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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT TRAINING

BACKGROUND

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 gives guidance to the way information is accessed and disclosed in the public domain. Organisations mainly owned by public authorities must adhere to the FOI Act and respond to requests adequately. Public organisations are required to publish certain information and the public is entitled to request this information. The availability of this information is important for an open and transparent exchange between public organisations and society.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

This 1-day interactive course is designed for those who are required to respond to FOI requests. The training course will give you a greater understanding of your responsibilities, how to appropriately deal with requests and give you the knowledge of when you should and shouldn't share the requested information.

The course will also benefit anyone who is required to oversee an FOI function within an organisation.

SCOPE OF TRAINING

The course seeks to put The Freedom of Information Act 2000 into context using real-life examples and delegate role-based scenarios. Delegates will gain an in-depth understanding of how to navigate the legislation, how to use it, and how to apply it to more complex situations.

A copy of The Act is provided to all delegates and is used throughout the course as part of improving their ability to navigate it.

COURSE OUTLINE

The course will cover the following key areas:

1. The basics of the Freedom of Information legislation:
 - What is the FOI legislation?
 - What is the purpose of it?
 - What does it cover?
 - Why is it so important? With examples of when the legislation has been used well.



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2. Is it a valid Freedom of Information request?
 - Learning to read an FOI request
 - Do we have the relevant information?
 - Should the information be in the public domain?
 - Clarity and refinement
3. What are the exemptions for fulfilling an FOI request:
 - What are the exemptions?
 - When should they be used
 - Absolute
 - Discretionary
 - Just because we can use one, doesn't mean we should
 - Public interest test
 - What is it?
 - When is it needed?
 - How do we do one?
4. Refusing a request
 - Communicating with the requesting party
 - Keeping records of decision making
 - Dealing with a complaint/Request for an Internal Review

At the end of this course, delegates will have a good understanding of the legislation, the role and power of the ICO, how working practices need to be adapted and will be able to confidently bring this and more to their organisational Freedom of Information procedures.



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