



## Accountability Principle

In this video I'm going to be talking about the secret 'seventh' principle of the GDPR, the Accountability Principle. This rather quirky principle differs from the others as rather than prescribing how personal data should be processed, it obliges companies *to be able to demonstrate compliance with the other six principles*.

Now of course, a company may well wonder what exactly is meant by being able to demonstrate compliance with the principles, and, to a greater extent, GDPR. The short answer, is documentation.

During a company's lifecycle of processing personal data there will be many decisions made about how to process personal data, such as: where to store it, the measures in place to keep it secure, the service providers it uses, how long to retain personal data, and what personal data is required by the company. These decisions should all be documented. Whilst this may seem burdensome, it is worth noting that in all likelihood these decisions will already be documented to one degree or another by various departments and so the key is ensuring that the relevant teams assist in pulling this together with a view on data protection.

In addition to the above, there are many specific documents that GDPR will require a company to have in place which will greatly assist with compliance with the accountability principle, these include:

- A company's record of processing which is a GDPR requirement under Article 30 and essentially gives an overview of personal data processed by a company;
- A company's privacy notice – both for staff and for consumers which will provide vital information about purposes and lawful bases.
- Any Data Protection Impact Assessments that have been carried out and which should be carried out where new types of processing could pose a risk to data subjects.
- Any Legitimate Interest Assessments which balance the interests of the company against the interests of the data subject where legitimate interest is the relevant lawful basis relied upon by the company for a processing purpose.

The documents just mentioned are by no means exhaustive but help to show that by following proper data protection practices any company will, as a by-product, be better complying with the Accountability Principle and will be building up a repository of documentation relating to its GDPR compliance and compliance with the GDPR principles.

The key advice on complying with the Accountability principle is to consider the data protection impact in any new type of processing activity and to make sure that this consideration is documented and filed accordingly.