

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME/POLICY

This policy is available on-line at: www.tynecoast.ac.uk

- We will consider any request for this policy to be made available in an alternative format or language. Please contact: Director of Governance.
- We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. We welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility or fairness of this policy.
- All our policies are subject to equality impact assessments*. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wishes to contribute to these impact assessments. Please contact: Director of Governance.

*Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a negative impact on grounds of: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Approved by:	Version:	Issue Date:	Review Date:	Contact Person:
Audit Committee	v.8	April 2021	April 2024	Director of Governance.

Equal Opportunities: Impact Assessed

Review:

POLICY NUMBER 27

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME

1 Policy Statement

The aim of our Publication Scheme is to explain what information we routinely make available to the public and to provide a method for accessing this.

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, every public authority has a duty to specify what information they publish (in terms of 'information classes'), how the information is made available, and whether it is available free of charge, or upon payment of a fee. We have adopted the Model Publication Scheme for Further Education in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This has been approved by the Information Commissioner and can be found on the following links:

Model publication scheme

Definition document for colleges of further education

2 Access to information

Some information may be downloaded from the College's website; other information will be supplied upon request in a paper format or in an electronic form, where appropriate.

The College can refuse an entire request under the following circumstances:

- It would cost too much or take too much staff time to deal with the request.
- The request is vexatious.
- The request repeats a previous request from the same person
- The request appears to be part of an organised campaign

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.

3 Charges for supplying information

For most searches the college will not issue charges. However, where the quantity of work required to satisfy the request is greater than 18 hours (equating to £450 of staff time), the College will either refuse to provide the information or charge for its collation.

In all cases, the College will consult the requestor to discuss its decision and reasons. We will also offer advice on how the request could be modified to avoid charges or refusal.

The College will normally make a charge for photocopying information included in the Publication Scheme.

If information outside the publication scheme is requested, the College may charge for photocopying and, if necessary, converting the information to your preferred format. We will ask you whether you wish to continue with the request before we do work that will attract a charge.

4 Timescales

Where the information requested is readily available, we aim to provide this within a few days. Where it takes longer to gather the information, we aim to supply the information within 20 working days.

5 Contacts

Please apply in writing to the Director of Governance, Tyne Coast College, St Georges Ave, South Shields, NE34 6ET.

Describe the information you are requesting as clearly as possible and remember to include your name and address.

6. Complaints

If you have a complaint about the College's compliance with the Freedom of Information Act that the College is unable to resolve, you may complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the independent body who oversees the Freedom of Information Act:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

The ICO also offers advice to members of the public about the Freedom of Information Act via its website.

A Guide to our 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 Director of Governance, at our South Tyneside College campus at St. George's Avenue, South Shields.

The Director of Governance can be contacted via:

Email: neil.longstaff@tynecoast.ac.uk

Tel: 01914273903

2.0 This Publication Scheme refers to classes of information that Tyne Coast 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

1. Who we are and what we do

Organisational information

This class contains information relating to how the individual departments of the College are organised and where each department fits in the overall structure of the institution.

The College structure is available on the College website at **www.tynecoast.ac.uk**

Locations and contacts.

This class includes information to be made available by the Board (Corporation):

1. College Mission Statement is available on the College website at **www.tynecoast.ac.uk**
2. College Quality Policy, and associated procedures.
3. Ofsted / Inspection Reports are available at **www.ofsted.gov.uk**
4. QAA (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education) Review Reports are available at **www.qaa.ac.uk**

Legal framework - Instrument and Articles of Government, Audit Code of Practice, Financial Memorandum (<http://www.tynecoast.ac.uk>)

Lists of and information relating to organisations it works in partnership with and any companies wholly owned by it.

