

## Cleardata UK Limited

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## Overview of our services

Cleardata provides secure, scalable data collection for education evaluations, combining ISO-certified print and data processing infrastructure with evaluation informed research leadership from our partners at Seymour Research. We specialise in paper-based and hybrid delivery models, supporting evaluators to collect high-quality outcome data efficiently and securely, with minimal burden on schools and settings.

### Core Services

#### Secure Print and Distribution

- High-volume production of paper tests, surveys and data collection forms.
- Unique identifiers (e.g. barcodes/QR codes) to enable accurate tracking.
- Tracked national delivery and reconciliation of returns.
- Tamper-evident packaging and controlled storage.

#### Scanning and Data Capture

- High-speed scanning with OMR/OCR/ICR.
- Automated validation and structured data outputs.
- Manual verification and double data entry where required (historical accuracy rates exceeding 99.8%).

- Segregated datasets within controlled-access environments.

## Project Coordination and Research Support

Seymour Research provides project management, evaluator liaison, and fieldwork oversight, ensuring operational processes align with evaluation requirements. For most projects, Cleardata acts as the lead contractor, offering evaluators a single point of accountability, and Seymour Research works as a subcontracted partner.

Qualitative research, online survey delivery and data preparation and analysis support can also be provided where required. This can include the option to contract directly with Seymour Research, where Cleardata's services are not needed.

## Delivery Model

Our primary model is secure postal distribution of assessments and surveys, designed to scale nationally while maintaining strong governance and audit trails. Targeted qualitative fieldwork capacity is available where needed.

## Experience in Educational Data Collection

Our combined experience spans large-scale secure data logistics and over two decades of educational research across early years, primary, secondary and post-16 settings. Our partnership combines **evaluation-informed research leadership** with **secure national data collection infrastructure**.

## Large-Scale Paper-Based Data Collection

Cleardata provides secure infrastructure for high-volume distribution and processing of assessments and surveys.

Recent projects include:

- Annual paper surveys for approximately **30,000 pupils across more than 300 schools**, including secure print, distribution and reliable data capture.

- Secure handling and processing of **mathematics screening assessments for approximately 5,000 Reception pupils**.
- High-volume scanning and structured data capture of **student questionnaires for the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)**, supporting rapid turnaround for examination processing.
- Scanning, OCR and digital upload of **exam scripts for multiple departments at Imperial College London**, delivered three times annually to support marking timelines.
- Secure print management, communications and fulfilment services for universities including the **University of Huddersfield**, supporting research teams and administrative departments with integrated hybrid-mail and print solutions.
- Large-scale secure document production for **City & Guilds**, including the production and global distribution of **millions of certificates and associated materials each year**.

These projects involved secure print production, unique identifiers for tracking, national distribution, controlled receipt of completed scripts, high-speed scanning and validated dataset delivery.

### **Education Evaluation Contexts**

Seymour Research has **supported outcome data collection across pilot studies and full effectiveness trials**, including Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) evaluations, direct commissions from programme developers/funders, and other research programmes.

Data collection activities have included:

- Academic attainment and cognitive measures.
- Socio-emotional and attitudinal outcomes.
- Pupil, teacher and parent surveys (paper and online).
- Implementation and practitioner behaviour measures.
- Qualitative interviews and focus groups with stakeholders.

This work spans early years, primary, secondary and post-16 contexts and includes projects involving large numbers of settings, complex fieldwork schedules and multiple outcome measures.

## Field Force Capacity and Expertise

Our approach to data collection focuses on **secure distribution and centralised processing of paper-based or hybrid instruments** with targeted qualitative fieldwork capacity where required. This model avoids reliance on large temporary field teams while supporting national-scale deployment with strong governance and audit trails.

## Operational Infrastructure

Cleardata provides UK-wide fulfilment and processing capability from secure, centralised locations. Capacity includes:

- High-volume secure print production.
- Tracked national distribution.
- Controlled receipt and reconciliation of returned materials.
- High-speed scanning and data capture.
- Segregated project datasets within controlled-access environments.

This infrastructure supports multi-thousand script deployments within compressed academic windows. Where very large volumes are required, phased production scheduling is agreed in advance to maintain quality and turnaround times.

