Information classifications

Lancaster University has **four information classifications** to help you identify the level of security the information needs: **Ordinary**, **Confidential**, **Restricted** and **Personal**.

**Personal data** includes **sensitive personal data**, which are **special categories** of personal data, such as racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, sexual life, physical or mental health conditions and genetic data. Sensitive personal data is often referred to as special category data.

These classifications are Lancaster University specific and may be different at other institutions. Please watch the video to learn about the information classifications at Lancaster University and how to apply them to the information that you work with.

Examples of each classification are below:

<table>
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<th>Classification</th>
<th>What is it?</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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| Ordinary       | Data with no constraints on publication | • University Prospectus  
• Job description |
| Confidential   | Data with internal interest, that can be shared with others within the University, if shared externally, must come with a confidentiality agreement | • Documents prepared for publication  
• Unpublished research data |
| Restricted     | Data only to be viewed by selected recipients | • Committee papers  
• Documents marked for the attention of a specific reader |
| Personal       | Data only available to relevant staff only, and is protected by Data Protection law. There is a **special category of personal information** in the GDPR, for sensitive personal data. | • Student contact details  
• Completed PDR forms or job applications  
• Data provided by research participants |

If you are unsure what classification you should use for your information, ask yourself three questions:

- Is the audience limited in any way?
- Must the info remain in our control?
- Does it contain personal information?

If the answer to all three questions is **Yes**, the classification is **Personal**. If any of the questions is **No**, move to the next category:

- **Ordinary** if the answer to the first question is **Yes**.
- **Confidential** if the answer to the second question is **Yes**.
- **Restricted** if the answer to the third question is **Yes**.

The result will be the classification that best fits the information.