

Board of Graduate Studies, University of Cambridge: Applications for Graduate Study

This direction is issued by the Board of Graduate Studies, having consulted the University's Legal Services and the Information Compliance Offices.

The Board of Graduate Studies requires Faculties and Departments to adopt and use the University's Electronic Document Management system which gives access to the University's student records systems (CamSIS) for admission purposes. The following principles apply to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998 while facilitating the orderly processing of applications for graduate study:

1. The standards and principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 apply to the processing of applications for graduate study whether accessed in hard or electronic copy.
2. The University is a single legal entity under the Act and applications for graduate study may be distributed and accessed internally as required for the purposes of assessing an applicant's suitability for the course and all consequent administrative matters pertaining to an individual's admission to the University. Applicants have been explicitly informed that the details of their application will be disclosed as necessary to the Colleges, which are separate legal entities, and therefore this data sharing may be carried out as required.
3. Applications information is confidential personal data and should be treated with utmost care and attention and in accordance with the Data Protection Principles as summarised on the University's website at:
<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/information/dpa/>
These Principles apply whether the applications information is accessed electronically or in hard copy, or stored within an on-line system or a manual filing system.
4. CamSIS includes security measures to ensure that individual users, whether members of Faculty or administrative staff, are properly authorised, following completion of an application, and are only able to access relevant applications information. Access to sensitive personal data, as defined in the Data Protection Act, is restricted still further on CamSIS and only certain categories of user will be able to access this information. Some users may have access to additional applications information due to other roles that they hold (within a College, or with responsibility for more than one course of study for instance) which may give them enhanced access rights.
5. Users are reminded that they should not attempt to access applications information or other student records, whether in hard copy or electronic form, in which they have no legitimate interest for the performance of their contractual duties or for which they are not authorised. Nor should they use applications information for purposes other than the processing and consideration of the application (unless an individual is admitted to a course of graduate study, in which case the information provided upon application will of course carry forward to form part of their student record). Copies of electronic documents accessed through CamSIS should not be printed out and shared with people not authorised to access this material through CamSIS.

November 2011