# UK GDPR Individual Rights: The right to restrict processing

**What is the right to restrict processing?**

The GDPR gives individuals the right to restrict the processing of their personal data in certain circumstances. This means that an individual can limit the way that an organisation uses their data. This is an alternative to requesting the erasure of their data.

Individuals have the right to restrict the processing of their personal data where they have a particular reason for wanting the restriction. This may be because they have issues with the content of the information you hold or how you have processed their data. In most cases you will not be required to restrict an individual’s personal data indefinitely, but you will need to have the restriction in place for a certain period of time.

**When does the right to restrict processing apply?**

Individuals have the right to request you restrict the processing of their personal data in the following circumstances:

* the individual contests the accuracy of their personal data and you are verifying the accuracy of the data;
* the data has been unlawfully processed and the individual opposes erasure and requests restriction instead;
* you no longer need the personal data, but the individual needs you to keep it in order to establish, exercise or defend a legal claim; or
* the individual has objected to you processing their data under Article 21(1), and you are considering whether your legitimate grounds override those of the individual.

Although this is distinct from the right to rectification and the right to object, there are close links between those rights and the right to restrict processing:

* if an individual has challenged the accuracy of their data and asked for you to rectify it, they also have a right to request you restrict processing while you consider their rectification request; or
* if an individual exercises their right to object, they also have a right to request you restrict processing while you consider their objection request.

It is good practice to automatically restrict the processing whilst you are considering its accuracy or the legitimate grounds for processing the personal data in question.

**How do we restrict processing?**

You must have processes in place that enable you to restrict personal data if required, such as:

* temporarily moving the data to another processing system;
* making the data unavailable to users; or
* temporarily removing published data from a website.

It is important that you consider how you store personal data that you no longer need to process, where an individual has requested you restrict their data (e.g. effectively requesting that you do not erase the data).

**Further information**

Refer to the ICO website for more detailed guidance: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/individual-rights/right-to-restrict-processing/