

**22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023**

**BY EMAIL**

**Our Ref: FOI 2037**

Dear 

Your request for information was received on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and was dealt with under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please be advised that the Business Services Organisation (BSO) has now completed its search for the information you requested in relation to the Associate Select List.

In the first instance, you should note that BSO does not hold data sharing agreements on behalf of Client Organisations who may avail of the Associate Select List, as this is the responsibility of each Client respectively. Further, please be advised that Data DSAs are completed on an assignment-by-assignment basis – i.e. where the assignment may involve processing of personal data held by BSO.

The following response, therefore, is based only on DSAs between BSO and Associate Consultants (i.e. for BSO assignments), and not for assignments relating to Client Organisations. You should also note that these DSAs were introduced in 2021, and as such responses are based on data held from 2021 onwards.

Please therefore find a response as follows:

**1) Associates who have a current signed data sharing agreement in 2023**

5

**2) Associates who do not have a current signed data sharing agreement**

Since 2021, there have been 107 assignments commissioned within BSO. Only assignments involving the processing of personal data require DSAs to be signed. Over this period, 5 assignments required a DSA to be in place, and these were signed and in place.



**3) Associates who had data sharing agreements in the 4 years prior to 31 December 2023 i.e 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022**

In line with earlier in this response, DSAs were introduced in 2021. Therefore, no information is held prior. There were 5 assignments which required DSAs.

**4) Associates who did not have a signed data sharing agreement during these 4 years.**

In line with earlier in this response, DSAs were introduced in 2021. Therefore, no information is held prior to that time. Where associate work for BSO was undertaken from 2021, involving the processing of personal data, all such assignments have DSAs in place.

I hope that the information provided assists you. If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter, as the BSO, along with all other public authorities are not obliged to accept internal review requests after this period has lapsed.

In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to

Information Governance Manager,  
2 Franklin Street,  
Belfast,  
BT2 8DQ

If, following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision-making panel, you remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request, you may make a complaint under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the BSO has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act.

You can contact Information Commissioner at:

**Website:** [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)  
**Phone:** 0303 123 1113  
**Email:** [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)  
**Post:** Information Commissioner's Office  
3rd Floor, 14 Cromac Place  
Belfast  
BT7 2JB

In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out. However, the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Yours Sincerely,

*Karen Bailey.*

**Karen Bailey**  
Chief Executive