



# **KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS: GENERATION, TRANSFER AND SHARING**

## **GUIDANCE NOTE**

**September 2022**

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## **1. Context**

### **1.1. Overview**

1.1.1. This note builds on chapter three of the Consultancy Playbook to provide more detailed guidance for departments on how to incorporate knowledge generation, knowledge and skills transfer, and sharing across the contract lifecycle.

1.1.2. This guidance note sets out:

- What knowledge generation, knowledge and skills transfer, and knowledge sharing is and provides definitions and examples;
- Why knowledge generation, knowledge and skills transfer and sharing is important and the desired outcomes of our strategy;
- When generation, transfer of knowledge and skills, and sharing is expected;
- Who is responsible during the lifecycle of the project;
- How best to clarify requirements when preparing project specifications;
- How best to transfer knowledge and skills;
- Sensitive information and scrub and share guidelines; and
- How to deliver knowledge and skills transfer.

### **1.2. Contact**

1.2.1. If you have any questions or issues, please contact the Government Consulting Hub's Knowledge and Skills Team on [GCH-Knowledge@governmentconsultinghub.com](mailto:GCH-Knowledge@governmentconsultinghub.com)

## 2. Definitions and glossary

### 2.1. Definitions

The following terms are defined below.

<p><b>Knowledge</b></p>	<p>Human or organisational asset enabling effective decisions and action in context</p> <p>Note 1 to entry: Knowledge can be individual, collective or organisational.</p> <p>Note 2 to entry: There are diverse views on the scope covered within knowledge, based on context and purpose. The definition above is general as to the various perspectives. Examples of knowledge include insights and know-how.</p> <p>Note 3 to entry: Knowledge is acquired through learning or experience.</p> <p><b>ISO 30401:2018(en) Knowledge management systems — Requirements</b></p>
<p><b>Skills</b></p>	<p>Learned capacity to perform a task to a specified expectation</p> <p><b>ISO 30401:2018(en) Knowledge management systems — Requirements</b></p>
<p><b>Knowledge Generation</b></p>	<p>Initiatives and activities undertaken towards the generation of new ideas or objects</p>
<p><b>Knowledge Management</b></p>	<p>Management with regard to knowledge</p> <p>[SOURCE:ISO 30400:2016, 14.1, modified]</p> <p>Note 1 to entry: It uses a systemic and holistic approach to improve results and learning.</p> <p>Note 2 to entry: It includes optimising the identification, creation, analysis, representation, distribution and application of knowledge to create organisational value.</p> <p><b>ISO 30401:2018(en) Knowledge management systems — Requirements</b></p>
<p><b>Knowledge Transfer</b></p>	<p>Knowledge transfer is the process of transforming the knowledge inside people’s heads into content, tools, and processes that others can use, and/or directly transferring knowledge person-to-person.</p>
<p><b>Knowledge</b></p>	<p>The exchange of information, ideas, and technologies between</p>

<b>Sharing</b>	people and organisations.
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## 2.2. Glossary

<b>Knowledge Exchange Platform</b>	A platform to store, share and promote knowledge across the Civil Service.
<b>GCH Events Programme</b>	Lunch and learn programme established by GCH to amplify the knowledge developed within assignments and share them across government.

### 3. Systematising knowledge and skills transfer

#### 3.1. Objectives

- 3.1.1. HMG is committed to ensuring it fully uses and reuses the knowledge that it creates, or is created on its behalf, through consultancy and associated spend.
- 3.1.2. Systematising the generation, transfer and sharing of knowledge from consultancy engagements is a central ambition (**see Table 1**). To help achieve this, the default expectation will be that all consultancy assignments will generate knowledge, and transfer knowledge and skills across government.
- 3.1.3.
- 3.1.4. The system will be enabled by the procurement process and the GCH Triage Service and Cabinet Office controls, and the GCH Knowledge Exchange platform. It has wider applicability into other advisory type contracts and potentially beyond.

