

Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

Issue 4

July 2016

Summary of Policy:

This policy sets out the College's legal responsibilities with regard to making information held by the College available to the public, subject to certain exemptions.

Senior Manager Responsible for Policy:

Director of Planning and
Performance

1.0 STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides the public with a general entitlement to information held by the College, subject to certain exemptions. Tyne Metropolitan College promotes fairness, transparency and openness in its operations and in relation to the information it holds and will facilitate access to information where this does not prejudice the purpose for which the information is held or infringe rights to privacy or compromise data security.

A significant proportion of information we hold is personal and private to individuals so the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not deal with this information. The relevant legislation pertaining to personal and private information is the Data Protection Act 1998. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not allow the making public information regarding an individual's personal records. The individual concerned does have access to that information under the Data Protection Act.

This policy has therefore been formulated within the context of the following College policies:

- Information Security Policy
- Data Protection Policy

2.0 ACCESSING INFORMATION

The Freedom of Information act 2000 requires publically funded organisations to specify what information they publish in terms of 'classes'. The classes of information we publish are described within the Publication Scheme in a later section of this document.

The College is not obliged to respond to a request where it appears to be part of an organised campaign nor is it required to comply with a number of related requests. The College is not required to respond to vexatious or repeated requests nor is it obliged to meet a request where either the costs are too great or it would take too much staff time to deal with the request.

In addition the Freedom of Information Act contains a number of exemptions that allows the College to withhold information. The exemptions relate to issues such as national security, law enforcement, commercial interests, and data protection. In particular, information is exempt from the Act if it is accessible to the applicant by other means, such as from other Government agencies.

Some information can be downloaded from the College's website; other information will be supplied upon request in an electronic format; or as a paper based document where appropriate.

Requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act:

- must be made in writing to the College address or via email to enquiries@tynemet.ac.uk
- must include the name and address of the applicant
- must clearly describe the information requested

3.0 CHARGES FOR SUPPLYING INFORMATION

Charges will apply for certain categories of information and charges are dependant on what is requested and the format in which the information is required.

There is no charge for downloading information from the website or for the College providing, via email, copies of readily available information. The College may make a charge for photocopying and posting information and charges will apply for providing paper copies of information where the information is readily available from the College website or the College could provide through electronic means. Requests for multiple print-outs, or for archived copies of documents, not readily available, will attract a charge for the cost of retrieval, photocopying and postage.

We will advise you of the cost at the time of request (the charge will be payable in advance of work being carried out).

4.0 TIMESCALES

We will aim to provide information as quickly as possible and make all decisions in relation to specific requests for information within 20 working days, There may however be some instances where it is not possible to respond to the request within 20 working days and in those instances we will give an estimate of the date by which we expect to be able to supply the information.

5.0 CONTROL OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is issued and controlled by the Director of Planning and Performance and will be reviewed every three years in line with the College’s normal cycle.

The latest version of the document will be maintained on the College’s website and the Toolkit.

Prepared by: **Director of Planning and Performance**

Validation & tracking by: **Executive Officer**

D. W. Midgley

Corporation:
Approval: **Signed:.....**

7.9.2016

Date:.....

July 2019

To be reviewed: **Date:.....**

Tyne Metropolitan College's Publication Scheme

1.0 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires publicly funded organisations to adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme to set out the information that will be published and/or made available by the College. This Publication Scheme is available on the College's website and will be made available in hard copy from the College's Gateway at our Coast Road campus at Battle Hill Drive, Wallsend.

The College's Gateway can be contacted via:

Email: enquiries@tynemet.ac.uk

Tel: 0191 2295000

2.0 This Publication Scheme refers to classes of information that Tyne Metropolitan College publishes for use within the College and externally. It is intended to provide guidance on finding information according to its type and the examples included are not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Publication does not refer solely to printed material and can include information on the website, electronic documents, printed books, reports and leaflets. Much of the material covered by the scheme is available on the College's website or is available via electronic means.

3.0 To enable easier identification and location of information the publication scheme specifies classes of information.

These classes are:

1. Who we are and what we do
2. What we spend and how we spend it
3. What our priorities are and how we are doing
4. How we make decisions
5. Our policies and procedures
6. Lists and registers
7. The services we offer

Classes of Information

1 Who we are and what we do

To include information such as organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

- Legal framework including Instrument and Articles of Government, Audit Code of Practice, Financial Memorandum
- Work of the Governing Body, board committee structure and membership, terms of reference for committees
- How the institution is organised including location and contact details, maps and addresses of College sites and the College structure
- Lists of, and information relating to, organisations the College works in partnership with and any companies wholly or partially owned by it
- Student activities including information relating to the operation and activities of clubs, associations and non-academic activities that are organised for or by the students where this information is held by the college
- Mission, Vision and Values, Strategic aims, Strategic plan.

2 What we spend and how we spend it

To include financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.

- Annual Accounts
- Financial Regulations and procedures
- Expenses policy including governor and staff allowances
- Government funding and other income
- Pay Policy and staff grading structures
- Approved Suppliers list
- Fraud Policy
- Register of Contractors.

3 What our priorities are and how we are doing

To include strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.

- Strategic Plan and Strategic Objectives
- Annual Report
- Performance indicators to include Self-Assessment report, Ofsted report, Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education Review report.
- Strategies including HR Strategy, Accommodation Strategy, Learning Development Strategy, IT Strategy, HE Strategy
- Internal and external audit reports.

4 How we make decisions

To include decision making processes and records of decisions.

- Minutes, agendas and papers from Governing Body meetings
- Minutes, agendas and papers from Senior Leadership Team meetings
- Minutes, agendas and papers from committees such as Equality and Diversity Committee, Quality and Standards Committee.

5 Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities

- Policies including Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, Prevent, Safer Recruitment, Single Equality, Anti-Bullying, IT Security, Data Protection. Fees and Health and Safety policies
- Procedures such as Recruitment and Selection, Absence Management, Capability, Disciplinary, Grievance, Dignity at Work and Procurement procedures
- Frameworks including Managing Challenging Behaviours
- Protocols including Records Management.

6 Lists and registers

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

- Any information the college is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers
- Asset registers
- Information Asset register
- CCTV including where appropriate details of the locations of any overt CCTV surveillance cameras operated by or on behalf of the college. The college will decide on the level of detail which is appropriate to reveal.
- Disclosure logs including Freedom of Information responses to requests
- Senior staff declaration of interests including the names, departments and job titles of all senior staff who have made entries
- Register of gifts and hospitality provided to senior staff to include details of gifts given or received; details of any hospitality afforded and by which organisation.

7 The services we offer

To include the information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters.

- Prospectus and course content
- Press and Media releases
- Health including medical services
- Welfare and Counselling services
- Funding, such as grants and bursaries available to students from the college
- Careers advice
- Multi-faith provision
- Services for which the college is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees
- Sports and recreational facilities

- Facilities relating to other cultural activities such as music
- Libraries
- Conference facilities