0	07/26	Introduction	Reference to Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 added	
4.0	07/26	Related Policies	Additional policies added	
4.0	07/26	Regulatory Requirements	Ofqual principles added. QAA Access to HE Conditions updated.	

1 Introduction

Open Awards is committed to data security and the fair and transparent processing of personal information. Our privacy policy explains what, how and why we collect personal data. It further explains how we store data, who we share data with, and your rights in relation to the personal data you provide to us.

This privacy policy applies to all the personal data we collect if you visit our website or use our services. This complies with current data protection law, particularly with the Data Protection Act 2018, United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation (UK-GDPR) January 2021 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025.

2 Policy

2.1 How does Open Awards collect personal data?

We may collect and process personal data provided to us if you:

- interact with our content via platforms such as our website(s)
- make an enquiry or application to become an approved Provider
- upload data through our secure portal
- register a programme of learning and submit associated course documentation
- register learners on an approved course offered by us
- have been registered as a learner on an approved course offered by us
- sign-up to receive communications (e.g. newsletter, events)
- enter into a contract with us to receive products and/or services
- correspond with us by phone, email or in writing, including via our website
- attend an Open Awards event (e.g. webinars, training, standardisation)
- report a problem.

2.2 What personal data does Open Awards collect and process?

We will only collect personal data where there is a legitimate business reason, or you have given explicit consent. Any personal data collected will be processed only for the purposes for which it has been collected and to provide business critical data to support Open Awards business functions and regulatory reporting.

We may collect and process personal information about you, including: your name, gender, email address, contact address, contact number, job role, employment status, disability status or dietary requirements, details for courses or events you have attended or delivered, data collected as part of any documents you complete with regard to Open Awards legitimate business functions, details of our services to which you have subscribed, bank details and billing information; marketing and communication preferences.

If you provide us with information about a person other than yourself, you must ensure that they understand how their information will be used and that they have given their explicit consent for you to share it with us for the purposes as outlined in this notice. If you are a learner, tutor or contact at a Provider, we may also receive information about you from your Provider when they register to receive products and/or services from us.

2.2.1 For contacts at a Provider

Data may include name, gender, e-mail address, postal address, telephone number, job role, course details and feedback concerning learner registration and achievement (e.g. in the event of a complaint/appeal). Your contact details may be provided by your Provider as part of their completed Provider Agreement form with Open Awards.

We may record certain online events such as webinars, training and live broadcasts. If an event is being recorded, we will notify you before recording begins. If you are an attendee or a presenter your image, audio and comments may be captured during the recording if you choose to share them.

2.2.2 For learners

This includes personal information for the purpose of registering learners and awarding learner achievements, and business critical and regulatory reporting, which is normally submitted through the Open Awards secure portal by the Provider with which you have registered. The data collected that can be used to identify you includes, but is not limited to name, date of birth, gender, postcode, employment status, achievement (including prior achievement) and course data. Where required for regulatory purposes, we may also collect, store and use the following 'special categories' of sensitive personal information about learners: ethnicity, disability, learning difficulty or health problem, religion, sexual orientation, fitness to practice declarations and/ or employer placement details.

We collect, store and use learner email addresses to allow us to seek feedback of Open Awards products directly from learners. Ongoing learners may also be contacted by email should the Provider be unable to continue delivery of Open Awards qualifications and programmes.

We may also keep video recordings of learners undertaking remote on-line assessments where an agreed structure for remote invigilation is in place for a Provider. Recordings include video footage to identify and monitor the learner for the duration of the assessment. Please see 'Privacy Notice: Learner and Apprentices' available on the Open Awards website for more details.

2.2.3 Children's Privacy

Open Awards does not knowingly register or collect personally identifiable information from anyone under the age of 13 ("Children"). If you, or a parent or guardian, has cause to believe that a child has provided us with personal information, please contact us immediately. We will ensure parental /guardian approval has been sought for the sharing of 'children's' data with us before we process their data.

2.2.4 Visitors to our website

Open Awards uses cookies (a small text file placed on your computer or device) to collect standard internet log information (including IP address), track visitor use of the website and to compile statistical reports on website activity. We also use cookies to help us to improve our website and tailor it to customer needs. Data we collect using cookies is only processed in a way which does not personally identify anyone and does not give us access to your computer.

You can choose to decline cookies if you prefer by modifying your browser settings. However, in a few cases, some of our website features may not function as a result. If we do want to collect personally identifiable information through our website, we will be up front about this. We will make it clear when we collect personal information and will explain what we intend to do with it.

You can manage cookies by activating the setting on your internet browser that allows you to refuse the setting of all or some cookies. For further information visit www.allaboutcookies.org.uk

We also use a third-party service, Google Analytics, to collect standard internet log information, to better understand how visitors use the Open Awards website. This includes analysing visitor numbers and page visits, which is processed in a way that does not identify an individual. To opt-out of being tracked by Google Analytics across all websites you can visit tools.google.com/dlpage/gaoptout.

