



# Her Majesty's Armed Forces Army Application Guidance Notes

## INTRODUCTION

The following guidance notes contain essential information about joining the Army. Similar versions are published for the RN and RAF.

Please read it fully, as well as any media or brochures that you have been given.

The notes are designed to help you fill in the Army application form (online or paper versions), as well as providing background information to the Army interest forms. The notes are based on the appropriate Ministry of Defence and Army rules and regulations.

## QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about the guidance notes or the application form please ask your Army Careers Adviser (ACA) in your local Armed Forces Careers Office (AFCO), Army Careers Information Office (ACIO), Regimental or Corps Headquarters, Reserve Forces or Territorial Army Centre (TAC). More information and the online application form are available on the Army website at [www.army.mod.uk/jobs](http://www.army.mod.uk/jobs)

## CAUTIONARY STATEMENTS

All applications are subject to Ministry of Defence approval. The Army cannot guarantee that you will be accepted. The Army may refuse an application without giving any reason.

You may cancel the application process at any time up to Enlistment into the Army.

Please **DO NOT** give notice or terminate your current job until you have been given a written offer of the initial training start date.

## WORLD WIDE SERVICE AND CONFLICT

You must be aware that, should you be accepted for enlistment:

- You must be prepared to serve anywhere in the world.
- You must be prepared to serve in areas of conflict and to carry arms.
- You may have to take life in the act of protecting life.

## ARMY EMPLOYMENT AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The British Army fully supports the principle of equality of opportunity in employment. We are opposed to all forms of unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnic background, gender, marital/civil partnership status, sexual orientation, disability, religious belief or age. We are committed, wherever practicable, to recruiting and maintaining a workforce which broadly reflects the UK population we serve. We have a strict code of conduct that ensures zero tolerance of bullying, harassment, discrimination and victimisation on any grounds.

## HOW YOUR INFORMATION WILL BE USED

The Army (as part of the Ministry of Defence) will keep your information safe to protect your privacy.

We will not share your personal details with other organisations.

The information will be used by the Army recruiting and selection authorities and their agents to help decide if you are eligible to join the Army. On entry to the Army the data will be used by the service training and personnel authorities.

If you need more information about data protection or want to contact us, read our privacy policy at:

<http://www.army.mod.uk/privacy-policy.aspx>

## CONDITIONS OF STANDARDS AND BEHAVIOUR

Before filling in the application form, you should understand the standards and behaviour that will be expected of you during service with the Armed Forces.

### **Commitment**

In joining the Armed Forces, you will enter a disciplined organisation that has different requirements from civilian life. There will be times when the requirements of the Service take priority over personal needs; for example, you will be liable for duty at any time of the day or night, seven days a week. You may also be required to serve in any part of the world.

### **Discipline**

Behaviour that does not amount to a crime as a civilian can be a disciplinary matter in the Armed Forces and will be punished. For instance, you can be disciplined for disobeying an order, being untidily dressed, being late for work or taking unauthorised absence from your place of duty.

### **Integrity**

Dishonesty of any kind is unacceptable and can damage morale and trust.

### **Alcohol**

Drunkenness is an offence under the Manual of Service Law and is taken very seriously by the Armed Forces. Those who keep offending may be administratively discharged.

### **Standards of Behaviour**

In the Service environment where men and women may live in close proximity, very high standards of behaviour are demanded. Where restrictions are placed on sexual activity, any breach may lead to administrative or disciplinary action.

### **Bullying**

Ill-treatment and bullying are unacceptable. Disciplinary action will be taken against offenders.

### **Sexual and Racial Discrimination**

Any form of sexual or racial harassment or discrimination will not be tolerated and disciplinary or administrative action will be taken against offenders. Your application will be rejected if you are (or have been) a member or supporter of – or associated with – any group or organisation whose purpose includes provocation to racial hatred and violence.

### **Equality and Diversity**

The Armed Forces diversity policy is to treat all personnel fairly, regardless of gender, marital status, race, ethnic origin or religious belief and without reference to social background or sexual orientation. The Army recognises and values individuals from diverse backgrounds, who bring fresh ideas, perceptions, skills and attributes. This enables the Armed Forces to recruit from the widest possible base, helping us to achieve and sustain our manning needs, and to maintain operational capability.

