PUBLICATION SCHEME

The model for this publication scheme has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner, and the college’s scheme mirrors the model issued by that office. As such, it may be adopted without modification by any public authority without further approval and will be valid until further notice.

The scheme outlines:

- The college’s commitment to make information available
- The classes of information held
- The method by which information will be made available
- Accessing information
- A statement on charging
- Written requests under the Freedom of Information Act
- Further information
- Definitions and guidance

COMMITMENT

This publication scheme commits the college to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by the college. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner, which the college has also adopted.

The scheme commits the college:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the college and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information that is held by the college and falls within the classifications below.
- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- To produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
To review and update on a regular basis the information the college makes available under this scheme.

To produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.

To make this publication scheme available to the public.

**CLASSES OF INFORMATION**

☑ **Who we are and what we do.**
Organisational information, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance.

☑ **What we spend and how we spend it.**
Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts.

☑ **What our priorities are and how we are doing.**
Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews.

☑ **How we make decisions.**
Policy proposals and decisions. Decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations.

☑ **Our policies and procedures.**
Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

☑ **Lists and registers.**
Information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of the authority.

☑ **The services we offer.**
Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information will not generally include:

☑ Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.

☑ Information in draft form.

☑ Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.
THE METHOD BY WHICH INFORMATION PUBLISHED UNDER THIS SCHEME WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE

Where it is within our capability, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, we will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where we are legally required to translate any information, we will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

ACCESSING INFORMATION
If the information has not already been found on the college’s website, information can be requested in the first instance by writing to one of the following Information Officers:

Dean Renphrey, Chris Pearson, Karen Chase

at the following address:

West Herts College
Hempstead Road
Watford WD17 3EZ

or by email to: informationrequest@westherts.ac.uk

It is important to us that this scheme meets your needs. Feedback on the scheme is welcomed, and can be made to one of the Information Officers.

CHARGES WHICH MAY BE MADE FOR INFORMATION PUBLISHED UNDER THIS SCHEME
The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the college for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.
Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:
- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Full details of charges are set out in our CHARGING POLICY.

WRITTEN REQUESTS
Information held by the college that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, as detailed within the college’s FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY.

FURTHER INFORMATION
More information about publication schemes and other information legislation is available on the Information Commissioner’s website at

www.ico.gov.uk
DEFINITION DOCUMENT FOR THE MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME FOR COLLEGES OF FURTHER EDUCATION

This guidance gives examples of the kinds of information that colleges of Further Education are expected to provide in order to meet their commitments under their publication scheme. Colleges are expected to make the information in this definition document available unless:

- they do not hold the information;
- the information is exempt under one of the FOI exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) exceptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute;
- the information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or,
- it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release.

The guidance is not meant to give a definitive list. The legal commitment is to the publication scheme, and the college looks to provide as much information as possible on a routine basis.

GUIDANCE

- **Who we are and what we do**
  Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts. We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

- **Legal framework**
  Information relating to the legal and corporate status of the institution.

- **How the institution is organised**
  Information about the management structure of the institution, including a description of the Statutory Bodies and the organisational structure together with a description of the work of each unit and the names and responsibilities of key personnel. It is also expected that terms of reference, membership and description of all boards and committees would be provided under this heading. It should include department structures and identify senior personnel.

- **Lists of and information relating to organisations it works in partnership with and any companies wholly owned by it**
  On the basis that most of these bodies will be responsible for their own affairs, it is expected that this information need be only sufficient for the purposes of identifying the relationship between these bodies (such as business, the professions and the community) and the college.

- **Location and contact details**
  If possible, named contacts should be given in addition to contact phone numbers and email addresses.
• **Student activities**
  Information relating to the operation and activities of the Student Union and other clubs, associations and non-academic activities that are organised for or by the students can also be included where this information is held by the college.

• **What we spend and how we spend it**
  Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit. We would expect as a minimum that financial information for the current and previous two financial years should be available.

• **Funding / income**
  Information on the sources of funding and income, such as funding grants, tuition fees, endowment and investment income (including investment strategy).

• **Budgetary and account information**
  Annual statement of accounts and other information to allow the public to see where money is being spent, where it is or has been planned to spend it and the difference between one and another. We would expect revenue budgets and budgets for capital expenditure to be included.

• **Financial audit reports**

• **Capital programme**
  Information on major plans for capital expenditure including any public private partnership contracts.

• **Financial regulations and procedures**

• **Staff pay and grading structures**
  This may be provided as part of the organisational structure and should indicate, for most posts, levels of pay rather than individual salaries.