#### 3.2. Consultancy procurement and controls processes

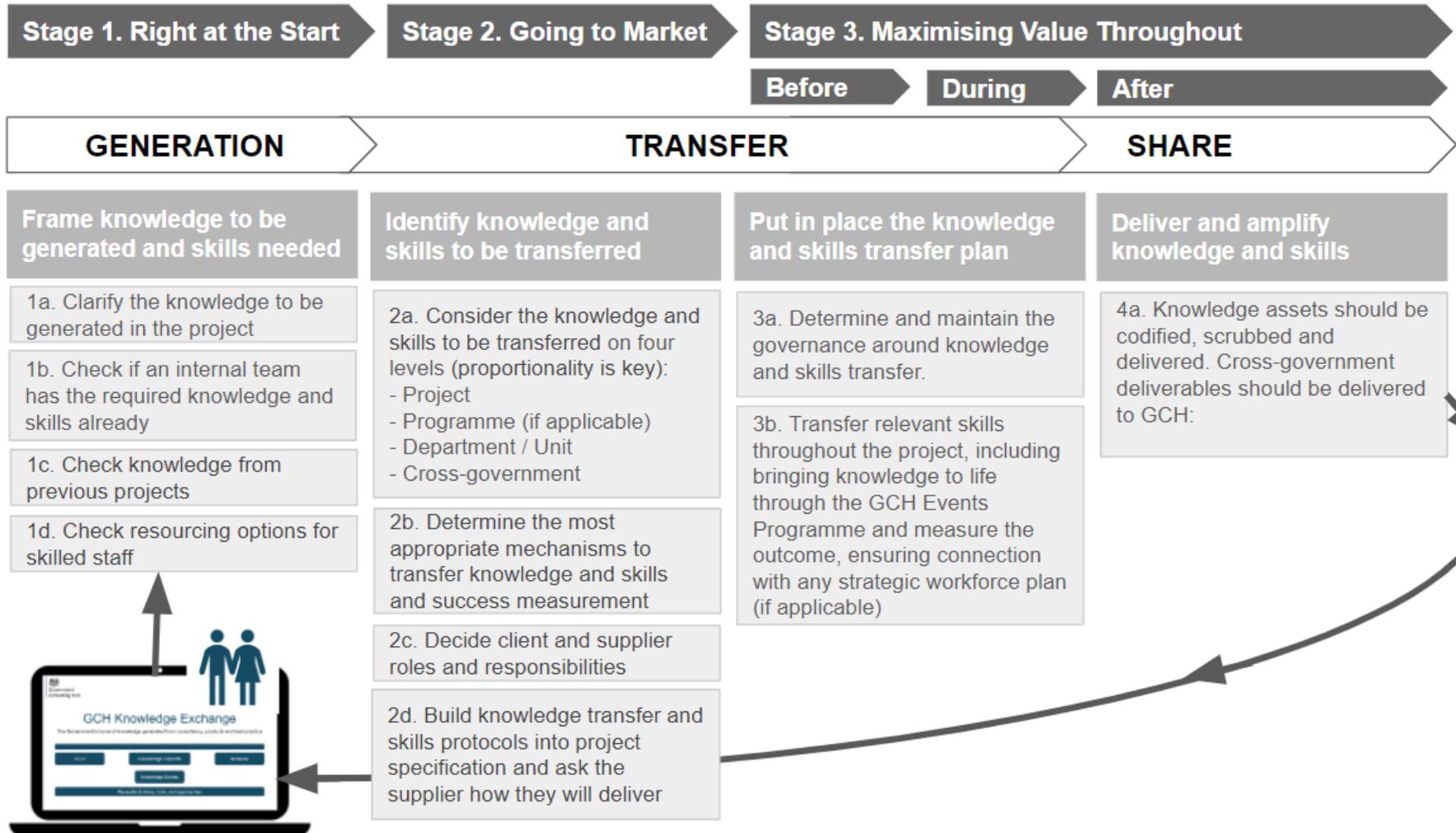
- 3.2.1. There are a range of routes to market for consultancy services, but generally there is a consolidation around the MCF3 framework which has in-built IP clauses to support this note. Whatever the procurement route, deliverables on knowledge and skills transfer should always be included. For non MCF3 contracts, additional commercial clauses may need to be included to ensure IP and sharing expectations are clear.
- 3.2.2. Assessment tests for knowledge generation and sharing are being built into both the GCH Triage Service and the Cabinet Office consultancy and professional services spend controls for all applicable consultancy requests. These tests will consider:
  - whether organisations have checked if the knowledge and skills exist in the system before going to market.
  - the opportunity to extend a requirement to 'buy it once' for HMG where approaches or outputs are widely bought
  - an expectation that a check has been made on the Knowledge Exchange platform, which is run and managed by GCH.
  - inclusion of codification of approaches to ensure we understand the 'how' to answer the question next time around, as well as the final outputs

- scope for amplification of the work for X-HMG benefit eg through events, training, development products, handbooks and toolkits

### **3.3. The Knowledge Exchange platform**

- 3.3.1. GCH's Knowledge Exchange platform which was launched in December 2021, is a cross-government knowledge sharing platform and the go-to place to search and share the output from consultancy engagements such as actual materials delivered to clients, methodologies, tools, 'how to guides' and cases. Content on the platform is scrubbed to remove any sensitive information and is limited to content classified as OFFICIAL.
- 3.3.2. The platform is also home to the map of the Government's internal consultancy and advisory ecosystem, helping to unlock the wealth of expertise and capabilities that exist in departments.
- 3.3.3. The Knowledge Exchange platform should be used throughout the lifecycle of a project to determine if the knowledge and skills exist in government before going out to market, to support throughout the project and at the end of the project to deliver knowledge useful for cross-government sharing.