Location and contact details - Maps and Addresses of College (www.tynecoast.ac.uk/contact)

Student activities. Advice and guidance can also be found on the Office for Students website: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/>

Other

- Mission, Values and Strategic Aims, Strategic Report, Self-Assessment Report.
- Board Committee Structure & Membership
- Code of Conduct for Governors
- Terms of Reference of Audit Committee, Finance & Resources Committee Governance & Search Committee, Quality, Curriculum and Standards Committee and Stakeholder Groups
- Agendas, Papers and Minutes for the Board, Audit Committee, Finance & Resources Committee, Quality and Standards Committee and Stakeholder Groups.
- Agendas for Performance Appraisal and Review Committee and Governance & Search Committee.
- Annual Schedule of Meetings.
- Procedure for appointing new governors.
- Governor role description.
- Director of Governance job description.
- Governors, SMT, and Director of Governance Photos

2. What we spend and how we spend it

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

- Funding / income
- Budgetary and account information
- Financial audit reports
- Capital programme
- Financial regulations and procedures
- Staff pay and grading structures incl. Pay Policy
- Governors' allowances
- Staff allowances and expenses
- Register of suppliers
- Procurement and tender procedures and reports
- Contracts

The following documents would provide the information for this class:

Annual Accounts
Financial Regulations
Travel and Expenses Policy
Three Year Financial Forecasts
Budgets for Income and Expenditure
Annual Report
Approved suppliers list
Fraud and Bribery policy
Register of contractors

3. What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.

- Annual report
- Self-assessment report
- Corporate and business plans
- Teaching and learning strategy
- Academic quality and standards
- Most recent Ofsted inspection report
- Privacy impact assessments (in full or summary)
- External review information
- Corporate relations
- Government and regulatory reports

College documents in this class include: HR Strategy, Accommodation Strategy, Retention, Achievement and Success Targets and actual figures, Analysis of Student Intake by age, gender, ethnicity, disability, and postcode, Entry Qualifications, Ofsted Reports, Funding Council reports and returns, Internal and External Audit Reports

4. 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, management committees, academic boards, steering groups and working parties
- Teaching and learning committee minutes
- Minutes of staff / student consultation meetings
- Appointment committees and procedures

College information in this class would include: HR Strategy, minutes of – College Board, Senior Executive Group, Senior Management Team, HE Operations Group, Equality and Diversity Committee, Health and Safety Council and Joint Consultative Committee.

5. Our policies and procedures

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

- Policies and procedures for conducting college business
- Procedures and policies relating to academic services
- Procedures and policies relating to student services
- Procedures and policies relating to human resources
- Procedures and policies relating to recruitment
- Code of Conduct for members of governing bodies
- Equality and Diversity Policy;
- Health and Safety
- Estate management
- Complaints policies and procedures
- Records management and personal data policies
- Charging regimes and policies

College documents in this class include: details of current vacancies, salary scales, Public Interest Disclosure Policy, Staff Disciplinary Procedure, Grievance Procedure, Harassment and Bullying Policy, Maternity and Adoption Policy, Management of Sickness Absence Policy, Health & Safety Policy, Data Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Parental Leave policy, Redundancy Policy, Capability Procedure, Equality and Diversity Policy, Race Equality, Gender Equality Policy, Disability Equality, Corporate Social Responsibility Policy, Acceptable Use of ICT Policy, Quality Policy, Health and Wellbeing Policy, Social Media Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

Induction Procedures, Performance Monitoring of Probationary Employees, Individualised Performance Review Procedure

Student Records Procedures, Student Disciplinary Procedure, College Charter, Student Association Constitution and Budget, Exam Dates and Regulations, Appeals Procedures, Fees Policies

Learning Observation Procedure, Internal Verification Procedure.

6. 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
- Information asset register
- CCTV
- Disclosure logs
- Register of interests
- Senior Staff's declaration of interests
- Register of gifts and hospitality provided to senior staff

Disclosure logs would include Freedom of Information Act responses to requests for data

7. The Services we offer

- Prospectus and course content
- Services for outside bodies
- Health advice including medical services
- Welfare and counselling services
- Funding i.e. grants and bursaries available to students from the College
- Careers advice
- Chaplaincy services and 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 music, art and other cultural activities
- Museums, libraries, special collections and archives
- Conference facilities
- Advice and guidance
- Media releases

College documents in this class would include: Information on Student Accommodation Services, Library and Learning Centre opening hours, helpdesk opening hours, Course Information Literature, Full time and Part Time Prospectus, Press Releases and Newsletters, Multi Faith Chaplaincy information.

Rental of College facilities including contract details.