### **Conclusion**

If, for any reason, you think that it will be difficult for you to meet the required standards, talk to your local Army Careers Adviser who will be able to advise you on whether a service career is the right choice for you.

## 1. BASIC DETAILS

### 1.1 Age and Outline Qualifications

The following criteria apply and are subject to change as Army manning policy dictates:

Regular Army	Soldier		Officer	
Age	Min 16 yrs (see Notes 1&2)	Max 32 yrs (see Notes 3&6)	Min 18 yrs (see Note 4)	Max 28 yrs (see Note 6)
Qualifications	No specific requirements except for technical jobs.		Specific GCSE and A level or equivalent grades. (see Note 5)	
Territorial Army	Soldier		Officer	
Age	Min 17 yrs (see Note 2)	Max 42 yrs (see Notes 6&7)	Min 18 yrs (see Note 4)	Max 34 yrs (see Note 6&7)
Qualifications	No specific requirements except for technical jobs.		Specific GCSE and A level or equivalent grades. (see Note 5)	

Notes (The ACA is able to brief you in greater detail than is practical to give here):

1. Must not be less than 15 years 7 months in order to start the application process. Minimum age requirements vary depending on the trade; not all trades accept candidates as young as 16 yrs in order to ensure that the majority of candidates are at least 18 on completion of Phase 2 training and entering the Field Army.
2. Parental or legal guardian consent is required if aged under 18 years on enlistment.
3. The Army Foundation College (Harrogate) and Army Technical Foundation College (Winchester) are Junior Entry open to young men and women aged between 16 years and 17 years 5 months at the time of starting the course.
4. Must not be less than 18 years to attend AOSB Main Board except those (for Regular Officer only) applying for a Scholarship or DSFC Welbeck for which the minimum application age is 14 years. DSFC Welbeck entry ages are between 15 years and 17 years 6 months.
5. A minimum of 35 ALIS points for the best 7 subjects at GCSE or equivalent which must include English Language, Mathematics and either a Science subject or a Foreign Language at Grade C or better. Plus 180 UCAS Tariff points acquired in separate subjects at AS and A Level or equivalent to include a minimum of 2 passes at A Level at Grades A-E or equivalent. Note that the General Studies paper does not qualify for UCAS Tariff points.
6. Maximum age is on Enlistment but time also has to be allowed for processing to avoid exceeding the age limit e.g. Regular Soldier Max is 32 years, so could be 32 years 11 months and 30 days, but not 33 years, on enlistment. Higher age limits may apply for those joining as professionally qualified or specialist entrants.
7. Ex-Regular soldiers may be enlisted up to 52 years of age; ex-Regular officers up to 57 years of age.

### 1.2 Job or Regimental Aspirations

Most careers, jobs or trades within the Army are open to both males and females. However, the following are NOT open to females, although females from other cap badges may be attached to such units.

- Household Cavalry, Royal Armoured Corps or Infantry

Your ACA will discuss your choice of job or career with you in detail as part of the application process, including the options of financial support in the Sixth Form, Further and Higher education. Don't worry if at this stage you are unable to complete these questions fully. You do not have to choose a specific career, job or trade until much further on in the application process.

### 1.3 Surname/Last Name/Family Name

If the name that you use is different from the name on your birth certificate, you will need to show the official supporting documents (deed poll etc), showing the change of name, will need to be shown to your ACA before you can proceed to enlistment.

If there are any changes to your name during the application period, please inform your ACA as soon as possible.

### 1.4 Nationality and Residency

For entry into the Army you must meet the following requirements:

- You must be a British, Commonwealth or British Protected Citizen or an Irish National or hold Dual Nationality as either a British National or as a Commonwealth Citizen. Dual Nationals may be required to provide written confirmation from the Government of the other nation to verify that they are not liable for National Service (Military or Government Service) or recall to military service with that nation.
- You must normally have lived in the UK\* or Ireland for a period of 5 years immediately prior to making an application, though for certain jobs there is a 10 year rule. However, we may be able to seek a waiver to reduce this residency requirement depending on where you have lived and the length of time out of the UK. The ACA will be able to advise you on the detail. If relevant, please complete the periods out of UK or Ireland as accurately as possible.

\*The United Kingdom (UK) includes England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and here also the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.

## 2. EDUCATION

### 2.1 Achievements

It is important that you give as much detail as possible. This will help us to:

- Advise you on the most suitable job or career stream open to you.
- Assist in your future personal development.

