



Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

May 2025

Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

1. Introduction and Purpose

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides public access to information held by public authorities.

It does this in two ways:

- public authorities, which include Further Education Colleges, are obliged to publish certain information about their activities via a Publication Scheme; and
- members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.

The Act covers any recorded information that is held by a public authority. Recorded information includes printed documents, computer files, letters, emails, photographs, and sound or video recordings.

The Act does not give people access to their own personal data (information about themselves) such as their health records or credit reference file. If a member of the public wants to see information that a public authority holds about them, they should make a subject access request under the General Data Protection Regulation.

2. Publication Scheme:

City Lit have adopted the model publication scheme for further education colleges that has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner.

This publication scheme commits City Lit to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information listed below, where this information is held by City Lit.

The scheme commits City Lit:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the organisation and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by City Lit 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 City Lit 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.
- To publish any dataset held by City Lit that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the organisation is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so.

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.

3. Obtaining further Information

Information held by the College which is not published under the scheme can be requested by email from FreedomofInformationActGroup@citylit.ac.uk or in writing from the Data Protection Officer, City Lit, 1-10 Keeley Street, London WC2B 4BA.

Anyone has a right to request information. There are two separate duties when responding to these requests:

- to tell the applicant whether we hold any information falling within the scope of their request; and
- to provide that information.

Requests must be responded to within 20 working days.

For a request to be valid under the Freedom of Information Act it must be in writing, but requesters do not have to mention the Act or direct their request to a designated member of staff.

Every enquiry does not have to be formally treated as a request under the Act. It may be easier to treat as a standard information request if the enquiry can be answered straight away. The provisions of the Act need to come into force only if:

- we cannot provide the requested information straight away; or
- the requester makes it clear they expect a response under the Act.

4. Refusing a request

We 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.

In addition, the Freedom of Information Act contains a number of exemptions that allow us to withhold information from a requester. In some cases this will allow us to refuse to confirm or deny whether we hold information.

5. Exemptions

There are several exemptions under FOIA, some exemptions where the public interest test applies and others which are absolute exemptions. A list of exemptions likely to apply in Further Education are:

Section of the FOI Act	Exemption
21	Information accessible to applicant by other means.
22	Information intended for future publication.
30	Investigations and proceedings conducted by public authorities.
31	Law enforcement.
32	Court records, etc.
36	Prejudice to effective conduct of public affairs.
38	Health and safety.
39	Environmental information.
40	Personal information.
41	Information provided in confidence.
42	Legal professional privilege.
43	Commercial interests.
44	Prohibitions on disclosure.

The College may decide that some information it holds could be regarded as exempt information under FOIA. Where a request for information includes exemptions, the College will consider the prejudice test and the public interest test and may, in some circumstances, withhold the requested information.

Where an exemption is deemed to apply to some or all of the information requested, the applicant will be notified in writing. The relevant exemption will be cited and any information that is not exempt will be provided.

Since FOIA contains a presumption in favour of disclosure, in cases where there is equal weight between withholding information and disclosing it, the information will be disclosed.

6. Personal Information

Where an applicant makes a request for their own personal data, the data is absolutely exempt and the request will be treated as a subject access request under Data Protection Law. Requests for personal data should be made to data.protectionofficer@citylit.ac.uk

7. Policy on Charging

Much of our information is available to you free of charge. However, because of the costs which may be involved in locating or copying what you need, City Lit retains the right granted under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to charge fees where necessary and these will be in accordance with the Act and any other relevant legislation. Where compilation of data is in our view particularly onerous it will be our intention to charge an additional sum of £25 per person hour to cover locating documents, copying and postage (up to a maximum of £450 as defined within the Act).

8. Making a complaint. What happens if my request is refused or I am unhappy with the response?

We will fully comply with the provisions of the FOI Act, and support the purpose of the Act, which is for openness and accountability. However, there will be times when we are unable to provide some, or all, of the information you have requested, because it is not in the public interest to do so. In these cases, we will explain why we have withheld information.

9. Internal Review

If you are dissatisfied with our response you may request that City Lit review the decision or reconsider whether you have received all the information to which you are entitled. A Senior staff member not involved in the original request will undertake the review and will inform you in writing of the outcome. Details of how to request an internal review will be provided in City Lit's letter of response to the original request.

10. Complaint to the Information Commissioner

If you remain dissatisfied after the internal review and feel we have not complied with our obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, you will be able to complain to the Information Commissioner. You can contact the Information Commissioner at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

<https://ico.org.uk/your-data-matters/official-information/>

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/official-information-concerns-report/official-information-concern/>

Publication Scheme

	Class	Notes / Description	Access
1	Who we are and what we do. Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.		
1.1	Legal framework / Instrument of Government / Articles of Association	<p>The Institution was established in 1919 by the London County Council to stimulate demand for evening study among office workers and this still forms an important part of its mission. City Lit was incorporated in 1990 and is both a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. City Lit trustees are its Board of Governors who are unpaid and who include students, staff and people with relevant business and professional experience. City Lit is funded and regulated by the Department for Education (DfE) and is inspected by OFSTED.</p> <p>City Lit is a registered charity whose objective is to "advance for the public benefit, education for adults".</p>	Request
1.2	How the institution is organised	Organisational and management structure charts	Request
1.3	Gender Pay Gap Reporting	Information on website	Website
1.4	Lists of and information relating to organisations it works in partnership with and any companies wholly or partially owned by it	Information is held in the Annual Financial Statements	Website
1.5	Location and contact details	Information on website	Website
1.6	Student activities	N/A refers to Student Association Activities	
2	What we spend and how we spend it. Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit.		
2.1	Funding / income	Annual Financial Statements	Website
2.2	Budgetary and account information; expenditure	Annual Budgets	Request
2.3	Financial audit reports	Annual Financial Statements	Website

2.4	Capital programme	Contained within annual budgets	Request
2.5	Financial regulations and procedures	Information held by Finance department	Request
2.6	Pay policy	Information held by HR department	Request
2.7	Staff pay and grading structures	Information held by HR department	Request
2.8	Staff allowances and expenses	Information held by HR department	Request
2.9	Governors' allowances	Annual Financial Statements	Website
2.10	Register of suppliers	Information held by Finance department	Request
2.11	Procurement and tender procedures and reports	Information held by Finance department	Request
2.12	Trade Union facility time reporting	Annual Financial Statements	Website
3	What our priorities are and how we are doing. Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews.		
3.1	Annual report	Report & Financial Statements (Annual)	Website
3.2	Self-assessment report	Held by Quality Department	Request
3.3	Corporate and business plans	Information held by Finance department	Request
3.4	Teaching and learning strategy	Held by Quality Department	Request
3.5	Academic quality and standards	Held by Quality Department	Request
3.6	Most recent Ofsted inspection report	Ofsted Website	Website
3.7	Privacy impact assessments (in full or summary format)	Held by Data Protection Officer	Request
3.8	External review information	Held by Quality Department	Request
3.9	Corporate relations	Information held by Marketing, PR and Communications team	Request
3.10	Government and regulatory reports	Held by Quality Department	Request
4	How we make decisions. Decision making processes and records of decisions.		

4.1	Minutes, agendas and papers from governing body, council, academic boards, steering groups and committees.	Information held by Clerk to Governors: Governing Body Audit & Risk Committee Quality Committee Financial & Commercial Committee Governance & People Committee <i>Minutes of the Governing Body are published on Website</i>	Request / Website
5	Our policies and procedures. Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities.		
5.1	Policies and procedures for conducting college business	Information held by Finance department: Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy Anti-Fraud Policy Whistleblowing Policy Pound Plus Fee Remission Policy	Request
5.2	Procedures and policies relating to academic services	Admissions policy for accredited courses Assessment and exam appeals procedure Assessment policy Attendance and punctuality policy Internal verification policy Access arrangements – use of laptops Access arrangements for exams Disability/Equality policy (exams) Emergency evacuation policy (exams) Non-examination assessments policy Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy Malpractice and Maladministration Withdrawal of Qualification Policy and Procedure	Request

