

## **Press Release**

### **For immediate issue**

Date: 05 August 2010

### **Get the inside story on your exam results under the Data Protection Act**

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) is reminding students who are unhappy with their exam results this summer about their right to access information concerning their marks under the Data Protection Act (DPA).

Under the Act, an individual can access personal information about themselves from any organisation. This is known as a Subject Access Request (SAR). Students wishing to know more about why they were awarded certain marks can use a SAR to request examiners' comments from examinations scripts. Students who appeal their results can also request the minutes of appeals.

David Smith, Deputy Commissioner at the ICO, said: "Being able to access information held on you by an organisation is an important right under the Data Protection Act. It can be very important when students want to appeal exam marks or understand more about why they received certain marks. In 2009/10, concerns with how people's SAR requests were dealt with generated the most complaints to the ICO. We have produced clear guidance for individuals looking to access information relating to their exam marks and to help universities and colleges to understand their responsibilities under the Act. We will not be afraid to

take action against organisations that repeatedly fail to handle requests in line with the Act.”

The guidance – '[Individuals' rights of access to examination records](#)' – also outlines how to access more general information about the college or university policies or procedures.

This guidance is available to download from the ICO website [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

## **ENDS**

If you need more information, please contact the ICO press office on 020 7025 7580 or visit the website at: [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)

### **Notes to Editors**

1. The Information Commissioner's Office upholds information rights in the public interest, promoting openness by public bodies and data privacy for individuals.
2. The ICO has specific responsibilities set out in the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 and Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003
3. Organisations can now sign the Personal Information Promise to demonstrate their commitment to protecting people's personal information by visiting the website at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk)
4. For more information about the Information Commissioner's Office subscribe to our e-newsletter at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk). Alternatively, you can find us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/ICOnews](https://www.twitter.com/ICOnews)
5. Anyone who processes personal information must comply with eight principles, which make sure that personal information is:
  - Fairly and lawfully processed
  - Processed for limited purposes
  - Adequate, relevant and not excessive
  - Accurate and up to date
  - Not kept for longer than is necessary
  - Processed in line with your rights
  - Secure
  - Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection