



GDPR Training Paths

Part 1 – Prioritising Privacy

INTRODUCTION

There are an abundance of articles outlining the benefits of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training. However, few pieces provide a convincing argument as to why an organisation with limited resources in terms of time and money should prioritise GDPR training over other data compliance initiatives. Furthermore, once the decision is made to invest in GDPR training, several questions arise :

- How do you develop a culture of privacy?
- What does a career path for privacy professionals look like?
- Are certified GDPR training courses worth the investment?
- Is there a legal requirement for conducting GDPR training?
- What are the business benefits?

Throughout the following article, we will answer all these questions to present a compelling business case for implementing a long-term GDPR training, learning, and development programme.

Before launching into specific GDPR training courses, let's pause for a moment and consider what 'training' is and how, as this [study](#) reveals, it is essential for our survival.

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[Education] is the entire set of processes by which each new generation of human beings, in any cultural group, acquires the skills, knowledge, rituals, beliefs, lore, and values—in short, the culture—of the previous generation. To say that we are the supremely cultural animal is to say that we are the supremely educative animal.

Workplace training is essential for a variety of reasons, beginning with an induction, then goes onto annual cultural awareness programmes, performance appraisals, and career progression planning. In the past, workplace training was imposed on staff and became something they disliked. Today, due to the threat of evolving technologies, automation, and globalisation, lifelong professional development is the best way to maintain relevant skills. That's why the success of an organisation and its staff are inextricably linked.

CONTENTS

Page	3	Build the right culture before investing in GDPR training
Page	4	What Does a Career Path for Privacy Professionals Look Like?
Page	5	A quick look at privacy salaries
Page	6	Make employee development a priority
Page	7	Why choose certified training courses
Page	8	Is There a Legal Requirement for Conducting GDPR Training?
Page	9	What are the Business Benefits?
Page	10	Available Courses
Page	11	Coming up in part two

BUILD THE RIGHT CULTURE BEFORE INVESTING IN GDPR TRAINING

You need to build the right culture before investing in GDPR training courses, and when thinking about investing in staff education, the above quote is particularly pertinent. We are all familiar with corporate tick-box training sessions, where employees complete an online privacy course at their desks. While there is a place for awareness level training, organisations that **only** rely on this type of training may as well stand in the street and tear up their money. Providing such training might allow you to report positively to HR, but 99% of the information is forgotten as soon as the employee shuts down their computer.

Tick-box training also does very little to satisfy disgruntled customers that their personal information is now in the public domain following a data breach. As **survey** after **survey** reveals, customers will switch providers over privacy concerns.

Education is about developing the culture of a group. That's why, before exploring training course options, you need to ask the following questions:

- Is privacy and GDPR compliance viewed as a core value in my organisation?
- Are the people at the top (i.e. board members, directors) committed to achieving GDPR compliance?
- Has a Data Protection Officer (DPO) or data protection lead been appointed?
- Is a robust governance structure in place with internal guidelines for data processing and securing data?
- Does everyone in the organisation understand how they play an individual role in privacy and GDPR compliance management?

Once you have made effective GDPR compliance an essential element of your organisation's culture, you can begin to invest in training to change employee behaviour. The reason it must be carried out in this order is that training is only useful when the attendee is **emotionally invested** in learning.

If an employee believes senior management could not articulate what GDPR stands for, let alone know how to identify and manage a Subject Access Request (SAR), why would they invest their time and energy?

When general data protection regulation GDPR compliance is part of an organisation's culture, everyone is required to understand and be able to perform their role in meeting the organisation's data protection responsibilities. This is why employees will embrace ongoing GDPR training courses and why the information will be more easily retained.

WHAT DOES A CAREER PATH FOR PRIVACY PROFESSIONALS LOOK LIKE?

All employees involved in the processing of personal data should receive regular awareness training. This should clearly outline internal policy guidelines, ethical standards, and be in accordance with the legal obligations of the GDPR. Training can be online or delivered by an instructor, but it should include a test, and a record of completion retained.

It should become apparent how certain individuals have a natural inclination towards privacy. At the same time, other members of staff, because of the amount of customer and employee data they handle, can be identified to play a more pivotal role in the delivery of the privacy management programme. These are the employees who may be perfect for supplemental training, so they can fulfil important data protection support roles. Such as **privacy champions** or **privacy technologists**.



Over time, these individuals are also candidates to one day move into full-time data protection roles within the data privacy compliance team. The eventual goal must be to identify, train and nurture data protection and privacy professionals who know the business, understand the industry, and have the potential to take on senior responsibilities.

Every organisation has to evaluate **whether it is legally required to appoint a Data Protection Officer (DPO)** under the GDPR or manage privacy through a different compliance structure. Regardless of the decision, limited availability (not to mention premium salary demands) means that there are not enough experienced privacy professionals, with the relevant credentials and sector skills to go around. The solution, therefore, is to develop future DPOs and their support teams from within the business.

A QUICK LOOK AT PRIVACY SALARIES



Annual salaries for DPOs in the UK begin at

£25,000, rising to **£84,000** per annum

depending on experience, according to Glassdoor. The national average for a DPO is

£46,002 per annum.

The IAPP annual salary survey provides an international perspective of what privacy professionals can expect to earn. The main findings from the 2021 report point to an overall growth in pay and bonuses.

MAKE EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT A PRIORITY

Are Certified GDPR Training Courses Worth the Investment?

Aside from ensuring staff members have the skills required to support your organisation in meeting GDPR compliance, training provides an opportunity for career progression.

According to Gartner's [2019 Global Talent Monitor](#) report, lack of career progression was cited by 40% of departing employees as a dissatisfying factor in their job. Investing in employee career progression and [positive training experiences](#) is a well-proven method of staff retention.