**Table 1 - Systematising knowledge and skills transfer**



## 4. Right at the start

### 4.1. Framing knowledge generation

- 4.1.1. When a business need for support from the market has been identified, contracting authorities should consider if the knowledge and skills exist within HMG. The default should be to draw on Civil Service resources and capability, and when we do go to market, we should consider which type of external resource we actually require.
- 4.1.2. Contracting authorities should carefully consider questions, such as:
- What knowledge is needed?
  - Is this knowledge the product of experience in a role (i.e. institutional knowledge), the skilled use of a particular tool or methodology etc., or both?
  - Does the team involved already have the necessary knowledge and skills and if not, what is the gap?
  - What is available elsewhere across the Government?
- 4.1.3. To answer these questions, contracting authorities should check the Knowledge Exchange platform to determine if there are existing toolkits and methodologies, and/or reports and case studies, and/or is a consulting and advisory team in-house with the knowledge to either help deliver and/or help frame the specification to ensure that the brief is as clear and as focused as possible.
- 4.1.4. Organisations should also explore if a similar project has been undertaken in their own department or across Government.. Even if previous knowledge does not answer all requirements, organisations should be asking themselves whether work that has previously been undertaken and the related outputs can inform the project brief and rationale.
- 4.1.5. HR staff should be consulted when making decisions about resourcing options. In the first instance members of the Workforce Planning team or HR Business Partners can share the annual strategic workforce plan.

## 5. Going to market

### 5.1. Identifying knowledge and skills to be transferred

- 5.1.1. Once the decision has been made to go to market, knowledge and capability requirements should be refined. The market has extensive experience of transferring knowledge and skills from assignments, so working collaboratively with suppliers from the outset can be very beneficial.
- 5.1.2. To determine what knowledge and skills should be transferred during the lifecycle of the assignment, it can be helpful to think about four different audiences: project, programme, departmental or unit and cross-government. **Table 2** below sets out some key questions to be considered for each, though this is not designed to be exhaustive, rather a guide to help contracting authorities think through the options.
- 5.1.3. Organisations and suppliers are encouraged to avoid the pitfalls of thinking that the knowledge generated and skills needed in their project are unique or not applicable elsewhere. In most assignments, there will be lessons learned, for instance, about working with stakeholders, how the project was approached, how to work with technology or tools and the ways of working, that will be broadly applicable.
- 5.1.4. In addition, contracting authorities should not just think of transfer of knowledge as being a one way process. We should be open to providing easy access to our own thinking and evidence base to ensure consultancy firms can add value, not repeat or guess at it.

**Table 2 - Identifying knowledge and skills to be transferred**

Audience	Questions
<p><b>Project</b> - knowledge and skills transferred at the project level to improve the course of the current assignment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there opportunities to develop the skills of the client side project team? i.e. can the team be supported to take the lead in the development of the work? Such training may be a useful resource for other HMG project teams to use.</li> <li>○ Are there specific parts of the engagement that would benefit from formal training sessions?</li> <li>○ Is the knowledge that will be generated at the project level critical (i.e. if it were to be lost would this negatively impact the operation of a service or a function)?</li> <li>○ Will any handover be required during the project?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Programme</b> (if relevant) - knowledge and skills transferred at the programme level to enhance other projects within the programme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have lessons been learned especially with regard to standards and processes that could be shared across the programme?</li> <li>○ Has there been any innovation which could be tested or employed in other projects?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Department or unit</b> - best practices and lessons learned that apply across the department and strengthen internal capability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are we seeing a repeated need for the same skills?</li> <li>○ Are there any opportunities for formal training sessions to be shared across the department?</li> <li>○ Have lessons been learned that would benefit the department or unit?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cross-government</b> - knowledge that is broadly applicable and building capability across the Civil Service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is there an opportunity to commission outputs which can be optimised across the Government?</li> <li>○ Can we fuse and create knowledge by evaluating tools, lessons learned and findings from other projects across Government?</li> <li>○ Can we package knowledge for upload in the Knowledge Exchange?</li> <li>○ Are there any opportunities for formal training sessions to be shared across the department?</li> </ul>