In order to support your application form your ACA will ask you to either take or send any original certificates or diplomas for their verification. If you cannot produce the original education certificates, then evidence from the relevant educational establishment (school or college) will be required.

### 2.2 Language Ability

If you use (speak or write) a language, other than English, for which you do not have a formal qualification (exam result or diploma) then please indicate in the appropriate box. For example you may speak a non English language at home. If so your ability would be described as Basic or Native (i.e. fluent or first language); if the language is self taught (Rosetta Stone or OU for example) the ability would be Untested. A formal qualification in a language should be recorded in the previous education, qualifications and skills boxes.

Use the following ability levels: Basic, Native or Untested.

## 3. PERSONAL DETAILS

### 3.1 National Identity and Ethnic Background

The Armed Forces are obliged by law to survey the ethnic mix of each Service, using the categories as defined in the Census 2001 guidelines. This ensures that the policy and practice of equality of opportunity for all personnel and potential entrants continues to be effective.

### 3.2 Religion or Belief

The Army encourages enlistment by people of many differing religions and beliefs. However, you must understand that you may have to use aggression and/or to take life during your service in the Army. There are also certain rules and regulations that state what type of clothing or dress is compatible or not with operations and for your health and safety. Other considerations may be the handling of certain types of food (as a chef) or the receiving of certain types of medical treatment.

### 3.3 Dependants (Care Responsibilities)

The Army (including the Volunteer and Reserve Forces) often require you to serve away from home for long periods. The Army needs to be sure that your private life will not prevent you from doing this. If you are married, or have children or family members who are dependent on you for money or help or both, then certain conditions of service apply. Your ACA will provide you with the appropriate information.

### 3.4 Care Order

If you are currently under a Care Order, then we will have to seek permission of the local authority for you to join the Army.

## Army Policy

### 3.5 Drug and Substance Misuse

The short, medium and long-term effects of the misuse of either illegal drugs or substances or legally obtained drugs or substances can have a damaging impact on mental and physical fitness and health. Drug or substance misuse is a direct threat to the operational effectiveness of the Army; the security and safety of Service personnel; and, potentially, the security and safety of the civilians whom they protect. Illegal misuse of drugs or substances by Army personnel also damages the reputation and standing of the Army.

For all of these reasons, the misuse of drugs or substances is not tolerated within the Armed Forces. The Armed Forces recognise, however, that drug or substance misuse is increasingly common in civilian life, particularly among the young, and that you may have misused drugs or substances yourself in the past. This will not necessarily prevent you from enlisting, as all applications are considered individually. Acceptance into the Army will depend on how often you use them and the class and type of drug or substance that has been misused.

Criminal convictions for trafficking or supply of any class of drug or substance will bar entry until the conviction is spent.

Once you have joined the Army, you are required to stay clear of drugs or substances at all times and also to avoid association with drug or substance misusers and suppliers. Once you have been enlisted, you will be liable by law to random compulsory drug testing throughout your Army career. If these tests show that you have misused drugs or substances, it is Army policy that, with very few exceptions, you will be discharged and will be permanently barred from re-enlisting or re-joining.

### 3.6 Financial Commitments – Debt and Bankruptcy

You may not be eligible to join the Army if you have financial commitments, debts or loans that you would have difficulty in repaying or lead to financial hardship if you entered the services. Look carefully at the appropriate rates of pay so that you are able to assess your particular situation; in other words: can you afford to join the Army? The ACA will ask you about this and will help you work through any queries.

A person who is declared bankrupt (and as a result does not have a working bank account) or is insolvent may be ineligible to join the Army. Your ACA will be able to assess your situation.

**UK Bank Account.** Once you have enlisted and started training, you will be entitled to pay and allowances. These can only be paid into a working UK bank or building society account. If you do not have one, you will have to open one before you are enlisted and start training.

### 3.7 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act

All applicants have to read the **MOD Form 493 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 'Advice to Applicants to HM Forces'** and complete the certificate on page 4 of the form. The ACA will give you a copy of the form when required.

If you have civilian or military offences against your name, whether spent or unspent, the form explains whether you have to declare and give details of any such convictions. You may not be able to enter or re-enter the Army if you have committed certain offences or have undergone certain types of sentence. Having an 'unspent' conviction does not necessarily mean that you cannot join the Army. Your ACA will be able to help clarify your particular situation.

