

Data protection complaints – are you ready for 19 June 2026?

The Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 imposes new rules about **data protection complaints**. From **19 June 2026**, every controller must have a process for handling such complaints that meets certain criteria.

What the law requires

You must:

1. Give people a way to make data protection complaints to you
2. Acknowledge receipt within 30 days
3. Investigate without undue delay, making appropriate enquiries
4. Keep the complainant informed of progress
5. Tell them the outcome without undue delay

Check whether your existing process is compliant

Review your current arrangements against these five points.

✓	Area	Question
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intake channel	Do we have at least one way for people to submit data protection complaints (email, phone, portal, or in person)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Acknowledgement	Can we acknowledge complaints within 30 days? The clock starts the day after receipt. If the deadline falls on a weekend or bank holiday, we have until the next working day.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Investigation	Can we investigate proportionately and without unjustifiable delay? If we use a standard internal timeframe, it must not prevent us resolving straightforward complaints more quickly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication	Can we keep complainants updated during the investigation and explain the outcome clearly?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Records	Do we log the date received, acknowledgement, relevant correspondence, outcome, and actions taken?

If you can answer **yes** to all five, your existing process is likely compliant. Document it as a written procedure if you have not already done so.

Build a process if you do not have one

1. Nominate who will handle data protection complaints. Make sure all staff can recognise one and know where to route it.
2. Set up at least one intake channel and publish details in your privacy notice. You must also tell people they can complain when you respond to rights requests.
3. Create a simple workflow covering acknowledgement, investigation, updates, outcome, and record-keeping.
4. If you are a joint controller, agree who coordinates and who liaises with the complainant. If you use processors, ensure contracts require them to cooperate.
5. Consider how you will handle complaints from children, via social media, or submitted by third parties on someone's behalf (you must verify authority before investigating).
6. Train your staff.

Further reading

[ICO guidance – How to deal with data protection complaints](#)
[Data \(Use and Access\) Act 2025, section 103](#)