5.3	Procedures and policies relating to student services	Student Conduct Policy and Procedure Equality and Diversity Policy (Students) Student Complaints Policy Student Vexatious Complaints Policy Refund and Credit Policy	Website
5.4	College Policies and other documents	Business Continuity Policy Risk Management Strategy Health and Safety Policy Preventing Radicalisation Policy External Speakers Policy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy Sustainability and Climate Change Policy	Request
5.5	Procedures and policies relating to human resources	Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy Change Management Policy ICT and Digital Acceptable Use Policy Disciplinary Policy Diversity & Inclusion Policy (Staff) Family Friendly Policy Grievance Policy Learning and Development Policy Leave Policy Performance & Capability Policy Probation Period Policy and Procedure Recruitment Mobility and Secondment Policy Sickness and Absence Policy Smoking Policy including use of E-cigarettes Wellbeing Policy Work Life Balance Policy	Request
5.6	Code of Conduct for members of governing bodies	Code of Conduct	Website
5.7	Equality and Diversity policies; Equality Scheme	Equality and Diversity Duty Review (annual) Equality and Diversity Policy	Website

5.8	Health and Safety	Information held by Facilities Department	Request
5.9	Estate management	Information held by Facilities Department	Request
5.10	Complaints policies and procedures	Student Complaints Resolution Procedure	Website
5.11	Records management and personal data policies	CCTV Policy Cookies Policy Data Handling Policy Data Protection Policy ICT and Digital Acceptable Use Policy Information Asset Classification Policy Information Security Policy Privacy Policy Records Management and Retention Policy Acceptable Use Policy for AI	Request Request Request Request Website Request Request Website Request Request
5.12	Fileplans	Information held by the Data Protection Officer	Request
5.13	Charging regimes and policies	Much of our information is available to you free of charge. However, because of the costs which may be involved in locating or copying what you need, City Lit retains the right granted under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to charge fees where necessary and these will be in accordance with the Act and any other relevant legislation. Where compilation of data is in our view particularly onerous it will be our intention to charge an additional sum of £25 per person hour to cover locating documents, copying and postage (up to a maximum of £450 as defined within the Act).	N/A
6	Lists and registers		
6.1	Any information the college is currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers	Information held by Clerk to Governors	Request
6.2	Asset registers	Information held by the Finance Department	Request
6.3	Information asset register	Information held by IT team	Request
6.4	CCTV	Information held by Facilities Department	Request
6.5	Disclosure logs	Information held by Clerk to Governors	Request
6.6	Any register of interests kept in the college	Information held by Clerk to Governors	Request
6.7	Senior staff's declaration of interests	Information held by Clerk to Governors	Request

6.8	Register of gifts and hospitality provided to senior staff	Information held by Clerk to Governors	Request
7	The services we offer. Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters.		
7.1	Prospectus and course content	Website	Website
7.2	Services for outside bodies	Information held by Marketing, PR and Communications team	Request
7.3	Health including medical services	N/A	
7.4	Welfare and counselling services	Student Centre & Library	Website
7.5	Funding, such as grants and bursaries, available to students from the college	Student Centre & Library	Website
7.6	Careers advice	Student Centre & Library	Website
7.7	Chaplaincy services and multi-faith provision	Student Centre & Library	Request
7.8	Services for which the college is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees	Course Fees	Website
7.9	Sports and recreational facilities	N/A	
7.10	Facilities relating to music, art and other cultural activities	John Lyon's Theatre / City Lit Gallery and Cultureplex	Website
7.11	Museums, libraries, special collections and archives	Student Centre & Library / CityLit Help Centre	Website
7.12	Conference facilities	John Lyon's Theatre	Website
7.13	Advice and guidance	CityLit Help Centre	Website
7.14	Media releases	CityLit Blog / CityLit Events	Website

Executive Owner	Chief Finance Officer
Policy Owner	Data Protection Officer
Approval Body	Governing Body
Date Approved	13 May 2025
Review Period	Every 2 years
Next Scheduled Review Data	Two years from date approved

Version	Date	Author	Reason for changes
1.1	6/3/19	Graham Jennings	New
1.2	7/10/22	Graham Jennings	Updates to college policy content
1.3	2/4/25	Graham Jennings	Updates to college policy list