## 5.2. Determining the appropriate mechanism for transfer

- 5.2.1. Once the organisation has identified the knowledge and skills required to be transferred it is then important to consider the best approach to use. It is worth bearing in mind that working as part of a 'blended team' with Consultants results in a more collaborative engagement and significantly increases the effectiveness of knowledge and skills transfer. Business units should connect with strategic workforce planning and consider how they will resource the assignment so people are available for skills training. It is important that transfer should not be thought of as something that happens only at the end of the project lifecycle. Transfer of both knowledge and skills should happen throughout the engagement.
- 5.2.2. Any transfer plan should be proportionate and tailored to the resource capacity within teams and the type of knowledge and skills to be transferred. The plan should consider the nature of that knowledge, how quickly it will go out of date, how easily it can be written down and the intended audience. In smaller, resource limited or highly technical projects, more light touch activities may be appropriate, such as sharing a scrubbed version of the final deliverables of the project. In cases where knowledge transfer is the main goal of the project, it would still be worth considering if there is any need to transfer capability or if there is a methodology or lessons learned to be captured.
- 5.2.3. There are many ways in which an effective transfer can be managed and a project may benefit from multiple approaches for different constituent parts. Table 3 below provides a way to think through some non-exhaustive transfer options. For a worked example setting out the deliverables by types of audience and when they should be delivered in the project lifecycle see **Table 4**.

**Table 3 - Non-exhaustive transfer options**

<b>Approach</b>				
<b>Knowledge</b>			<b>Skills and Learning</b>	
<b>Codification (Explicit)</b>	<b>Codification (Tacit)</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>From Others</b>	<b>Formal</b>
For knowledge that lends itself to being put into explicit formats (document, slide deck, spreadsheet, video, podcast)	For knowledge that is usually exchanged person-to-person that is important to be extracted	Where there is an existing internal community who are the custodians of the body of knowledge in question and can facilitate sharing	For learning that is best received through the guidance of others	For formal learning and for amplifying the number of people receiving the training (If unsure on this point, the GSCU programme on core consultancy skills can provide ideas)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-All working documents produced during the project</li> <li>-Case study</li> <li>-Project data</li> <li>-Project documentation</li> <li>-Methodology</li> <li>-Tool</li> <li>-Manual</li> <li>-Handover note</li> <li>-Process map</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Lessons learned</li> <li>-After action review</li> <li>-Thought leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Expert team</li> <li>-Community of practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Mentoring</li> <li>-Shadowing</li> <li>-Coaching</li> <li>-On the job learning</li> <li>-Conversations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Training courses</li> <li>-E-learning</li> <li>-Lunch and learn sessions</li> </ul>

**Table 4 - Worked example**

<b>EXAMPLE:</b> Project focused on the delivery of a complex programme business case	<b>Approach</b>				
	<b>Knowledge</b>			<b>Skills and Learning</b>	
	<b>Codified (Explicit)</b>	<b>Codified (Tacit)</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>From Others</b>	<b>Formal</b>
<b>Audience</b>					
<b>Project</b> - knowledge and skills transferred at the project level to improve the course of the current assignment.	-Approach to business cases methodology  -Handover documentation	-Lessons learned	n/a	-On-the-job development for leads	-Formal training session of business case components
<b>Programme</b> (if relevant) - knowledge and skills transferred at the programme level to enhance other projects within the programme.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Department or unit</b> - best practices and lessons learned that apply across the department and strengthen internal capability.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	-Formal training session of business case components
<b>Cross-government</b> - knowledge that is broadly applicable and building capability across the Civil Service.	-Approach to business cases methodology	n/a	n/a	n/a	Formal training session of the approach to complex, x-government business cases

	Deliver during the project		Deliver at the end
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### **5.3. Considering measures of success**

- 5.3.1. It is good practice to consider how to measure the effectiveness of the transfer process for each deliverable and to document this as part of the specifications. For the project, programme and department or unit level, it can be useful to develop a questionnaire or interview questions to gauge recipient reaction to learning sessions or to evaluate the transfer process. Where internal team members are being coached during the assignment, tracking the number of issues they are able to resolve, or tasks they can now complete can be useful.
- 5.3.2. For cross-government knowledge and skills transfer, measurement will be tracked automatically. GCH will conduct surveys at the end of every formal learning session and various metrics will be captured in the Knowledge Exchange platform that will help to provide the evidence for the amount of codified knowledge being used regularly, how the reuse of this knowledge is driving down spend and where there are gaps in knowledge.

### **5.4. Deciding roles and responsibilities**

- 5.4.1. To ensure that knowledge and skills transfer happens throughout the project, there should be clear roles and responsibilities for the client and the supplier. The supplier should know what they are being expected to deliver in regard to knowledge and skills transfer and measurement, and at what point during the project that these deliverables should be fulfilled. On the client side, resources and time should be made available to support and champion the transfer process.

