



Data Minimisation Principle

In this video I'm going to talk about the Data Minimisation Principle under the GDPR and what this means to your company.

The GDPR is principle driven legislation, meaning that much of the law and the spirit of the legislation is derived from six principles. One of these principles is that *Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed.*

This principle is really quite simple in nature and companies should have no trouble complying with it, provided of course that they are sensible about what data they collect. Essentially, the data minimisation principle says that you should only collect the personal data that is needed to achieve your purposes. So, for example, if a retailer is delivering a parcel to a person they will need their name and address and possibly a contact number; however they won't need their height, weight and eye colour. Similarly, if a company is hiring a new member of staff they will need to collect significant amounts of personal data, such as bank details and previous references; however, information relating to their favourite flowers and banking transaction history will not be relevant.

The best tool for a company to comply with the data minimisation principle is to look at what personal data is being collected and the reasons why this data is being collected. These two things should marry up well.

The area where most companies come unstuck is where personal data – often analytical data obtained from usage of services or website browsing – is collected 'just in case'. It can be seductive to collect personal data which feels as though it could be useful at a future date even if it serves no purpose at the present. Organisations may even come under pressure to enact this precise practice. But these should be resisted.

The primary risk with breaching the data minimisation principle – as well as being a breach of the GDPR itself – is that a personal data breach where the data that was lost or stolen goes far beyond the purposes for which personal data was required will be seen as a significant aggravating factor by the ICO when determining if the GDPR has been breached and what sanctions should be imposed.

So, this has been my summary of the data minimisation principle. As mentioned, it is a fairly simple principle to comply with and the best way to do so is for a company to understand its data protection collection and needs.