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OF MANAGEMENT & SCIENCES

Freedom of Information 2021-2023

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Introduction

1. The College actively seeks to share information about itself and its activities, subject to the constraints of Data Protection legislation and certain sensitive matters explicitly addressed by the Freedom of Information Act 2000
2. The main aim of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 is to give the public the right of access to a wide range of official information and great access rights to personal information. The intention is to ensure the release of information, except where disclosure would harm specified interests or is contrary to the public interest
3. Each institution covered by the Act is required to have a Publication Scheme that lists the classes of information routinely published, where the information is published, and any charges for access to this information

Enforcement Proceedings

4. If a requestor is unhappy with our response, they must first make a complaint under the

College Complaints' Procedures, and they then may appeal to the Information Commissioner, who will issue a decision notice or enforcement notice. This would normally request that we release the information if the Information Commissioner believed we were withholding the information, the requestor may demand further enforcement proceedings through an Information Tribunal, and then the High Court. It is a criminal offence to refuse to release information or to destroy information

Core Principles

5. The College will publish the information set out in the College's Publication Scheme and will ensure that documents containing the information are available on request
6. The College will give access to information not covered by the publication scheme, except for exempt information following properly submitted access requests and the payment, where appropriate, of the fee within 20 working days
7. Where the College refuses to give access it will give reasons for the refusal. The College will publish details of an appeals procedure against refusal to give access
8. Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs and sound or video recordings
9. The Act does not give people access to their own personal data (information about themselves)

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

10. Publication of information listed in the Publication Scheme will be the responsibility of the manager named in the publication scheme
11. Members of the public should expect access to documents listed in the Publication Scheme within 2 working days of placing an order and making the required payment
12. In addition to the information listed in the Publication Scheme, the College will share any other information that it holds, as quickly as possible and without charge, unless it:
 - does not exist
 - is information reasonably accessible through another route
 - is information in respect of an investigation that relates to criminal proceedings, either current or potential
 - relates to the prevention or detection of crime
 - relates to Court records, including information relating to legal proceedings
 - is personal information
 - is information provided in confidence
 - is planned to be publically disclosed in the future
 - is likely to endanger health and safety
 - is covered by legal privilege
 - would prejudice commercial interests, or is vexatious or repeated.
13. The above exemptions are not absolute in as much as for some of them the College will undertake a 'public interest' test to determine whether the information should be disclosed
14. Access to information held by the College under the Freedom of Information Act will be overseen by the Data Protection Officer
15. The Data Protection Officer will:
 - publish on the College website and in printed form the College Publication Scheme
 - publish on the College website and in printed form the College procedure for "Accessing Information under the Freedom of Information Act" and will provide assistance to persons wishing to access information but who are unclear about the process
 - take steps to ensure that the information contained in publications listed in the publication scheme is as up-to-date as possible
 - acknowledge access requests within 2 working days of receipt

- where further details of the information requested are needed before access request can be dealt with, send a letter or email requesting that information within 5 working days of receipt of the access request
- where a fee is to be paid, send a letter or email setting out details of the fee to be paid within 5 working days of the receipt of the access request or, where applicable, further details of the information request are received
- make the information accessible in the form which the applicant requests within 20 working days of receipt of the original request or within 20 working days of the receipt of clarification about the request if it was required

in some instances an extension to the timescale may be required either due to the complexity of the request or in determining whether the request should be complied with. The College is to notify the person requesting the information of the extension which should not normally be in excess of ten working days

- where the information is exempt or the access request is vexatious or repeated, the Data Protection Officer will send a refusal notice to the applicant setting out the reason for refusal with, where necessary, the category of exemption claimed and drawing attention to the appeals procedure
- where the information is exempt, the Data Protection Officer will decide whether to confirm/deny or not in the refusal notice the existence of the information following the guidance in the Act
- where the refusal is on the grounds that the information is available elsewhere, the Data Protection Officer will, in the refusal notice, guide the applicant on where to access the information
- the Data Protection Officer will direct appeals to the Principal within two days of receipt, and
- the Principal will complete the appeals process.