## Qualitative and On-Site Capacity (Where Required)

For projects requiring on-site qualitative fieldwork or additional research support, Seymour Research maintains a small network of 10–12 experienced educational researchers working on an associate basis.

Associates are selected based on:

- Experience in educational research.
- Experience working with children and young people.
- Strong qualitative interviewing and facilitation skills.
- Enhanced DBS clearance.
- Up-to-date safeguarding training.

This associate model allows us to scale flexibly for targeted fieldwork while maintaining quality and consistency. Coverage extends across England, with remote delivery options also available where appropriate. Where project-specific training is required (e.g. familiarisation with instruments or protocols), this is delivered in collaboration with the evaluator prior to fieldwork.

### **Delivery Model Summary**

This model is particularly well suited to evaluations requiring **secure paper-based or hybrid data collection with strong governance and audit trails**. Cleardata's secure print and fulfilment infrastructure includes established delivery partnerships, including hybrid mail and print services provided through CFH Docmail, enabling efficient national distribution of survey and assessment materials, and evaluation leadership and oversight from Seymour Research.

### **Communication Systems**

Clear, timely communication underpins successful data collection. Our approach minimises burden on schools while providing evaluators with accurate oversight of fieldwork progress.

### **Communication with Schools and Settings**

All setting-facing communications are agreed in advance with the lead evaluator. We provide clear, plain-English guidance on requirements, timelines and return processes, with named project contacts for queries.

Our systems include:

- Project-specific email inboxes where appropriate.
- Structured logging of communications.
- Confirmation of dispatch and receipt of materials.
- Reconciliation of issued and returned scripts.

Communications are concise, predictable and aligned with agreed fieldwork windows.

## **Communication with Evaluators**

Seymour Research acts as the primary liaison between Cleardata's operational delivery and the evaluation team. This includes:

- A designated project lead, with clear lines of communication with the evaluation team.
- Agreed reporting intervals and metrics during fieldwork.
- Updates on distribution, return rates and data capture progress.
- Early identification of risks and prompt mitigation or escalation where required.
- Secure transfer of validated datasets.

Where qualitative fieldwork is undertaken, structured supervision and reporting processes are in place. This model ensures transparency, responsiveness and alignment with evaluation requirements.

## **Quality Assurance Strategies**

Robust quality assurance underpins all stages of our data collection model. Our approach is designed to minimise missing data, protect data integrity and provide evaluators with confidence in the accuracy and completeness of returned datasets.

### **1. Pre-Fieldwork Controls**

Before distribution, we:

- Finalise instruments and identifiers with the evaluation team.
- Conduct print and pagination checks.
- Confirm tracking mechanisms for issued materials.
- Agree clear administration guidance for settings.
- Review qualitative protocols and brief researchers (where applicable).

This reduces the risk of administration error and avoidable data loss.

### **2. Live Monitoring During Fieldwork**

During active data collection we:

- Track distribution and returns against issued materials.
- Monitor response and return rates.
- Identify emerging risks (e.g. low returns in specific regions, setting types, etc.).
- Provide clarifications to settings where required.
- Escalate safeguarding or data handling concerns immediately.

We track all physical mail and boxes in real time using Cleardata's Bureau Schedule software, supported by barcodes and project-specific documents such as scanning box-list spreadsheets. Additional tracking and auditing is carried out through our secure database systems, and any documents processed through our automated classification and data-extraction tools generate full activity logs at every stage. For qualitative fieldwork, researchers are supervised and debriefed throughout to ensure consistency, accuracy and high-quality outputs.

### **3. Data Capture and Validation**

All returned materials are logged and reconciled prior to processing. We keep a full audit trail from receipt to scan to output.

Scanning and capture processes utilise our high-speed, high accuracy scanning infrastructure and include:

- Optical mark/character recognition / intelligent character recognition (OMR/OCR/ICR) capabilities for searchable scanned documents.
- Automated validation rules.
- Manual verification of flagged fields.
- Segregated project datasets.
- Controlled-access processing environments.

Where manual data entry is required, double-entry procedures can be applied in full or by defined sampling. Historical accuracy rates exceed 99.8% following QA validation. Structured validation checks (e.g. range, logic and completeness checks) are applied prior to dataset release.

