



QAA privacy and cookie statement

This privacy and cookie statement tells you what to expect when the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) collects personal information from the following individuals:

- visitors to our websites, which include www.qaa.ac.uk, heer.qaa.ac.uk, www.accesstohe.ac.uk, www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk and the secure Reviewers' Extranet.
- people who email QAA or use the contact us form
- people who call QAA
- people who contact QAA via social media
- people submitting concerns about HEIs
- people complaining about QAA
- people who contact QAA in relation to a data protection subject access request or other enquiry
- people taking CPD awards offered by QAA
- people who use our services, for example subscribe to one of our newsletters, attend a QAA event, or request a publication from us
- people who respond to a QAA survey
- people involved in testing and training.

Visitors to our websites

When you visit one of our websites, we collect standard internet log information and details of visitor behaviour patterns. This helps us to identify the number of visitors to various parts of the site. We collect this information in a way which does not identify anyone. We do not attempt to find out the identities of visitors to our websites. We will not associate any data gathered from this site with any personally identifiable information from any source.

Where we need to collect personally identifiable information through one of our websites we will do this by asking users to complete a registration form (for example when registering to use the HEER database, to sign up to attend a QAA event, or to receive a QAA publication). We will make it clear when we collect personal information and will explain what we intend to do with it.

We may use personal information collected when people contact us to offer services and information related to our work on quality and standards in higher education, which we feel would be of interest. This may include services offered by our wholly owned trading subsidiary QAA Enterprises Limited. QAA will enable users to 'opt out' of further contact with QAA or QAA Enterprises at the time that personal data is collected.

Data may be passed to the police and other authorities where it is required in the investigation of illegal activities and security breaches.

Where data is passed to third parties, it is done so in compliance with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (2018).

Use of cookies by QAA websites

Cookies are small text files that are placed on your computer by websites that you visit. They are widely used in order to make websites work, remember your individual settings and preferences, and to measure how you use websites to ensure they meet your needs.

We do not use cookies to identify individuals or collate personal data. We only use cookies to make our sites work better for you.

Most web browsers allow some control of cookies through the browser settings, and you are able to manage and delete cookies from specific websites.

To find out more about cookies, including how to see what cookies have been set by the websites you visit, and how to manage and delete them, visit [All About Cookies](#).

The table below explains the cookies we use on each website and why.

www.qaa.ac.uk

Cookie	Name	Purpose	More information
Google Analytics	_utma _utmb _utmc _utmz	<p>These cookies are used to collect information about how visitors use our site. This information is used to improve QAA's sites and to ensure they meet your needs.</p> <p>All data is collected in an anonymous form and includes information such as the number of visitors to our websites and the pages they visit while they're on our sites.</p>	<p>Overview of privacy at Google</p> <p>Opt out of Google Analytics</p>
Google cookies	GAPS khcookie NIDS PREF VISITOR_INFO1_LIVE YSC	<p>We use the YouTube video player and Google Maps functionality on our website. These are cookies set by Google to store your user preferences.</p>	<p>Overview of privacy at Google</p>
BrowseAloud	Browsealoudcountry country	<p>We subscribe to a service called BrowseAloud, which allows our website visitors to use the BrowseAloud toolbar for free.</p>	<p>BrowseAloud website</p>

Standard ASP.NET cookie	ASP.NET_SessionId	Created when session state is used. Expires when the browser closes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?
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acesstohe.ac.uk and ava.acesstohe.ac.uk

Cookie	Name	Purpose	More information
Cookie acceptance	acceptcookies	On first visiting our website, you will see a message at the top of your screen explaining that we use cookies. If you click to accept and hide the message, a cookie is stored so that you will not see the message appear again when you visit the website. Set to expire after 100 years.	
Google Analytics	_utma _utmb _utmc _utmz	<p>These cookies are used to collect information about how visitors use our site. This information is used to improve QAA's sites and to ensure they meet your needs.</p> <p>All data is collected in an anonymous form and includes information such as the number of visitors to our websites and the pages they visit while they're on our sites.</p>	<p>Overview of privacy at Google</p> <p>Opt out of Google Analytics</p>
Google cookies	GAPS khcookie NIDS PREF VISITOR_INFO1_LIVE YSC	We use the YouTube video player and Google Maps functionality on our website. These are cookies set by Google to store your user preferences.	Overview of privacy at Google
Session cookie	f	Stores the font size, if you have selected one of the options provided in the accessibility menu. Set to expire after 20 minutes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?

