

Ref. No: FOI2447
Date: 20/03/2026
Subject: Ophthalmology Experience

REQUEST

1. Can you please confirm if Dr Soly Somapalan, GMC 7712517 who is supposedly part of the Ophthalmology team at St Helens Hospital, and if she does actually work at St Helens Hospital and has any Ophthalmology experience. Request a start date for her employment commencing from date.

RESPONSE

Section 40: Personal Information

Disclosure of the requested information is exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), which relates to personal data. This exemption applies where the release of information would contravene any of the data protection principles set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

In this case, the information in question constitutes personal data, as it relates to an identifiable individual. An individual may be identifiable either directly from the data itself or indirectly when combined with other information that is reasonably likely to come into the possession of the recipient or any other person. Disclosure of such information without a lawful basis would breach the first data protection principle, which requires that personal data be processed lawfully, fairly, and in a transparent manner.

As such, the exemption under Section 40(2) is absolute, meaning it is not subject to the public interest test. The rights of the data subject to privacy and protection of their personal data outweigh any interest in disclosure. Therefore, we are unable to release the requested information.