



THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT (POPIA) CLIENT PRIVACY POLICY

PREAMBLE

The purpose of this policy is to advise the client/ user (data subject) of VQS services, both electronic and otherwise, why data is collected and processed, what data is in focus as well as how it is processed. VQS is committed to full compliance with the POPI Act insofar as the utilisation and disclosure of data subject personal information (PI) is concerned. Hence, technical and operational measures have been put in place to protect data subject privacy and VQS invites all data subjects and/ or requesters to engage with its Information Officer (IO) in respect of any matter related hereto.

SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to data subjects under the POPIA and its principles extend to the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA) in respect of requesters of records held by VQS. Personal information applies to both natural and juristic persons. Data subjects and requesters are invited to engage with the VQS Information Officer about any matter pertaining to the POPIA and PAIA, including but not limited to updating personal information, deletion of personal information, complaints in respect of how personal information is being processed and updating consent for electronic direct marketing.

DEFINITION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION (PI)

“Personal information” means information relating to an identifiable, living, natural person, and where it is applicable, an identifiable, existing juristic person, including, but not limited to:

- information relating to the race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, national, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, physical or mental health, well-being, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth of the person;
- information relating to the education or the medical, financial, criminal or employment history of the person;
- any identifying number, symbol, e-mail address, physical address, telephone number, location information, online identifier or other particular assignment to the person;
- the biometric information of the person;
- the personal opinions, views or preferences of the person;
- correspondence sent by the person that is implicitly or explicitly of a private or confidential nature or further correspondence that would reveal the contents of the original correspondence;
- the views or opinions of another individual about the person; and
- the name of the person if it appears with other personal information relating to the person or if the disclosure of the name itself would reveal information about the person.

PURPOSE OF COLLECTING AND PROCESSING PERSONAL INFORMATION

VQS processes personal information for various purposes including for:

- facilitating transactions with data subjects;
- fulfilling its contractual obligations to its clients and client contacts;
- complying with the provisions of statute and regulations;
- attending to the legitimate interests of data subjects;
- identifying prospects for enhanced service delivery and business sustainability;
- confirm and verify data subject identity or to verify that they are authorised users for security purposes;
- engaging in various forms of direct marketing; and
- audit and record keeping purposes.

LAWFUL BASIS

In respect of the processing of personal information as provided for above, VQS will adhere to the conditions for the lawful processing of personal information, based on its desire to provide data subjects services in their best interests as well as a legitimate interest of VQS to achieve its business objectives.

PERIOD OF HOLDING PERSONAL INFORMATION

VQS endeavours to provide the most accurate information possible to stakeholders, including data subjects. VQS seeks to verify the accuracy of its information as frequently as possible and to remove information that it learns to be inaccurate. Thus, VQS intends to process the information it has about data subjects for so long as it is accurate or until the data subject instructs VQS to refrain from processing it. In order to instruct VQS to refrain from collecting and/ or processing personal information, requests must be submitted to the Deputy Information Officer.

Notwithstanding the above, VQS shall hold personal information for such period as may be required in terms of statutes such as the Companies Act and various labour laws.

DATA SUBJECT RIGHTS

Data subjects have the right to request that VQS provide them with access to their personal information, to rectify or correct their personal information, erase personal information or restrict the processing of personal information, including refraining from sharing it or otherwise providing it to any third parties. Data subjects also have the right to raise complaints with the Information Regulator. The afore-going rights may be subject to certain limitations pursuant to applicable law.

SOURCES OF PERSONAL INFORMATION (PI)

VQS gathers personal information from several sources, which include directly from data subjects, publicly available sources such as websites, social media, commercial transactions with VQS, referrals, prospects, partner agreements, training engagements, conferences and the like. Given that personal information can be extracted and/ or obtained from several sources and consolidated into one Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) or other similar systems of record, it may be difficult or impossible to identify the exact source of one particular piece of information.

CATEGORIES OF PERSONAL INFORMATION (PI) COLLECTED AND PROCESSED

VQS collects information about data subjects who may be clients, client contacts, prospective clients and prospective client contacts. It also collects information on its employees and suppliers as well as third parties that are part of its scope of operation.

In respect of clients, client contacts, prospective clients and prospective client contacts VQS profiles business organisations and the contacts who work for the said organisations and it may have some or all of the following categories of personal information on data subjects, historical or current:

- name and surname;
- identity number;
- equity, gender and disability status;
- contact details (email, mobile);
- birth date;
- position held and responsibilities;
- areas of interest in respect of VQS offerings;
- record of services used;
- email correspondence and attachments;
- organisation details;
- office address;
- office contact details;
- organisation email address;
- organisation and data subject social media URLs; and
- other information that is available in the public domain.

We collect and process your personal information mainly to contact data subjects for the purpose of understanding their requirements and delivering services accordingly. Where possible, we will inform data subjects what information they are required to provide to VQS and what information is optional, as well as the consequences of not providing the said information.

Website usage information may be collected using “cookies” which allows VQS to collect standard internet visitor usage information.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

VQS may disclose data subject personal information to its service providers who are involved in the delivery of products or services data subjects. VQS has agreements in place to ensure that it complies with the privacy requirements as required by the POPI Act.

VQS may also disclose data subject personal information:

- where it has a duty or a right to disclose in terms of law and/ or industry codes; and
- where it believes it is necessary to protect its rights.

INFORMATION SECURITY

VQS is legally obliged to provide adequate systems, technical and operational protection for the personal information that it holds and to prevent unauthorised access to as well as prohibited use of personal information. VQS will therefore on a regular basis review its security controls and related processes to ensure that the personal information of data subjects remains secure.

VQS has conducted an impact assessment across all of its functions and used the findings thereof to manage risk optimally as well as to provide iterative improvements on an ongoing basis. VQS policies and procedures cover the following aspects:

- physical security;
- computer and network security;
- access to personal information;
- secure communications;
- security in contracting out activities or functions;
- retention and disposal of information;
- acceptable usage of personal information;
- governance and regulatory issues;
- monitoring access and usage of private information; and
- investigating and reacting to security incidents.

VQS also ensures that it contracts with Operators as required by POPIA and it requires appropriate security, privacy and confidentiality obligations of these operators in order to ensure that personal information is kept secure. The same protocols apply to any party to whom VQS may pass personal information on to for the purposes mentioned herein.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Our physical address is:
26 Vincent Road, Vincent, East
London, 5247

The Information Officer is:
Tony Balshaw
Email: tony.balshaw@vqs.co.za
Phone: +27 (0)43 726 9898

The Deputy Information Officer is:
Kathy Dixon
Email: kathy.dixon@vqs.co.za
Phone: +27 (0)43 726 9898