Here are some advantages that come from making employee development a priority:

- Be regarded as one of the best places to work
- Attract higher calibre applicants for new positions
- Retain valuable employees for longer
- Spend less time and money on recruitment
- Younger workers will be more motivated to stay, rather than move on to another organisation to progress their career
- Identify future leaders along with employees who may not be pulling their weight
- Diversity will increase and the workplace culture will be continually refreshed
- Employees will become more confident in their roles, leading to better customer service and innovation
- Performance and productivity will increase
- **General data protection regulation [GDPR Training] will reduce the risk of a data breach**

Providing ongoing training also increases hiring opportunities. As stated by Alana Walden in her [article](#), The Value of Marketing Qualifications and Training Courses:

“

...if a company is struggling to find the 'perfect' candidate for a role they're hiring for, sometimes it can be worth considering candidates who have some of, but not quite all, the right experience for the role, and consider putting them on training courses to cover off any areas that they're not quite strong enough on. And if a reduction in basic salary is needed as a compromise, the new hire can then be incentivised to learn by outlining that they will get an increase once they've completed their qualification or courses.

WHY CHOOSE CERTIFIED TRAINING COURSES?

People can teach themselves pretty much anything these days. Do we even need professional qualifications?

More importantly, are they worth the investment in time and money to gain a formal certification?

Suzanne Galletly, Portfolio Director at EXIN, suggests **three reasons for getting certified**:

- > **Certification makes people happier** - employees who are certified are more confident in their skills and better overall performers.
- > **Careers opportunities are boosted** – it's one thing to possess specific knowledge or skills, but it's another to be able to prove it via an independent, globally recognised professional certification.
- > **Training is now highly accessible** – certified courses are available through the traditional classroom-based learning environment, or via live online courses. There are also self-study or distance learning options to consider. Examinations are also becoming more flexible, with most being available online to take when it suits the learner.

Certification is an investment in your business and workforce as it empowers your employees with the competences and confidence required to be able to carry out their role successfully.

In terms of data protection, certified training is a way of demonstrating that employees who are processing personal data comply with UK or EU general data protection regulations.



IS THERE A LEGAL REQUIREMENT FOR CONDUCTING GDPR TRAINING?

The principle of accountability is of particular significance, under GDPR. Defined within [Article 5\(2\)](#), it outlines how every organisation is expected to not only satisfy its GDPR responsibilities but must also be able to demonstrate compliance.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) describes accountability as:

“

A real opportunity for you to show, and prove, how you respect privacy. This can help you to develop and sustain people's trust.



Embedding a GDPR culture throughout the workforce, getting senior executives on board, initiating training and awareness programmes for everyone involved in the processing of personal data, and appointing someone to lead GDPR compliance are all core requirements of the [accountability principle](#).

It would be a mistake to think of GDPR training (and overall data protection compliance for that matter) solely as a legal obligation. Instead, we strongly recommend implementing a culture of privacy.

WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS BENEFITS?

Regulatory compliance requires funding. And of course, the larger the organisation, the bigger the budget allocation. At one time, Microsoft had 1,600 engineers working on GDPR compliance. However, there are real benefits to having a robust privacy operation in place.

In uncertain economic times, especially following the COVID-19 pandemic, **investors** want to see evidence of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) compliance and responsibility.

As organisations continue to invest in GDPR compliance, the knowledge about what data they hold will increase, which will lead to an improved understanding of their customers and service users. Consequently, as analysis leads to insight and intelligence, the capacity to **extract value** will eventually follow. According to Cisco, the time, energy, and costs are worth the effort due to the significant benefits most organisations are seeing from their **privacy investments**.

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For every pound spent in data privacy, companies are getting £2.70 worth of improvements to their data loss mitigation, agility, innovation, customer loyalty and other key areas.

To find out about the UK and EU general data protection regulation training courses we offer, get in touch today.

Call us on **0370 04 27701** or visit our **IAPP course** or **BSC course** pages to find out more.



SEE OUR AVAILABLE COURSES



BCS Foundation Certificate in Data Protection

The Foundation GDPR Certificate from the BCS is recommended for anyone involved in the collection, usage or protection of personal information.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

IAPP Certified Information Privacy Professional Europe

The CIPP/E is the essential IAPP certification for privacy professionals covering Europe's framework of laws, regulations and policies, most significantly the GDPR.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

BCS Practitioner Certificate in Data Protection

The GDPR Practitioner Certificate from the BCS is the leading industry qualification for UK focused DPOs and compliance professionals.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

IAPP Certified Information Privacy Manager

The CIPM is a unique qualification in privacy programme management from the IAPP that teaches DPOs and senior compliance professionals how to turn policies into accountability.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

BCS Practitioner Certificate in Freedom of Information

This BCS Practitioner Certificate is the recognised qualification for individuals with information access responsibilities under the FOIA or EIR.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

IAPP Certified Information Privacy Technologist

The CIPT is an Industry recognised qualification for IT professionals who require the technical skills and knowhow to implement comprehensive privacy compliant solutions.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

COMING UP IN PART TWO

We will examine the certified GDPR and privacy management training courses available from the BCS and IAPP, along with the advantages of working with specialist training provider Freevacy Ltd.

"Excellence is an art won by training and habituation". – **Aristotle**





Freevacy is an independent GDPR training provider. We offer accredited BCS and IAPP training for DPOs, privacy professionals and anyone with data protection responsibilities. We also deliver bespoke courses that can be adapted to suit your particular learning requirements.

For more information, please call: 0370 04 27001
or email: **contact@freevacy.com**

www.freevacy.com