If you have any convictions which you are required to declare, then please give the following information on the certificate at page 4 of the MOD Form 493 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974:

Offence or allegation (including date and place)  
Name of court and date of hearing  
Final or interim result or sentence/fine

At all times during the application process, you need to keep the ACA informed of any changes to your circumstances as regards offences, including if you are awaiting a court appearance for a criminal offence, or in any capacity (including jury service) other than as a witness, until the outcome of the hearing is known. This may cause a delay to the application process.

### 3.8 Basic Check

All soldier applicants have to undergo a Basic Check that will verify your identity and will list any unspent convictions that you may have. Your ACA will explain the procedure to you.

### 3.9 National Security Vetting (NSV)

All officer applicants, and certain soldier applicants depending on the job applied for, will be asked to complete an online e-Form security questionnaire. It is government policy that, for certain jobs, a Security Check and/or a Counter-Terrorist Check is carried out on applicants to confirm their identity, suitability and trustworthiness. You will have to declare any spent convictions for these checks. Your ACA will explain the procedure to you.

### 3.10 Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS)

There is a statutory requirement for applicants who seek to join certain specialisations (those that work with children or vulnerable adults) to undergo suitability checks by the Criminal Records Bureau. These checks include the disclosure of any criminal record that you may have. If appropriate, a Suitability Certificate will be issued. Your ACA will advise you when and how this certificate is to be obtained.

### 3.11 National Security - HM Government's Statement on Vetting Policy

In the interests of national security, safeguarding parliamentary democracy and maintaining the proper security of the Government's essential activities, it is the policy of HM Government that no one should be employed in the Armed Forces who is, or has been, involved in or associated with any of the following activities:

- espionage;
- terrorism;
- sabotage; or
- actions intended to overthrow or undermine parliamentary democracy by political, industrial or violent means; or is, or has recently been:
- a member of any organisation that has advocated such activities;
- associated with any such organisation (or any of its members) in such a way as to raise reasonable doubts about his or her reliability;
- susceptible to pressure or improper influence, for example because of current or past conduct;
- guilty of dishonesty or lack of integrity that throws doubt on their reliability; or
- shown to demonstrate behaviour or is subject to circumstances that may otherwise indicate unreliability.

### 3.12 Tattoos

Any tattoos that are offensive, obscene or excessive in size or number may be a bar to entry or re-entry. Tattoos which are visible on the head, neck and hand may be a bar to entry depending on their size and nature. If you have tattoos you may be asked to complete a form describing them. The tattoos will be seen during your medical examination.

### 3.13 Body piercing

Some body piercings will be a bar to entry or re-entry, particularly those which alter appearance significantly, e.g. flesh tunnels. For health and safety reasons, you will be asked to remove certain items of body piercing jewellery before undergoing physical activity as part of the application and selection process. You will not be allowed to attempt the physical activities if you do not remove the body piercing jewellery when requested. Once you have joined the Army, you will be advised by Service authorities of the rules for wearing body jewellery when on and off duty.

## Medical Criteria

### 3.14 Medical and Physical Criteria

**The Army requires anyone who enlists to be medically fit to serve worldwide.**

New entrants to the Army undergo intensive training, which is both physically and mentally demanding. The Army medical authorities have to be aware of your medical history and of any conditions that may affect your performance as a serviceman or servicewoman. Applicants who do not meet the required medical standards may be rejected. Your medical history is confidential and will not be given to anyone not authorised to hold this information.

### 3.15 Initial Medical Examination

Your medical examination will take place at one of the Army selection centres in most cases. Before attending the selection centre, in order to avoid unnecessary travel, you will be required to complete a Medical Questionnaire (RG Form 8). This is given to your doctor to verify and then sent to a selection centre for the Army medical authorities to review. The selection centre medical authorities will decide whether you are medically eligible to attend selection.

### 3.16 Basic medical requirements

The conditions in the table below make a person **permanently unsuitable**, except where specifically time limited, for entry into the Army.

The table is for general guidance only. Many conditions that are compatible with civilian employment and sport may not be compatible with military service. If you have a recurrent medical condition that is not mentioned below, or if you are unclear about the impact of your medical history, you should seek further advice through your ACA.

Please note that the ACAs and recruiting office staff are not medically qualified and are therefore unable to answer or advise on medical conditions. All decisions regarding medical suitability for entry are only made by appropriately appointed medical staff.