• **Register of suppliers**

• **Procurement and tender procedures and reports**
  Details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services. Contracts currently available for public tender and reports of successful tenders.

• **Contracts**
  We would expect normally that it should be necessary only to publish details of contracts that are of sufficient size to have gone through a formal tendering process.
What our priorities are and how we are doing
Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews. We would expect information in this class to be available at least for the current and previous three years.

Below is a list of the type of information that we would expect colleges of further education to have readily available for publication. Any other reports or recorded information demonstrating the college’s planned or actual performance should normally be included.

- Annual report

- Corporate and business plans

- Teaching and learning strategy

- Academic quality and standards
  Information on the college’s internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards and qualitative data on the quality and standards of learning and teaching.

- External review information
  This will include information such as the annual monitoring and review process together with a statement of roles, responsibilities and authority of different bodies within the institution involved in programme approval and review.

- Corporate relations
  Information relating to the college’s links with employers and the development of learning programmes.

- Government and regulatory reports
  For example accreditation and monitoring reports by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies and information that an institution is legally obliged to make available to its funding and/or monitoring bodies.

- How we make decisions
  Decision making processes and records of decisions. We would expect information in this class to be available at least for the current and previous three years.

- Minutes from governing body, council, academic boards and steering groups
  We would expect minutes of meetings where key decisions are made about the operation of the college, excluding material that is properly considered to be private, to be readily available to the public.

- Teaching and learning committee minutes
• Minutes of staff / student consultation meetings

• Appointment committees and procedures

• Our policies and procedures
  Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities. We would expect information in this class to be current information only.

• Policies and procedures for conducting college business
  Codes of practice, memoranda of understanding, procedural rules, standing orders and similar information should be included. Procedures for handling requests for information should be included. In Wales it will include the Welsh Language Scheme in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993 and in Northern Ireland the equality scheme/statement produced in accordance with section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

• Procedures and policies relating to academic services
  Some of these policies may already be covered in class 2 ‘What our priorities are and how we are doing’ in the context of external review and academic quality and standards. Additional policies under this heading may include such matters as policies and procedures relating to changing course, regulations and policy on student assessment, appeal procedures and policy on breach of assessment regulations.

• Procedures and policies relating to student services
  This will include relevant policies and procedures as they apply, for example, to student admission and registration, accommodation, management of the student records system, the assessment of external qualifications, internal student complaints and appeals, and code of student discipline.

• Procedures and policies relating to human resources
  This will include the full range of human resources policies and procedures such as generic terms and conditions of employment, collective bargaining and consultation with trade unions, grievance, disciplinary, harassment and bullying, public interest disclosure, staff development (such as induction, probation, appraisal, promotions).

• Procedures and policies relating to recruitment
  If vacancies are advertised as part of recruitment policies, details of current vacancies will be readily available.

• Code of Conduct for members of governing bodies

• Equality and Diversity
  This will also include policies, statements, procedures and guidelines relating to equal opportunities and the Annual Equality and Diversity Report.
• Health and Safety

• Estate management
This will include disposals policy, estates strategy and plan, facilities management policies, grounds and building maintenance.

• Complaints policies and procedures
Complaints procedures will include those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme.

• Records management and personal data policies
This will include information security policies, records retention and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing) policies.

• Charging regimes and policies
Details of any statutory charging regimes should be provided. Charging policies should include charges made for information routinely published and clearly state what costs are to be recovered together with the basis on which they are made and how they are calculated.

• Lists and registers
We expect this to be information contained only in currently maintained lists and registers.

• Any information we are currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers

• Asset registers
We would not expect colleges to publish all details from all asset registers. We would expect some information from capital asset registers to be available.

• Disclosure logs
Where a department produces a disclosure log indicating the information that has been provided in response to request it should be readily available. Disclosure logs are themselves recommended as good practice.

• The services we offer
Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters. Generally this is an extension of part of the first class of information. While the first class provides information on the roles and responsibilities of the college, this class includes details of the services which are provided by the college as a result of them. It will also relate to information covered in other classes. Examples of other services that could be included are:

• Prospectus and course content
• Health advice
• Careers advice

• Chaplaincy services

• Services for which the college is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees

• Sports and recreational facilities

• Museums, libraries, special collections and archives
  It is expected that this will include guides to collections and scope and availability of catalogues. (Further guidance is available in that provided for bodies responsible for managing museums, collections and archives.)

• Conference facilities

• Advice and guidance

• Local campaigns

• Media releases

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