Data Protection and Privacy Policy

FOCUS AWARDS

Version History

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Introduction

Focus Awards is committed to safeguarding your personal information. We always strive to respect and safeguard any personal information you submit to us, or we obtain from others. At Focus Awards we are committed to protecting the personal data of our customers, employees, and other stakeholders. This Data Protection and Privacy Policy outlines our approach to data protection and privacy in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Privacy Policy

This Privacy Policy outlines our data collection and processing procedures, including through our websites, as well as the rights and choices you have regarding how your personal information is used and collected. This policy applies to all employees, contractors and stakeholders who process personal data on behalf of Focus Awards.

Focus Awards are committed to the following principles:

a) Lawfulness, fairness, and transparency.
b) Purpose limitation.
c) Data minimisation.
d) Accuracy.
e) Storage limitation.
f) Integrity and confidentiality (security).
g) Accountability and transparency.

It is entirely up to you whether you choose to provide us with your personal information. However, your ability to use our services or connect with us may be hampered if you choose not to provide your personal information to us. For example, you will be unable to take a test or acquire a qualification.

We gather the following personal information about you:

Directly – this is when you provide us with personal information, this can be via a phone all, email or when you write to us. Please be aware that all calls are recorded for quality, training and compliance purposes.

Indirectly – When you start a qualification, your personal information will be provided to Focus Awards by the training/learning provider that you are studying with.

Publicly – Information may be collected via public external sources such as social media platforms or services however; this will be dependent on your privacy settings.

When you visit our website we will automatically collect technical data, this can include your IP address, web browser, time zone. When visiting the website we will automatically collect information on how you use our website such as how you click through our website, services accessed or viewed, how long you've have been on the website for, how you were referred to the website, errors you may come across, the response times of each page and the date and time you accessed.

We will only collect personal data that is necessary for the specified purposes and will inform data subjects about the purposes of data collection.

When required, we will obtain explicit consent from individuals for processing their data. Consent will be freely given, specific, informed, and revocable.

We will take reasonable steps to ensure that personal data is accurate and up-to-date. Data subjects have the right to request corrections.

We will implement appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect personal data against unauthorised access, disclosure, alteration, and destruction.

Review arrangements

Focus Awards will review this document annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements. However, a review will be commissioned earlier should an issue arise in relation to changes with relevant data protection laws and changes to our data protection activities.

Do we deal with specific types of data?

Certain kinds of personal information, such as information on your health, ethnicity, and religious views, are designated as sensitive under the General Data Protection Regulations ("GDPR").

Focus Awards may collect and/or utilise certain categories of data in certain circumstances; for example, information on candidates' medical issues so that appropriate changes and/or special considerations may be made. We will only handle these specific categories of data if there is a compelling cause to do so and the GDPR permits it.

How is your data used and why?

Your personal information will be used for the reasons stated, regardless of how it was submitted to us. We may use your personal information in the following ways:

- to register you as a candidate and for the purposes of administration;
- to conduct assessments and quality assurance
- to allow us to issue results and certificates and maintain records of achievement;
- to carry out any reviews or appeals;
- to otherwise provide you with services, products, or information you have requested;
- to communicate as necessary with training/learning providers and employers;
- to provide you with additional information about our work, to manage relationships with our partners and service providers;
- to analyse and improve our work, services, activities, products, or information (including our website), or for our internal records;
- to keep our facilities safe and secure;
- to run/administer the activities of our website, and ensure that content is presented in the most effective manner for you and your device;
- to audit and/or administer our accounts;
- to comply with legal obligations;
- to comply with the General Conditions of Recognition or comparable paperwork of Ofqual or any other regulatory authority;

- to comply with the Equalities Law;
- to assist proper account management of our centres in respect of our commercial activities

Lawful reasons

To use your personal information, the GDPR requires us to rely on one or more legal bases. The following reasons are significant, in our opinion:

- If you have given us your permission to use your personal information in a specific way. For example, we may ask for your permission to collect certain categories of your personal information so that you can take an assessment with reasonable accommodations and/or special considerations.
- Whenever it is required to comply with a legal duty to which we are bound, where we are obliged to share your personal information with regulatory bodies which govern our work and services.
- Wherever it is required for the fulfilment of a contract to which you are a party, or to take actions at your request prior to entering a contract (for example, to provide you with a certified award after sitting an examination).
- When there is a valid reason for us to do so.

If it is reasonably required to achieve our or others' legitimate interests, the GDPR enables us to acquire and process your personal information if that processing is fair, balanced and does not unduly impact your rights as an individual.

In general terms, our "legitimate interests" include the interests of running Focus Awards as a commercial company and ensuring applicants get suitable levels of certified awards in accordance with our criteria.