Session cookie	homepage_imageno	This cookie refreshes the image that appears in the top right-hand corner of the Access to HE homepage. It is purely for design purposes. Set to expire after 40 minutes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?
Session cookie	accessibility	Stores the contrast setting you have selected while using the website. Set to expire after 20 minutes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?
Session cookie	LoggedIn	Stores your email address if you are logged in to the AVA area, so that it displays in the main navigation throughout your visit. Set to expire after 30 minutes or cleared when you log out.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?
Standard ASP.NET cookie	ASPXAUTH	Created and set when you log in to the AVA area. Expires when the browser closes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?
Standard ASP.NET cookie	ASP.NET_SessionId	Created when session state is used. Expires when the browser closes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?
Session cookie	ASPSESSIONID	Session cookies store information about particular choices you have made during your visit to the website - for example your preferred language choice if you have selected a Welsh language page. These cookies expire when you close your browser.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?

heer.qaa.ac.uk

Cookie	Name	Purpose	More information
Google Analytics	_utma _utmb _utmc _utmz	<p>These cookies are used to collect information about how visitors use our site. This information is used to improve QAA's sites and to ensure they meet your needs.</p> <p>All data is collected in an anonymous form and includes information such as the number of visitors to our websites and the pages they visit while they're on our sites.</p>	<p>Overview of privacy at Google</p> <p>Opt out of Google Analytics</p>
Standard ASP.NET cookie	ASPXAUTH	Created and set when you log in to the AVA area. Expires when the browser closes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?
Standard ASP.NET cookie	ASP.NET_SessionId	Created when session state is used. Expires when the browser closes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?
Twitter cookies	_guestid remember_checked_on twll _twitter_sess	These cookies are set by Twitter as a result of the integration of a Twitterfeed on our website.	Overview of privacy at Twitter

qmmunity.qaa.ac.uk and reviewextranet.qaa.ac.uk

Cookie	Name	Purpose	More information
Session cookie	WSS_KeepSessionAuthenticated	Session cookies store information about particular choices you have made during your visit to the website. This cookie keeps you authenticated - or logged in - throughout your visit to the site so that you only have to log in once.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?

		This cookie expires when you close your browser.	
Standard ASP.NET cookie	ASP.NET_SessionId	Created when session state is used. Expires when the browser closes.	All About Cookies: What is a session cookie used for?

Links

Our websites contain links to other sites. QAA is not responsible for the privacy practices within any of these other sites. We encourage you to be aware of this when you leave our sites and to read the privacy statements on other websites you visit which collect personally identifiable information. This privacy statement applies solely to information collected on our websites.

People who email QAA or use the 'contact us' form

Emails may be kept as records and retained according to the QAA Retention Policy. This data is held securely and will be released to third parties only when QAA believes the release is appropriate to comply with the law or QAA statutory purposes.

People who contact QAA by email or the contact us form should be aware that access to messages may be shared between QAA staff for business purposes.

We may use personal information collected when people contact us to offer services and information related to our work on quality and standards in higher education, which we feel would be of interest. This may include services offered by our wholly owned trading subsidiary QAA Enterprises Limited. QAA will enable users to 'opt out' of further contact with QAA or QAA Enterprises at the time that personal data is collected.

People who call QAA

Calls to staff

Voicemail messages left for members of QAA staff can be accessed via email. Callers should be aware that access to email messages may be shared between QAA staff for business purposes.

Email and audio data is held securely and could be released to third parties if QAA believes this is appropriate to comply with the law.

Calls to QAA's information and enquiry lines

People who call QAA information and enquiry lines should expect to have their calls monitored to assist QAA in maintaining and improving the standards of our customer service and for staff training purposes. Private phone calls to QAA staff will not be monitored.

Personal data collected during telephone enquiries are logged securely and remain confidential within QAA unless you give your explicit consent for your data to be divulged outside of the agency. QAA will only use the contact information you give us to get in touch with you concerning your enquiry. Data will be kept for eighteen months and then deleted.

People who contact QAA via social media

QAA retains copies of messages received via social media. Any personal data collected will only be used in order to respond to the message. Messages are retained for a set period of time, and used by QAA to monitor its social media activity. Data is held securely and could be released to third parties if QAA believes this is appropriate to comply with the law.

Individuals submitting concerns about HEIs

Individuals submitting concerns can request to remain anonymous. Their personal details will not be disclosed, however, by completing the application form permission is given to QAA to discuss details of the case with the institution concerned, and any other appropriate organisations that we may need to consult in the course of our investigations. It is important that individuals are aware that QAA may not always be able to preserve their anonymity as they may be identifiable through the details of their application.