Our website may contain links to other websites. When you link to these sites, you leave our website, and your communications are no longer protected by our privacy notice. Open Awards is not responsible for the privacy practices nor the content of these websites. We recommend that you review the privacy notice of those sites to fully understand what information is collected and how it is used.

2.3 Why does Open Awards collect and process personal and sensitive information?

The collection and processing of data by Open Awards is solely for exercising its legitimate business functions and to meet its responsibilities, both statutory and otherwise. This includes using your personal details to provide the products and services you have requested; communications in relation to these products and services, including issues, complaints and disputes; administrative support; performing analytical processes to support our business functions and report to our regulators and a small number of other organisations as outlined below.

‘Special categories’ of personal data require higher levels of protection (e.g., ethnicity, disability or health status) may be collected, stored and used to meet regulatory requirements and for national statistical purposes in the public interest. We have in place appropriate policies and safeguards when processing such data.

Where you have given your explicit consent to receive marketing communications, we may use your personal data to send you newsletters, information about events, job vacancies and products and services that may be of interest to you. You may unsubscribe to receive these communications at any time by emailing marketing@openawards.org.uk or clicking on the ‘unsubscribe’ link within any of the marketing emails we send you.

We may also process your personal data if required by government or law, such as for crime prevention or fraud.

2.4 Who does Open Awards share personal data with?

As part of our legitimate business functions, we share personal data with our regulators and may also share it with a small number of other organisations, with whom we share a business partnership. These organisations include:

Organisation	Relationship	Shared data
Ofqual, Qualifications Wales and Department for Education.	Regulator	Learner name, postcode, registration number, ULN, DOB, gender, ethnicity, learning difficulties and disability status, units of learning and achievement details
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)	Regulator	Learner name, postcode, registration number, ULN, DOB, gender, ethnicity, learning difficulties and disability status, units of learning and achievement details
General Pharmaceutical Council	Regulator	Learner name, postcode, registration number, ULN, DOB, gender, ethnicity, learning difficulties and disability status, religion, sexual orientation, employer placement details, units of learning and achievement details

Organisation	Relationship	Shared data
UCAS	Business partnership	Learner name, registration number, ULN, DOB, gender, units of learning and qualification achievement details
Learning Records Service (LRS)	Business partnership	Learner name, DOB, postcode, gender, registration number, achievement details
Skills England	Business partnership	Apprentice achievement details
Higher Education Institutions	Business partnership	Access to HE Diploma achievement
Partner organisations undertaking work on behalf of Open Awards	Business partnership	Data recorded on SharePoint, the Open Awards database, secure portal and online assessment platform, remote invigilation assessment platform
Electrotechnical certification scheme	Business partnership	Learner name, registration number, achievement details
Individual contractors undertaking work on behalf of Open Awards (E.g., external quality assurers, invigilators, assessment markers)	Business partnership	Learner name, registration number, ULN, reasonable adjustments agreed, employer placement details, units of learning.

Unless otherwise stated, data is normally shared and processed as anonymised data. However, there may be situations, such as an investigation or complaint, when Open Awards is required to process or share individual personal details due to a legitimate business reason. In these instances, Open Awards will share only those details which are necessary to the case and will endeavour to maintain the security of this information.

We encourage Providers to register learners with their Unique Learner Number (ULN). Any ULN's provided will be validated through a secure link with the Learning Records Service (LRS) during the initial registration. If any ULNs are invalid, we will notify the relevant Provider, using our secure portal, to advise them of the actions required to rectify the error.

Upon achievement of Qualifications and/or Qualification units, Open Awards are required to pass the achievement details of learners to The Learning Records Service, who will update learners' Personal Learning Record (PLR). This is done through a secure link from the Open Awards database to the LRS database. The PLR is a source of information to support learners in their decision-making in relation to further study, employment or skills development. We only send achievement data to the PLR where a learner has a valid ULN. We strongly encourage learners to visit the Learning Records Service website to view their Privacy Notice, which provides detailed explanation of how their data may be used. This can be visited at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-records-service-the-plr-for-learners-and-parents>

2.5 Where do we store personal data?

All personal information provided to us is stored on secure servers or on the secure servers of sub-contractors that we have engaged to provide services on our behalf.

The security of personal information is vitally important to us. Unless otherwise stated, data is normally shared and processed as anonymised data. However, there may be situations such as an investigation or complaint, when Open Awards is required to process or share individual personal details due to a legitimate business reason. In these instances, Open Awards will share only those details which are necessary to the case and will endeavour to maintain the security of this information.

2.6 How does Open Awards protect and store personal data?

Open Awards is committed to a notice protecting the rights and privacy of individuals and the protection of personal data from loss or destruction. We take all reasonable steps to ensure our staff are aware of their obligations in relation to the security and confidentiality of personal data and the lawful processing of any personal data shared with them.

The Open Awards portal is accessible only to pre-approved users by means of a secure login, which is actively managed by Open Awards. Users are bound by the Terms and Conditions of use of the portal, which prohibits the sharing of passwords or accounts.