16. If the request cannot be addressed immediately, it will be subject to a fee of £25 per hour for the work required to meet the request, subject to a maximum of £450. This must be paid before the information is released

17. The Data Protection Officer, will present a termly report to the Principal and an annual report to the Board of Governors detailing access requests received. For each individual request, the report will give:

- The date of the request
- The subject(s) of the request
- Whether the request was made by an individual or a legal person, such as a company
- The College response to the request
- Where the response to the request was to give access:
 - the time taken to satisfy the request, and

- the marginal cost of providing access and any fee charged Where the response to the request was to refuse access:

Main Categories

Publication scheme are:

1. External relations
2. Financial resources
3. Governance
4. Human resources
5. Information services
6. Student administration and support
7. Physical resources
8. Teaching and learning

Class	Description	Manner	Fee
Community liaison (Optional)	This class contains information about the College's relationship with its local community. The information included within this class represents the College's approach to maintaining and fostering that relationship.	Electronically	Free
Fundraising (Optional)	This class contains information which relates to the activities undertaken by the College to raise additional revenue to that provided by its main funding bodies.	Electronically	Free

Government and regulator relations	<p>This class contains information that the College is legally obliged to make available to its funding and/or monitoring bodies². Such material may provide information as to how well the College is performing. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Reports/returns to funding councils, inspectorates, standards bodies, research councils, professional bodies and government departments etc.;</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Inspections under the common inspection framework</p>	Electronically	Free
Marketing and recruitment	<p>This class lists publications relating to student recruitment including the 'A-Z' and fulltime prospectus. It also includes information related to the learning experience. There will be some overlap with student administration and support. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospectus • Open days • Entry requirements • Widening participation. 	Electronically	Free

Appendix 1.1 External Relations

This section covers information relating to the College's relationship with its external environment. These include the formal reports the College is required to provide to its funding bodies, arrangements with other colleges, how it manages its relationship with the local community and how it retains contact with its former staff and students.

By virtue of its nature the majority of these classes are already made available to the public in some means. Members of the public are also likely to find the same or related information is available from the external partners with which the college has links.

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Public relations	<p>This class contains information that is created specifically by the College to help publicise its facilities and activities. The majority of such information has been created for prospective and current students but may still be of considerable interest to those wishing to know more about what the college has to offer and the activities of its students and staff. Examples of the type of information in this class include: Press releases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospectus • Course brochures • Newsletters and magazines • Current information provided to an enrolled student such as induction material. 	Electronically	Free
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Class	Description	Manner	Fee
Legal framework	<p>The College was established and its standing from the point of view of the law was conferred by the relevant statutes, in particular the Education Reform Act of 1988 and the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. The actual legislation is already publicly available, for example on the HMSO website (www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts.htm) and will not be published further by the College.</p>	www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts.htm	Free
Management Structure	<p>The College will make available information relating to how the individual units of the College are organised and where each unit fits in the overall structure of the College. This will include: Organisational structure charts Description of work/responsibilities of curriculum teams and support divisions</p>	Electronically	Free
College Strategy	<p>The College will make available:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mission statement • Statement of quality improvement policies and procedures • The learning and teaching strategy and periodic review of progress <p>Where some or all of the information listed above appears in other classes, then cross-</p>	Electronically	Free

	references to where in the publication scheme it appears will be included here		
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Appendix 1.3 - Governance

This section covers information relating to the way the College is governed and how decisions are made. It includes information on the legal status of the College, which individual member of staff or group within the organisation is responsible for specific functions and where they fit in the overall structure of the organisation. In some instances information from committee minutes will be exempt from disclosure where it contains personal information or information that may damage the commercial interests of the College or that may threaten the health and safety of specific individuals.

Class	Description	Manner	Fee
Employment and employee relations	<p>The College will make available information including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies, statements, procedures and guidelines relating to recruitment • Generic terms and conditions of employment • Salary grades • Collective bargaining procedures and consultation with recognised trade unions and professional organisations and agreements reached • Grievance procedures and policies • Disciplinary procedures and policies • Health and safety policy and procedures • Public interest disclosure (for compliance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act) • Job vacancies • Any other policies relating to staff not included elsewhere in the publication scheme 	Electronically	Free

Equal opportunities/diversity	The College will make available information including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies, statements, procedures and guidelines relating to the provision of equal opportunities with respect to age, race/ethnic origin, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation and disability • Race relations/race equality policies, as required under the Race Relations Amendment Act of 2000 	Electronically	Free
Human Resources strategy (Optional)	The College will publish its Human Resources strategy	Electronically	Free
Staff development	The College will make available information including policies and procedures on staff development and training, induction programmes, probation and appraisal but will not publish personal data. Examples of the type of information to be made available include: Induction – details of areas covered and procedures	Electronically	Free