When we process your personal information to achieve such legitimate interests, we consider and balance any potential impact on you (both positive and negative), and on your rights under data protection laws. We will not use your personal information for activities where our interests are overridden by the impact on you, for example where use would be excessively intrusive (unless, for instance, we are otherwise required or permitted to by law.)

We may use your contact information to send you information about our work, events, services, and/or activities that we think you would be interested in, such as other certified awards we provide, or training/learning providers with which/whom we collaborate.

We shall not do so without your previous consent if we communicate with you through email, SMS, or telephone (if you have registered with the Telephone Preference Service), unless allowed to do so via applicable law.

If you have already given us your consent but no longer desire to be contacted by us about our work, events, services, and/or activities, please contact us at info@focusawards.org.uk.

We generally erase your personal information from our records six years from the date it was acquired, unless it is still necessary in connection with the purpose(s) for which it was collected and/or processed. However, if (i) your personal information is no longer necessary for such purpose(s), (ii) we are no longer lawfully allowed to handle it, or (iii) you successfully exercise your right to be forgotten before that date, we shall delete it from our databases at that time.

Sharing Information

We do not disclose, sell, or rent your personal information to other parties for marketing purposes. However, we may share your personal information with carefully chosen third parties to fulfil the goals outlined in this Notice.

These parties might include (but are not limited to) the following:

- Individual examiners; educational authorities such as the Department for Education, Department of Education Northern Ireland, UCAS, ESFA, and the Learning Records Service;
- local authorities and other public bodies responsible for education;
- other educational establishments/potential employers (for example, if a reference is sought); suppliers and sub-contractors for the performance of any contract we enter into with them;
- individuals engaged by Focus Awards for the purposes of quality assurance and compliance,
- and/or regulatory organisations that control our work, such as Ofqual, CCEA Regulation, or Ofsted.

We retain the right to transmit your personal information to third parties in particular:

- if we sell or purchase any business or assets, we shall disclose your personal information to the (potential) seller or buyer of such business or assets;
- If a third party acquires substantially all of our assets, personal information kept by us may be one of the transferred assets;
- if we are required to do so by law or regulation;
- and/or to protect Focus Awards, its workers, users, visitors, or others' rights, property, or safety.

Storage

Focus Awards is committed to keeping your personal information safe and secure, and we have implemented suitable and proportional security policies, as well as organisational and technical safeguards.

Only professionally trained personnel, volunteers, and contractors have access to your personal information, which is held on secure systems with measures to prevent unauthorised access.

Your Rights

You have the right to withdraw your permission to allow us to use your personal information if we rely on it. This includes the ability to request that we cease using your personal information at any time, as well as the ability to unsubscribe from our email list.

You also have the following rights:

- You can write to us to inquire about what personal information we have on you and to obtain a copy of that information. We shall give you your personal information, subject to any applicable exemptions, if we are satisfied that you are entitled to receive the personal information requested and we have successfully authenticated your identity.

- We shall erase your personal information from our records at your request, to the extent that we are legally obligated to do so.
- You have the right to request that our records of your personal information be rectified if you feel they are wrong. If you are unclear if the personal information we have on you is valid or up to date, you may also ask us to check it.
- If there is a disagreement concerning the accuracy or reasonable use of your personal information, you have the right to request that processing be limited.
- You have the right to object to processing of your personal data if we are (i) processing it for our legitimate interests (see section 4 above), (ii) using it for direct marketing, or (iii) using it for statistical purposes.
- Where we are processing your personal information (that you have provided to us) either (i) with your consent or (ii) because such processing is necessary for the performance of a contract to which you are a party or to take steps at your request prior to entering into a contract, and in either case we are processing using automated means (i.e. with no human involvement), you may ask us to provide the personal information to you to the extent required by the GDPR.
- You have the right not to be subjected to a decision based solely on automated processing of your personal data that has legal or similarly significant consequences for you, unless that decision (i) is required to enter into/perform a contract between you and us/another organisation; (ii) is authorised by EU or Member State law to which Focus Awards is subject (as long as that law provides you with adequate protection); or (iii) is based on your explicit consent.

Please keep in mind that certain of these rights are only applicable in certain circumstances. We recommend that you contact us for additional information to clarify, if necessary.

Changes

This Notice may be updated from time to time. Significant changes will be communicated to you by contacting you personally (when/if feasible) and posting an update notice on our website.

Links to third party

We provide direct links to other websites on our website. External websites are not covered by this Notice, and we are not responsible for their privacy policies or content. We recommend that you read the privacy policies of any external websites you access through our website's connections.

Contact us

If you have any queries about the contents of the policy, please contact our support team

E: info@focusawards.org.uk

T: +44(0)333 3447 388