The security of personal information is vitally important to us. However, no method of transmission over the internet or method of electronic storage is 100% secure. While we endeavour to use commercially acceptable means to protect personal information, we cannot guarantee its absolute security.

2.7 Open Awards and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Open Awards recognises the increased use of artificial intelligence (AI) to collate and process data. However, Open Awards does not currently use AI for these purposes.

Open Awards operates a Workplace Use of Artificial Intelligence Policy which stipulates that it is not permitted to enter personal data/ sensitive learner data to any AI software. We will keep this approach under review to ensure that any data being used with any AI solution is stored and processed safely in line with GDPR requirements.

2.8 How long does Open Awards keep personal data?

Open Awards retains data in line with a comprehensive Data Retention Policy and Data Retention Schedule.

2.9 Access to your information and correction

Open Awards strives to meet the highest standards when collecting and using personal information. For this reason, we take any complaints we receive about this very seriously. We encourage people to bring it to our attention if they think that our collection or use of information is incorrect, unfair, misleading or inappropriate. Any concerns can be sent to Open Awards by emailing enquiries@openawards.org.uk.

You have the right to request a copy of the personal information that we hold about you by making a 'Subject Access Request'. If we do hold information about you, we will:

- respond within one month of receiving your request
- give you a description of the data we hold
- tell you why we are holding it
- tell you who it could be disclosed to, and
- let you have a copy of the information in a clear format.

To make a request for information or changes to your details, please write to the contact address at the end of this notice or at enquiries@openawards.org.uk.

2.10 Changes to our privacy notice

Open Awards recognises that privacy and data protection concerns may change and evolve over time.

If we make any changes to this Privacy Policy we will update our website and, if appropriate, notify you by email. Please check frequently to see if there are any changes to this notice. If you don't agree to any changes, please do not continue to use our website or services, or provide us with your personal information.

2.11 How to contact us

If you have any questions or concerns with regard to this notice or our use of personal data, please contact:

Open Awards
Estuary Commerce Park,
17 De Havilland Drive,
Speke
Liverpool,
L24 8RN
enquiries@openawards.org.uk

3 Responsibility

Overall responsibility for this policy rests with the Director of Quality and Data.

4 Review Arrangements

This document will be reviewed, normally on a biennial basis, as part of Open Awards' self-evaluation arrangements, and at other times where it appears that a review is required following stakeholder feedback, and/or regulatory or legal changes.

5 Related Policies

This document should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Open Awards Providers and staff:

- Open Awards Provider Agreement
- Open Awards Privacy Notice – Learners and Apprentices
- Open Awards Data Protection Policy
- Open Awards Acceptable Use of IT Policy
- Open Awards Data Retention Policy
- Open Awards Information Security Policy

Open Awards staff only:

- Anti-Fraud Policy
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Confidentiality Policy
- Employee Privacy Notice
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Hybrid Working Policy
- Workplace Use of Social Media Policy
- Workplace Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

6 Regulatory Requirements

This policy is designed to fulfil the requirements of our regulators. In particular:

6.1 Ofqual Principles

- Principle 1 An awarding organisation must act with honesty and integrity.
- Principle 2 An awarding organisation must treat Learners fairly by acting and taking decisions with due impartiality and based on appropriate evidence.
- Principle 3 An awarding organisation must ensure that each qualification that it makes available, or proposes to make available is, and continues to

be, fit for the purposes for which it is intended.

- Principle 4 An awarding organisation must act in a way that maintains and, where possible, promotes public confidence in qualifications.
- Principle 5 An awarding organisation must act in an open, transparent and cooperative manner with Ofqual and, as appropriate, with Users of qualifications.
- Principle 6 An awarding organisation must conduct its activities with a proactive approach to compliance with its Conditions of Recognition.

6.2 Ofqual General Conditions of Recognition/ Qualifications Wales Standard Conditions of Recognition

- A5 Availability of adequate resources and arrangements
- B3 Notification to [the regulator] of certain events
- B4 Notice to provide information to [the regulator]
- B6 Cooperation with [the regulator]
- C1 Arrangements with third parties
- C2 Arrangements with Centres
- D3 Reviewing approach
- G5 Registration of Learners
- G6 Arrangements for Reasonable Adjustments
- G7 Arrangements for Special Consideration
- G8 Completion of assessments under required conditions
- H5 Results must be based on sufficient evidence
- H6 Issuing results
- I1 Appeals process

6.3 QAA Access to HE Conditions

- A7 Student registration
- B1 Notification to QAA of certain events
- B2 Notice to provide information to QAA
- B3 QAA monitoring of AVAs
- B4 Information and data submission requirements
- B5 AVA monitoring of records
- C1.1 Provider approval
- C1.2 Agreement between the AVA and Provider
- D3 Transfer or withdrawal arrangements,
- F1 Qualification recognition and certification

Originator:	Director of Quality and Data
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