## **4. Capacity and Risk Mitigation**

Our centralised infrastructure supports projects of all scales, from a few hundred to multi-thousand script deployments within compressed academic windows. Where volumes increase significantly, phased production scheduling is agreed in advance to protect turnaround times and data quality.

### **Project Leadership**

Projects delivered under this panel arrangement will be jointly led by senior contacts from Cleardata and Seymour Research.

#### **Mike Murphy – Account Director**

Mike Murphy is Account Director at Cleardata UK Limited and has nearly nine years' experience delivering secure print, scanning and data capture services for organisations requiring reliable, high-volume data processing. He is responsible for overseeing project delivery from initial specification through to final dataset production.

Mike works closely with evaluation teams and research partners to translate data collection requirements into practical operational workflows. This includes coordinating print production, distribution logistics, returns processing, scanning and structured data capture. He also oversees capacity planning, delivery milestones and risk management across projects.

Mike has managed programmes involving secure national distribution and high-volume document processing, including large-scale survey and assessment data collection. He acts as the primary operational contact throughout project delivery, ensuring that specifications, validation rules, turnaround times and dataset outputs are clearly defined and implemented accurately within Cleardata's processing systems.

Through regular liaison with partners and operational teams, Mike ensures that projects are delivered efficiently, securely and in line with the requirements of evaluation programmes.

#### **Dr Kathy Seymour – Research and Evaluation Lead**

Dr Kathy Seymour is Director of Seymour Research and has over 25 years' experience in educational research and evaluation across early years, primary, secondary and post-16 settings. She began her career at the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), where she coordinated large-scale assessment trials and school-based survey programmes.

Since establishing Seymour Research in 2011, Kathy has worked with universities, charities, government bodies and education organisations to design and deliver research and evaluation projects. She has been part of evaluation teams on several Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) projects, including pilot studies and effectiveness trials.

Kathy brings a detailed understanding of the operational requirements of impact evaluations, including fieldwork coordination, maintaining participation across schools and minimising missing outcome data. She acts as the primary liaison between evaluation teams and operational delivery partners, ensuring that data collection processes align with evaluation design and governance requirements.

She also oversees qualitative fieldwork and provides research leadership across projects where required.

### **Emma Young – Operations Director**

Emma Young is Operations Director at Cleardata and brings nearly 20 years' experience in data processing and digital information services. She oversees operational delivery across Cleardata's secure data capture and processing services, ensuring that high-volume projects are delivered accurately, securely and within agreed timelines.

Emma has extensive experience managing large-scale data processing programmes within the education sector, including the scanning and capture of examination papers, surveys and research datasets. These projects require rigorous quality assurance, robust data security controls and the ability to manage sensitive and time-critical information.

She leads operational teams responsible for data capture, validation and processing workflows, ensuring that systems and processes support reliable delivery and high data accuracy. Emma also oversees the implementation of digital workflows and automated

validation processes that improve efficiency and maintain Cleardata's high standards for secure and accurate data processing.

### **Alex Lewis – Bureau Manager**

Alex Lewis is Bureau Manager at Cleardata UK Limited and has more than 15 years' experience overseeing scanning and data capture operations. He is responsible for managing Cleardata's processing environment, ensuring that document scanning, data capture and validation processes operate efficiently and securely.

Alex oversees day-to-day operational delivery within the bureau environment, including workflow management, staff supervision and quality assurance processes. He ensures that client specifications, such as validation rules, data formats and turnaround times, are accurately implemented within Cleardata's scanning and data processing systems.

His role also includes monitoring operational capacity, managing risk and maintaining the organisation's high standards for data accuracy and security. Alex works closely with project leads and operational teams to ensure that data collection materials are processed efficiently and that validated datasets are delivered to clients in line with agreed schedules.

Through his operational oversight, Alex helps ensure the reliability and consistency of Cleardata's large-scale data processing services.

### **Paul Keefe – Sales Director**

Paul Keefe is Sales Director at Cleardata UK Limited and brings more than 30 years' experience in document management, information processing and large-scale data capture services. He provides senior oversight across client programmes involving secure print, scanning and structured data processing.

Paul works with partners and clients at the outset of projects to help design practical delivery approaches that support secure and efficient data collection. This includes ensuring that

programme requirements are clearly understood and that the appropriate operational expertise and infrastructure are in place to support delivery.