#### Medical conditions that preclude entry:

<b>Eye disorders</b>	Eye disease, e.g. glaucoma, keratoconus, retinitis pigmentosa. Double vision. Visual field defects. Corneal grafts or recurrent corneal ulcers. Cataract or cataract surgery. Detached retina. Vision only in one eye. Squint surgery in the previous six months. Laser eye surgery in the previous 12 months.
<b>Ear, nose and throat disorders</b>	Ongoing ear, nose, throat or sinus disease. Deafness. Presence of grommets. Current perforated eardrum. Certain surgical procedures.
<b>Heart and cardiovascular disorders</b>	Heart disease. Certain congenital heart conditions e.g. repair of tetralogy of fallot, coarctation of the aorta. Certain heart valve abnormalities. High blood pressure. Raynaud's disease.
<b>Respiratory disorders</b>	Asthma, wheeze or asthma symptoms or treatment within the past four years. Lung disease including chronic bronchitis, emphysema, bronchiectasis, cystic fibrosis. Active tuberculosis.
<b>Abdominal and digestive disorders, including diet</b>	Ongoing abdominal, digestive or liver disease. Crohn's disease. Ulcerative colitis. Loss of spleen (splenectomy). Chronic hepatitis. Untreated hernia. Requirement for specific dietary restriction.
<b>Neurological disorders</b>	Ongoing nervous system disease. Epilepsy or more than one seizure/fit after the age of five (although benign Rolandic epilepsy is acceptable). Single seizure/fit within the last ten years. Multiple sclerosis. Complications following head injury. Hydrocephalus (with or without shunt). Severe or recurrent headache (including migraine).
<b>Endocrine disorders</b>	Diabetes. Adrenal disorders. Pituitary disorders. Certain thyroid diseases.
<b>Skin disorders</b>	Chronic eczema or dermatitis. Severe psoriasis. Severe acne.
<b>Female reproductive disorders</b>	Chronic breast pain. Chronic pelvic pain or inflammatory disease. Endometriosis.
<b>Male reproductive disorders</b>	Current cancer of the testicle or prostate gland. Chronic scrotal pain.

<b>Musculoskeletal disorders</b>	Any abnormality that interferes with the ability to undertake military training. Spinal abnormalities. Certain spinal operations. Recurrent back pain or sciatica. Joint disease, pain or limitation of joint movement. Hypermobility (laxity) of the joints. Bone or joint operations within the last 12 months. Anterior cruciate ligament reconstruction (subject to single Service policy). Recurrent joint dislocations. Severe deformity following fractures. Loss of a limb. Foot abnormalities (e.g. club foot or hammer toe). Complete loss of either big toe. Complete loss of either thumb. Arthritis and similar conditions. Fractures within the last 12 months, except fractures of the digits / clavicles.
<b>Blood disorders</b>	Certain blood diseases, such as G6PDD, sickle cell disease, congenital spherocytosis, haemoglobinopathy. Any bleeding disorder or abnormality of blood clotting.
<b>Infections</b>	Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Carriers of hepatitis viruses.
<b>Malignancy (cancer)</b>	Most cancers are considered to place an applicant below the medical entry standard. Exceptions: some cancers in childhood or early adult life that have been successfully treated and are regarded as cured.
<b>Allergic disorders</b>	Severe allergic reactions and/or anaphylaxis. A need to carry adrenaline injections (EPIPEN, etc). Nut and peanut allergy. Egg allergy. Latex allergy. Vaccine allergy (including tetanus allergy). Gluten sensitivity (Coeliac disease).
<b>Conditions resulting from exposure to extremes of temperature</b>	Heat illness. Frostbite and non-freezing cold injury.
<b>Psychiatric disorders</b>	Ongoing psychiatric illness. Psychosis. Schizophrenia. Obsessive-compulsive disorder. Autism. Personality disorder. More than one episode of deliberate self-harm of any type. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Alcohol, drug or substance dependence. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) unless free of symptoms and not requiring treatment for at least three years. Anorexia and bulimia.
<b>Kidney disorders</b>	Ongoing kidney disease. Polycystic kidney disease and kidney stones. Donation of kidney in the past six months.
<b>Other</b>	Transplanted organs.