We will keep personal information contained in complaint and concerns for 10 years in line with our retention policy. It will be retained in a secure environment and access to it will be restricted according to the 'need to know' principle.

Individuals raising concerns by calling QAA's information and enquiry lines may have their calls monitored (see People who call QAA).

Individuals complaining about QAA

When we receive a complaint from a person we make up a file containing the details of the complaint. This normally contains the identity of the complainant and any other individuals involved in the complaint.

We will only use the personal information we collect to process the complaint and to check on the level of service we provide. We do compile and publish statistics showing information like the number of complaints we receive, but not in a form which identifies anyone.

We usually have to disclose the complainant's identity to whoever the complaint is about. This is inevitable where, for example, the accuracy of a person's record is in dispute. If a complainant doesn't want information identifying him or her to be disclosed, we will try to respect that. However, it may not be possible to handle a complaint on an anonymous basis.

We will keep personal information contained in complaint files in line with our retention policy. This means that information relating to a complaint will be retained for three years from closure. It will be retained in a secure environment and access to it will be restricted according to the 'need to know' principle.

Individuals raising a complaint by calling QAA's information and enquiry lines may have their calls monitored (see People who call QAA).

Individuals who contact QAA in relation to a data protection subject access request or other enquiry

Personal data relating to a data subject access request or other information request will not be disclosed publicly. However, individuals should be aware that they may be identifiable through the details of their request.

People taking CPD awards offered by QAA

QAA offers CPD awards, hosted by YMCA Awards. When you sign up for a CPD award your personal data, including name and contact information, is collected and processed by YMCA Awards and shared with QAA.

Both YMCA Awards and QAA need to collect and use your personal data to provide you with the service you have purchased. Either organisation may contact you relating to course operation and administration.

QAA may use personal information collected to offer services and information related to our work on quality and standards in higher education, which we feel would be of interest to you. This may include services offered by our wholly owned trading subsidiary QAA Enterprises Limited.

If you choose to purchase a CPD course your personal financial data, including card number and billing address, is collected and processed by YMCA Awards. Your financial information is not shared with QAA. Please see YMCA Awards' Privacy Policy for information on YMCA Awards' use of your personal information www.ymcaawards.co.uk/privacy-policy.

People who use QAA services, for example who subscribe to one of our newsletters, attend a QAA event, or request a publication from us

QAA offers various services to the public, including publications, newsletters and events. We have to hold the details of the people who have requested the service in order to provide it.

We may use personal information collected when people contact us to offer services and information related to our work on quality and standards in higher education, which we feel would be of interest. This may include services offered by our wholly owned trading subsidiary, QAA Enterprises Limited. QAA will enable users to 'opt out' of further contact with QAA or QAA Enterprises at the time that personal data is collected.

People who respond to a QAA survey

When QAA requests personal data on a survey we will be clear about why we are asking for this information and the use we will make of it. Unless otherwise stated on the survey, responses will be treated as confidential and the data will only be used for the purpose for which we collected it.

Information sharing

To effectively discharge our public functions, QAA may share information with organisations with a common interest in protecting standards and quality in higher education. This is regulated by Information Sharing Agreements, copies of which are available to view on our website (www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-governance) or upon request.

Testing and training

Training may be undertaken using the live or test environment. In either case, the people accessing the data will be limited to those who would have access to it in the real environment, and have completed the appropriate non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements where necessary.

Complaints or queries

Should you think that QAA's collection or use of information is unfair, misleading or inappropriate, please contact us at the address at the end of this policy ('How to contact us').

Access to personal information

QAA tries to be as open as it can be in terms of giving people access to their personal information. Individuals can find out if we hold any personal information by making a 'subject access request' under the EU General Data Protection Regulation (2018). To make a request to the QAA for any personal information we may hold you need to put the request in writing addressing it to our Information and Records Team at the address provided below ('How to contact us'). For further guidance please see QAA's subject access request guidance and form and also refer to QAA's Data Protection policy.

We may use personal information collected when people contact us to offer services and information related to our work on quality and standards in higher education, which we feel would be of interest. QAA will enable users to 'opt in' to receive further contact from QAA at the time that personal data is collected.

Notification of changes to this privacy notice

Changes to our privacy policy will be published on this page. This will help ensure that you are always aware of what information we collect, how we use it, and under what circumstances, if any, we share it with other parties.

This privacy notice was updated April 2018.

How to contact us

Requests for information about our privacy policy can made here: www.qaa.ac.uk/contact-us or by writing to:

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Southgate House
Southgate Street
Gloucester
GL1 1UB