Within education and research-related projects, Paul collaborates with evaluation partners and their stakeholders to ensure that operational approaches align with the requirements of evaluation programmes. He draws on extensive experience of large-scale survey and document processing projects where reliability, data security and consistent turnaround times are essential.

Paul acts as a strategic liaison between Cleardata's operational leadership and partner organisations, helping ensure that programmes are delivered effectively and remain aligned with project objectives.

### **Jason Lusty – Senior Business Development Manager**

Jason Lusty is Senior Business Development Manager at CFH Docmail (Cleardata's print and distribution partner) and has more than 30 years' experience in the print and communications sector, including over 18 years with CFH Docmail, a leading UK provider of hybrid mail and secure digital communications.

Jason has extensive experience supporting large-scale survey and research mailings that require secure production environments and reliable national distribution. He works with research organisations and public sector clients to design hybrid mail solutions that support efficient and compliant data collection.

His role includes translating mailing specifications into production workflows, coordinating with operational teams to ensure capacity planning aligns with project requirements and advising on postal optimisation strategies. Jason also oversees quality assurance processes within CFH Docmail's secure production environment.

Through his experience delivering high-volume communications programmes, Jason supports the reliable distribution of survey and research materials where accuracy, data security and turnaround times are critical.

## Additional Data Services Offered

In addition to secure print, distribution and data capture, Seymour Research can provide complementary research and analytical support where required.

This includes **qualitative fieldwork** such as **interviews and focus groups** with pupils, teachers and school leaders, and **thematic analysis** of transcripts and open-text responses.

All qualitative work is conducted by experienced, DBS-checked researchers with appropriate supervision.

We also **design and host online surveys** (including hybrid paper and online models) using QuestionPro or Qualtrics.

**Analytical support** can include data cleaning and validation, dataset merging, descriptive statistical analysis and qualitative coding. Analysis is conducted using established tools (e.g. SPSS, NVivo) under the direction of the lead evaluator where appropriate.

## Cost Model and Pricing Structure (Cleardata)

All pricing is developed on a project-by-project basis and tailored to the specific requirements of each evaluation.

Final costs depend on factors including:

- Trial size (e.g. number of settings, classes and pupils).
- Instrument length and complexity.
- Volume of materials and distribution model.
- Turnaround time requirements.
- Mode of delivery (paper, online or hybrid).
- Scanning complexity and exception handling needs.
- Level of project management and outputs / reporting required.

## **Operational Cost Components**

For paper-based data collection, costings may include:

- Print production and pack assembly.
- Unique identifier integration and tracking.
- Secure storage and fulfilment.
- Postage and tracked distribution.
- Scanning and data capture (per script or per survey).
- Manual verification or double data entry (where required).
- Exception handling for complex cases.
- Project set-up and configuration.

Where automated capture systems are required, appropriate configuration and validation costs are agreed in advance.

## **Research and Coordination Costs**

Research leadership, project coordination and qualitative fieldwork are costed on a day-rate basis, depending on scope and seniority required. Day rates are agreed transparently at proposal stage and reflect the scale and intensity of involvement.

## **Transparency and Value for Money**

We work collaboratively with evaluators to develop proportionate, transparent and value-for-money budgets aligned with EEF-funded project specifications.

Indicative pricing can be provided following review of the evaluation design, data collection instruments and anticipated volumes. Detailed cost breakdowns are supplied at quotation stage. All costs are subject to VAT where applicable.

## Data Protection

Data protection and information security are central to our delivery model. Our partnership combines ISO-certified infrastructure with research-sector data governance expertise.

### Information Security and Governance (Cleardata)

Cleardata operates under a robust information security framework, including:

- ISO 27001 (Information Security Management).
- ISO 9001 (Quality Management).
- ISO 22301 (Business Continuity).
- BS 10008 (Legal Admissibility of Electronic Information).
- BS EN 15713 (Secure Destruction of Confidential Materials).
- Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials Plus.
- ICO Registration.

Data is processed within controlled-access environments with:

- Role-based access controls.
- Encryption at rest and in transit.
- Segregated project datasets.
- Chain-of-custody logging.
- Certificate-based secure destruction.

Cleardata acts as a registered Data Processor and routinely handles special category and children's data within secure, access-controlled systems.

