

# Confidentiality Policy

**QRS Market Research Ltd** is committed at every level and in all aspects of the service it offers to providing a confidential service to all clients and employees.

Information will be treated in the utmost confidence and will not be divulged to anyone outside the company except where extenuating circumstances exist (see below).

No conversation about a client or project(s) should take place with anyone who does not work for QRS.

No personal information about a client or employee will be given to any third party even if the person is a member of their family.

Information will only be passed to another agency with the consent of the client or employee. In certain circumstances QRS reserves the right to break confidentiality should this be deemed necessary. These circumstances include:

- If we receive information which indicates that a crime has been committed.
- If we receive information which indicates a possible terrorist threat.
- If we receive information which indicates a breach of the MRS Code of Conduct, data protection, confidentiality or an offence of similar standing.

## **Data Protection /GDPR**

QRS are registered with the ICO for Data Protection and a DPO has been appointed and can be contacted at [dpo@qrs-research.co.uk](mailto:dpo@qrs-research.co.uk)

## **Use of client information for training purposes:**

Examples of questionnaires, instructions, data tables etc... may be used for training purposes, but any information which may contain results or enable identification will be changed.

## **Evaluation and Monitoring:**

In order to adhere to our quality standard ISO 20252, all QRS interviewers will be monitored / validated in accordance with the minimum requirements.

## **Record keeping, statistics, evaluation and monitoring**

### **Client Records**

- ⇒ All documentation will be kept securely.
- ⇒ Customer records will be kept secure for 12 months from completion of a project, unless explicit consent has been granted by an individual and it is deemed a legitimate interest to retain that record, for example, to detect fraud or to meet legal obligations.
- ⇒ Unless otherwise requested, any materials relating to a project will be destroyed after a period of 2 years.

### **Letters or online messages**

- ⇒ Any letters or printed documentation will be kept secure as per our Clear Desk Policy.
- ⇒ Any correspondence relating to a project will be destroyed after 2 years. However, if a letter or online message is received which gives thanks or encouragement then it may be kept provided that permission is sought from the writer. (See below)
- ⇒ If a private letter or online message is received which we would like to use in publicity, we will seek the permission of the writer to ensure that they are happy for us to do this. Information about a client will never be used for publicity purposes unless consent has been obtained (see above).
- ⇒ Personal data shall be transferred by secure FTP unless there are extenuating circumstances. If there is no other option and it becomes necessary to send personal data via email then files are to be password protected and must adhere to the QRS password policy.

### **Key procedures**

- ⇒ It is our preference to transfer data via client secure FTP whenever possible. If that's not possible then transfer will be via a designated folder (ftp directory) within the QRS SharePoint directory.
- ⇒ Auto complete e-mail addresses have been removed and are not to be used by data staff.
- ⇒ Passwords shall meet our password policy.
- ⇒ A new password is to be created for every project for each client.

### **Making the Confidentiality policy known**

- ⇒ All staff will be provided access to all QRS policies.
- ⇒ We will ensure that all staff are informed about our policies and are able to give information about the Confidentiality Policy if asked.
- ⇒ All staff are required to read and sign the QRS Confidentiality Agreement prior to starting work / starting the first assignment.

This policy applies to all staff, agency workers, contractors, members of the public, suppliers etc.

Any breach of this policy will be dealt with under the QRS Disciplinary Procedure.

The policy will be reviewed annually.

*These policies supplement your terms of employment but are not of contractual effect. Their purpose is to explain the Company's current policies and procedures but they may be subject to change without notice if changes are considered appropriate by the Company or if there are changes in relevant legislation.*