**At the discretion of the Army medical authorities your application may be rejected due to other medical reasons.**

### 3.17 Temporary conditions

The following conditions require the selection procedure and/or entry to be **temporarily** put on hold until you are fully recovered, discharged from hospital follow-up, and fit to train:

If you are:

- pregnant
- on the waiting list for an operation
- ill or injured

the selection procedure and/or entry will be **temporarily** put on hold until you are fully recovered, discharged from hospital follow-up and fit to train.

If none of the conditions above or in the table apply, tick the **Yes** box at the **Medical and Physical Criteria** paragraph of the application form.

### 3.18 Height and Weight

You need to be of a minimum weight and height:

- Soldier entry only: The minimum height requirement is 148cm (except for driver trades, when the minimum height is 158cm).
- All: Your Body Mass Index (BMI) and waist size will be measured during the selection process and you will be told if you are within the criteria.

### 3.19 Eye Sight

The minimum standards for both uncorrected and corrected vision are determined by service medical staff and are dependent on the proposed employment and trade. Spectacle or contact lens correction must not be greater than -7 dioptres or +8 dioptres in any meridian. Impaired colour perception (colour blindness) is not a bar to service, but may limit your career choices. When you go for your medical examination, you will need to take a copy of any acuity prescription from your optician.

## Driving Licence

### 3.20 Driving Licence

If you currently have, or have had in the past, any penalty points or a disqualification, there may be a restriction on the career path or job you wish to choose. Your ACA will give you the appropriate information.

#### 4. PREVIOUS OR CURRENT MILITARY APPLICATIONS OR SERVICE

4.1 We need to know of any service you may have had for the following reasons:

- UK service details (RN, RM, Army or RAF), including any university unit and Adult Cadet Instructor role - to avoid duplication of service numbers and to take into account your previous skills and training.
- Overseas service - to ensure that you do not have any outstanding commitments to serve in that particular country.
- To help guide you to the most appropriate career, job or trade.
- In all instances of previous service, whether UK or overseas, we will require to see any records of service and/or discharge papers.

#### 5. INTERESTS, ORGANISATIONS AND POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

5.1 Please provide as much information as possible, as you will often be able to develop your interests in the Army.

#### 6. REFEREES

##### 6.1 Officer

All applicants have to give referees in order to assist in confirming your identity and character, as well as for academic and work records. We will approach your Head Teacher or Tutor, and Employer (if appropriate), as referees.

Also give the details of **two** further referees (other than relatives or persons connected with your school, college or university, Territorial Army, UOTC or employer) who have known you for at least **one** year and who may be approached for references. You must ask the referees for their permission before giving their names here.

##### 6.2 Soldier

All applicants have to give at least one referee in order to assist in confirming your identity and character. Dependent on your choice of entry and career or job, you may be asked to give further referees. You must ask the referees for their permission before giving their names here.

Your initial referee should be:

**Either** your head teacher or tutor (if you are currently in full-time education or within 12 months of having left that school, college or university);

**Or** your current employer (or most recent employer if you are not currently employed).

If neither of the above is possible, the referee may be a personal referee. They must have known you for at least 12 months and have had contact with you within the last six months. They must have some standing in the community such as a doctor, magistrate, teacher, Member of Parliament, priest, and civil servant. They must not be related to you, nor had a close personal relationship or any financial arrangement with you.

In all cases you may have, as an additional referee, the Officer Commanding (if you are a serving member of the Reserve Forces) or the County Cadet Commandant (if serving in a Cadet unit).

#### DATA PROTECTION ACT – YOUR RIGHTS AND HOW WE PROTECT THEM

When it comes to the information we hold about you, your rights are set out clearly in the law. The Data Protection Act 1998 also says that people who record and use personal data must be open about how it is used, and that they must obey the following eight Data Protection Principles:

- Process it fairly and lawfully.
- Process it for specific purposes and not in any manner incompatible with those purposes.
- Only process information that is adequate, relevant and not excessive.
- Ensure that the information is accurate and up to date.
- Ensure that the information is not kept longer than is necessary.
- Ensure that the information is treated in accordance with your rights.
- Take care of your personal information.
- Ensure that your personal information is not transferred outside the European Economic Area unless there are suitable safeguards in the countries to which it needs to be sent.

The law exempts us from these principles if obeying the principles would damage the fight against crime or be against the national interest in some way.

If you want to know more about the Data Protection Act 1998, you can visit their website at: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)