Appendix 1.4 Human Resources

This section covers information on the College's strategy and management of human resources, rather than information relating to individual members of staff which is exempt from disclosure as personal information. The information available covers personnel policies and procedures (including terms and conditions of service including all current versions of the information specified in each class).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures pertaining to appraisal • Information relating to the ongoing development of staff including schemes such as Investors in People 		
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Class	Description	Manner	Fee
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<p>Availability and conditions of use of facilities</p>	<p>Information in these classes provides details about who can access systems and services and the facilities that they can access. They also provide assurance for external bodies/individuals that rules exist to ensure that breaches of conditions of use (e.g. breach of copyright, e-mail spamming of an external site) are appropriately dealt with.</p> <p>Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening hours of libraries, helpdesks etc. and scheduled maintenance times of systems • Who is allowed to use the facilities (for example, categories of persons and their associated rights/levels of access) • The general rules and conditions of use (e.g. no smoking/drinking/eating, the existence of policies with regard to law such as copyright, computing code of practice and data protection). For other student policies, see reference to other relevant student policies in the publication scheme <p>Some of the information is covered in the student registration details or staff conditions of employment</p> <p>This section contains a pointer to other codes of conduct or rules external to the college which may apply to the use</p>	<p>Electronically</p>	<p>Free</p>
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.5 Information Services

This section covers information on functions within the College that provide access to information to students and to academic and administrative staff including libraries, computing services and information support services.

These functions are managed separately from each other but routinely explain their facilities (and the conditions of their use) to students, staff and the general public; information of this nature that is included within this section. Information services inevitably hold large quantities of personal data that are exempt from general disclosure.

	<p>Access to/use of archives including how far back in time information exists and if so to what extent it is available</p> <p>Details of logging, monitoring and procedures followed in case of breach of conditions of use should be included here</p>		
Mission statements and related documents	This class includes information regarding the aims of each section of the College in context of its place in the organisation, a definition of the service provided and where appropriate service level agreements.	Electronically	Free
Policies with regard to data and information		Electronically	Free
Procurement and disposal policies	<p>Information in this class offers assurances that monies are being appropriately spent and assurances that procurement is fair and open. The disposal policies also assure that the college is making correct and appropriate use of funds. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies relating to the procurement and disposal of equipment • Collection management/preservation strategy (including policy on disposal of stock) 	Electronically	Free
Scope of collections held	<p>Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides to collections • Scope and availability of catalogues 	Electronically	Free

.6 Student Administration and Support

This section covers information on how the College manages the administration and progression of their students from admission to course completion including student support services. Information available within this section does not include specific student personal details, by virtue of being personal information.

Class	Description	Manner	Fee
Information on student admission, progression and completion		Electronically	Free
Student accommodation	There is no accommodation available for students	N/A	N/A
Student administration	This class includes information relating to all areas of the maintenance of individual student records including policies and procedures covering the management of the student records system itself and the division of responsibilities between central registry staff, school/ faculty/ college staff and the students themselves. Examples of the type of information in this class include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registry student records policies and procedures documents • Registry security and data protection policy and procedure documents 	Electronically	Free
Student admission and enrolment	This class includes information relating to the admission/ enrolment of new students including policies and procedures covering the assessment of external qualifications, the creation of student records, the co-ordination of student funding arrangements and the division of responsibilities between central admissions or equivalent and	Electronically	Free

	curriculum area staff. An example of the type of information in this class is the admissions and enrolment policies and procedures document		
Student discipline	<p>This class includes information relating to the conduct of disciplinary proceedings against students. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of student discipline and other policy and procedure documents; • Internal student complaint and appeals procedures 	Electronically	Free
Student learning support services	<p>This class includes information on student support services from an academic and learning perspective, particularly those not covered under information services. This is also likely to appear in the student handbook and prospectus in some form. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning development and support personal development advice • Services for students with learning difficulties 	Electronically	Free
Student liaison	This class includes information relating to the structure and functioning of Student Voice.	Electronically	Free
Student policies		Electronically	Free

Student welfare	Examples of the type of information in this class include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare/advice services • Health services • Careers services • Sports and recreational facilities • Finance 	Electronically	Free
Student association and activities (Optional but strongly recommended)	This class should contain information relating to the operation and activities of the Students' Union and other clubs, associations and non-academic activities that are organised for or by the students. Examples of information include: Students' Union constitution, code of practice, list of officers and any other related documents	Electronically	Free

Appendix 1.8 - Teaching and Learning

This section contains information regarding the management of teaching and learning within the College including mechanisms for reviewing and ensuring the quality of teaching provided.