Data capture is carried out exclusively within the UK via our full-time and vetted (BS 7858 - Security Screening of Individuals) staff, with all data stored on secure UK/EEA-based infrastructure in line with UK GDPR requirements. All data processing takes place within UK-regulated environments, which was a key factor in the University of Nottingham selecting Cleardata as a data collection partner.

## **Research Governance (Seymour Research)**

Seymour Research is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office as a Data Controller and operates in compliance with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

For evaluation projects, we agree data controller/processor roles at the outset, establish Data Processing Agreements where required, and apply data minimisation and transparency principles throughout. We contribute to Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs) where appropriate.

Electronic data is stored within secure UK/EEA-based cloud systems with controlled access. All staff and associates complete data protection training and adhere to strict confidentiality and secure data handling protocols.

## **Safeguarding**

We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in research and evaluation activities.

Seymour Research operates under a formal Safeguarding Policy (updated November 2024) aligned with UK safeguarding legislation, including the Children Act 1989, the Care Act 2014 and *Working Together to Safeguard Children*.

Dr Kathy Seymour acts as Designated Safeguarding Lead for research activities. Clear procedures are in place for identifying, recording and escalating safeguarding concerns in line with statutory guidance and host setting protocols.

## **Fieldwork Safeguards**

Where projects involve direct engagement with pupils or vulnerable groups:

- Enhanced DBS clearance is required for relevant personnel.
- Safeguarding training is up to date (most recently refreshed September 2024).
- Risk assessments are conducted prior to fieldwork.
- Informed consent (and parental consent where appropriate) is obtained.

- Research is conducted within appropriate, supervised environments.

All associates engaged in qualitative fieldwork are DBS-checked and briefed on safeguarding expectations specific to each project.

### Secure Operational Environments

Cleardata staff do not engage directly with children; all staff are trained in and aware of heightened safeguarding obligations when processing children's data. Data processing is undertaken within controlled-access environments with staff security screening in place.

### Project Examples

Project	Partners	Phase/Year Group	Data Collection	Description
Pupil surveys and maths screening tests for the annual Cohort Studies	Observatory for Mathematical Education (University of Nottingham)	2024/5: Reception / Year 7 / Year 12  2025/6:  Year 1 / Year 8 (incrementing each year for 7 years)	Pupil survey on attitudes to maths; maths screener test (developed for the project) to assess baseline maths abilities; survey of UCAS applicants.	Secure print, national distribution and data capture for over 30,000 pupil surveys across 300+ schools, alongside 5,000 Reception maths screener assessments, with validated datasets provided to the research team. Design of online survey on UCAS choices for Y12 (7,000 completes).
Questionnaires and Exam Scripts scanning	Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)	Ongoing across multiple exam subjects and questionnaires since 2014	Maths, English, Phonics, plus Teacher Questionnaires	High-volume scanning and structured data capture of exam scripts and teacher questionnaires for the Scottish Qualifications Authority, supporting large-scale assessment processing and rapid

<b>Project</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Phase/Year Group</b>	<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Description</b>
				turnaround of validated datasets.
Maths admissions test gender equity analysis	U-Maths	Year 11 tests for entry into Year 12	Bespoke maths admissions tests (different for each of the 8 schools)	Collection and analysis of item-level responses from bespoke mathematics admissions tests used by eight specialist mathematics schools, supporting statistical analysis of potential gender bias within assessment design.
Strategic School Improvement Fund reading and maths improvement programmes	Transform MAT and Nottingham Education Partners	EYFS, KS1, KS2	Audit of maths and reading provision; collection of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 attainment	Overall evaluation of the two programmes including collection and analysis of EYFS, KS1 and KS2 attainment data, alongside programme implementation evidence, to assess the impact of the interventions across participating schools.
Voice 21 Oracy Improvement Programme 2 <sup>nd</sup> Pilot	EEF (AlphaPlus)	Year 7 & 8	Voice 21 Oracy Assessment	Collection and analysis of Voice 21 Oracy Assessment data across Year 7 and Year 8, alongside teacher surveys and interviews (88 interviews; 500+ assessments) as part of the EEF-funded pilot

<b>Project</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Phase/Year Group</b>	<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Description</b>
				evaluation led by AlphaPlus.