### **5.5. Building knowledge and skills transfer into the specification**

- 5.5.1. The brief should be carefully designed to address the knowledge and skills determined to be transferred. For smaller projects with limited resources it may be that a short paragraph describing the deliverable, the measure of success, the timings for delivery and roles and responsibilities is sufficient. However, larger more complex projects will have multiple deliverables and measures of success and in these cases it is best to include a knowledge transfer plan in the documentation.

## 6. Maximising value throughout

### 6.1. Maintaining the governance around transfer

- 6.1.1. Discussions about the knowledge and skills transfer expectations laid out in the specifications should be covered as part of the good contract management practices established in the project. Touchpoints should be fixed and the key knowledge and skills transfer contacts on the client and supplier side should meet regularly to review progress against the knowledge transfer plan. Knowledge sharing is a dynamic process and adjustments may be needed as the project progresses. Any adjustments should be agreed with both sides.

### 6.2. Knowledge and skills transfer during the project

- 6.2.1. Continually sharing information and working documents along the lifecycle of the project and recording key dates and decisions, will ensure that the development of codified knowledge assets or learning sessions are as fresh as possible and limit the risk of the 'thread of thinking' being lost when the project ends.
- 6.2.2. Codifying knowledge, especially where someone not involved can understand the project takes thought and should not be left to the very end of the project. For knowledge being shared to a cross-government audience there is also a requirement for the deliverables to be scrubbed of sensitive information (see **Table 5**).
- 6.2.3. For knowledge sharing events and learning sessions that could be useful to a cross-government audience, client transfer contacts should get in touch with [GCH-Knowledge@governmentconsultinghub.com](mailto:GCH-Knowledge@governmentconsultinghub.com), who will work with contacts to determine the best way to amplify the event with a wider audience. This may be in the form of a recorded webinar, a lunch and learn or a live event, whatever is the most appropriate.

### 6.3. Delivering at the end of the project

- 6.3.1. All agreed deliverables should be shared with the client point of contact at the end of the project. A final review meeting should take place to confirm that what was expected has been delivered.
- 6.3.2. Codified knowledge for the project, programme and departmental audiences will be delivered to the appropriate internal repository. For cross-government audiences, the knowledge should be shared with

[GCH-Knowledge@governmentconsultinghub.com](mailto:GCH-Knowledge@governmentconsultinghub.com), and this will be uploaded to the Knowledge Exchange platform. As the platform evolves, it will become possible to upload content directly. Client contacts should share the information and include key details about the project, so assets can be given the most relevant tag.

## Table 5 - Scrub and share guidelines

Definition of sensitive:

By sensitive, we mean, (1) any content classified as secret or top secret, (2) personal information about individuals such as medical records, names, addresses and phone numbers, or where disclosure would be considered a data protection breach (3) content protected by patents, copyrights or trademarks, and (4) any information where disclosure would be likely to cause harm or present a risk to HMG. We expect that firms will follow these guidelines and only classify information as sensitive where there is good reason to do so.

Item	Replacement	Examples
<b>Personal names</b>	Replace all personal names with a title or position. Label multiple people with the same title consecutively.	[Director 1, Director 2]
<b>Personal information</b>	Replace any personal information, such as email addresses, addresses, dates of birth, health conditions etc.	[Personal Email] [Date of Birth]
<b>Project name</b>	Replace any project names that will reveal confidential information.	[Project Name]
<b>Project description</b>	If confidential, project descriptions should be restricted to a "broad" description of the technical aspects of the project, without sharing any confidential data or the specificities of the project itself.	"Public body, value for money review"
<b>Dates</b>	If confidential, and the combination of the project description and the date would lead to identifying the project, it should be removed.	[Date]
<b>Entity names</b>	If multiple confidential entities are included.	[Public Body 1, Public Body 2]
<b>Photographs</b>	If copyright is not owned, if the photograph will reveal any personal, location, corporate or identity data, it should be removed.	[Photograph removed]
<b>Graphics</b>	Remove any graphics that contain confidential information.	[Graphics removed]
<b>Data</b>	Confidential information must be removed, but a dummy set of data should be entered if it is important to show how the data can be processed / analysed.	[Dummy data being used for illustrative purposes]

<b>Videos</b>	If sharing videos, any person featured should have signed an appropriate waiver and legal advice should be sought.	
<b>Logos and branding</b>	Permission should be sought from the owner. If this is not obtained, all logos and branding should be erased.	[Logos and branding removed]