Class	Description	Manner	Fee
Academic year dates	This class includes information on the dates for the current academic year as well as future academic years (as far as is known)	Electronically	Free

Further course information	<p>This class includes information relating to particular schools and departments also information relating to programmes and qualifications. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Term dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure of courses • Qualifications gained • Changing courses • Work experience 	Electronically	Free
Information on internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards	<p>This class includes information about the College's internal quality audit programmes and annual review. It should also include information on the College's internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <p>Information on programme approval, monitoring and review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Programme specifications - Annual monitoring and review processes - Accreditation and monitoring reports by professional statutory or regulatory bodies <p>Information on assessment procedures and outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assessment strategies, processes and procedures - The range and nature of student work. <p>Information on student satisfaction with their college experience, covering the views of students on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arrangements for academic and tutorial guidance, support and supervision - Library services and IT support - Suitability of accommodation, equipment and facilities for teaching and learning - Perceptions of the quality of teaching and the range of teaching and learning methods - Assessment arrangements 	Electronically	Free

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of pastoral support <p>Information and evidence available to teams undertaking internal reviews of quality and standards in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The effectiveness of teaching and learning in relation to programme aims and curriculum content as they evolve over time - The range of teaching methods used - The availability and use of specialist equipment and other resources and materials to support teaching and learning - Staff access to professional development to improve teaching performance including peer observation and mentoring programmes - The use of external benchmarking and other comparators 		
Staffing structure of schools/ departments	<p>This class includes information about staff roles within schools and departments, together with organisational charts. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job titles of academic staff and support staff • Contact details for each school/department 	Electronically	Free
Student assessment strategy		Electronically	Free
Tuition fees	<p>This class includes information relating to tuition fees for UK students, EU students and other international students including information on when tuition fees will be payable and how to pay. Examples of the type of information in this class include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for home/EU students • Information for international students • Information on other charges 	Electronically	Free

Appendix 2 - Appeal Procedure

1. The Code of Practice of the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) places a duty on public authorities to put a process in place to ensure that applicants are able to appeal to the public authority for an internal review if they are not content with the public authority's decision on the release of information. This provides a first review stage for the applicants

2. Appeal Process

2.1 Principles

If the College refuses to supply the information requested, or the applicant is dissatisfied with its response or feels that a fee has been applied unfairly they may ask for an internal review of that decision. The following principles will apply when considering an appeal request:

- a) the review will be undertaken by an individual (normally the College Principal) who was not involved in the original request for information
- b) If the applicant has not received a response to a request for information within 20 working days it may be regarded that the College has refused the request; the individual therefore has a right of appeal
- c) All reviews will make an assessment of the information released against the information requested and make a full review of the information associated with the original application
- d) The reviewer will discuss the decisions made with the staff members concerned with the original request in order to gain a full picture of how decisions were made
- e) The reviewer may contact the applicant at their own discretion
- f) The reviewer may obtain advice from external sources including legal advice
- g) Conclusion will be summarized and handed to the Chief Operating Officer who will log them centrally for future reference
- h) An internal review must be completed before an appeal can be made to the Information Commissioner.

2.2 Timescales

- a) The College will aim to deal with simple appeals within 3 weeks of the receipt of the appeal
- b) The College will aim to deal with complex appeals within 6 weeks of the receipt of the appeal
- c) If it becomes clear at any stage of the appeal that the above timescales cannot be met the College will inform the applicant in writing and give a revised deadline for completion of the review

2.3 Outcomes An internal review may have three outcomes

- a) The original decision is reversed
- b) The original decision is amended
- c) The original decision is upheld

Whatever the outcome of the appeal the complainant will be informed in writing with appropriate information about what will be provided should a decision be reversed or amended.

Reviewed and Approved by Academic/ Quality Assurance Board 16th May, 2019

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