



What skills are required for a Data Protection Manager in Schools?

1 The Question?

I wonder if you have a Data Protection Manager Job Description which we can look at to see if we have any appropriate staff for this post?

2 Background

This is not a simple question to answer, may we start by explaining the background. Under the DPA 1998 a School could appoint its own Data Protection Officer, very often this was the Head, so Data responsibility was taken at the most senior level. GDPR introduced the “conflict of interest” provisions that essentially said you could not mark your own homework, yet mandated an appointment. Many Schools sought support from a fractional service such as Satswana as a consequence. The designation, duties and tasks are set out in Section 4 of the General Data Protection Legislation which with very few differences is entirely reflected in the Data Protection Act 2018.

Article 38 Clause 1 sets out that “The controller and the processor shall ensure that the data protection officer is involved properly and in a timely manner, in all issues which relate to the protection of personal data”. The Article 29 Working Party recognised that there was a conflict here, the “controller” was mandated to keep the DPO informed, and yet there was no appointment within the School to be responsible for that happening. Their solution was to introduce the title of Data Protection Manager!

3 The role

Thus the most important aspect of the role is that this is the person within the School with the executive day to day control brief for data, with the independent technical expertise support of the external Data Protection Officer.

4 The tasks

Satswana seeks to suggest that they have five tasks:-

- 1 Liaison with the DPO and ensuring that all related tasks are performed (Article 39)
- 2 Dealing with information rights issues, where appropriate in conjunction with the DPO
- 3 Raising awareness of data protection issues within the school
- 4 Ensuring training for new staff and refresher awareness training
- 5 Managing and overseeing the assurance that encryption is being deployed and deletion policies complied with



5 Skills?

One of the challenges arising from consideration of the new challenges of data protection legislation is whether staff must obtain new skills within an environment that is changing its processes. We will all be handling data in a collaborative environment that is new to us all, probably involving cloud processing that transforms the IT landscape, with the routine handling of information becoming part of a standard, but new, training imperative. In five years' time we may have forgotten all the current skills using paper based administration, indicating a significant retraining requirement.

6 Appropriate staff?

Few schools will have the budget to make a specific appointment, and it is unlikely that any single existing member of staff will have a full range of skills and experience to provide all the answers, so where are the starting points, and what are the compromises.

- 1 Above all, the person selected must be a leader, somebody unafraid of taking command of the subject, preferably as a volunteer (which will immediately limit the choice!!)
- 2 They must be sufficiently authoritative to command attention, and to make sure that all those with appropriate skills contribute to delivering the requirements.
- 3 Some organisations may have a specialist data control unit that is responsible for the maintenance of all data within the environment. Having a single point of control is ideal (but it is recognised as not always being possible) and will ensure that all data has a single management responsibility.
- 4 In other organisations the role might fall within an IT remit, yet others it might come under the Business Manager, a Deputy Head, or indeed anybody with a natural interest in the subject.

It must be stressed that the person you seek is required to be an executive manager of the subject, not an expert. They are a focus that ensures that things get done, that policies are implemented, that change is managed; and in doing so they must use resources, such as the DPO, IT support, etc.

7 Implementation

The requirements for the selected person would have to be:-

- 1 Establishing the function, role and responsibilities in the first place
- 2 Ensuring the provision of legal interpretation, advice and guidance to the key projects and initiatives in consultation with the DPO



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- 3 Source high-quality advice and guidance to ensure colleagues have a good understanding of their Privacy and Data Protection responsibilities and how to deliver compliant outcomes for the school, again with the support of the DPO
- 4 Acting as a focus for breach reporting through the agency of the DPO
- 5 Ensuring that training needs are met

8 Conclusion

We said at the start that this is not an easy question to answer. From the Satswana point of view, we must regard it as our duty to support anybody who takes on what might well be regarded as a “poisoned chalice”. We are delighted to support anybody who kindly takes on the job, since it also makes life easier for the DPO if there is a single conduit of expertise to ensure our key mutual role, of delivering “privacy by design and default!”