



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Revised (2008)

Introduction

1. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act") imposes a number of obligations on public authorities, which for these purposes includes the College, and provides the public with wide rights of access to the College's records. In essence, members of the public have a statutory right:
 - From 29 February 2004, to obtain (either from the College's website or in some other form) all the information covered by the College's Publication Scheme.
 - From 1 January 2005, to request (with some minor limitations) any information held by the College, regardless of when it was created, by whom, or the form in which it is now recorded.
2. This Policy, and its associated Code of Practice, set out how the College will meet its obligations under the Act.

Policy Statement

3. The College is committed to being transparent in the conduct of its operations and to comply fully with the Freedom of Information Act. To this end the College will:
 - Be open with the general public and the media and will place in the public domain as much information about its activities as is practicable and, subject to the exemptions permitted under the Act, will make all other information available on request.
 - Establish records management procedures which meet the requirements of the 'Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records'. (1)
 - Deal with all requests for information in accordance with the 'Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Discharge of Public Authorities' Functions'. (2)

1. "Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records" Issued under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, November 2002.

2. "Lord Chancellor's Code Of Practice on the discharge of public authorities functions under Part I of the Freedom of Information Act 2000" Issued under Section 45 of the Act, November 2002

4. On particular occasions the College will not be able to supply all the information requested. Information will only be withheld in accordance with the exemptions laid down in the Act, and in particular those concerning:
 - The College's duties under the Data Protection Act 1998 to keep confidential sensitive information about individual members of staff and students;
 - Other legal and contractual obligations; or
 - Material detrimental to the safe and efficient conduct of the College's operations or which is commercially sensitive.
5. On such occasions the College will always state the reasons why information has been withheld.

Relationship With Existing Policies

6. This Policy has been formulated within the context of the College's Information Strategy

Publication Scheme

7. As from January 2009 the College adopted the new model Publication Scheme for public authorities (July, 2008) introduced by the Information Commissioner's Office. In accordance with this scheme the College has produced a 'Guide to Published Information', which indicates the location and means of access to items of information about the College made available under the scheme. This guide is located on the College's website and available in printed form from the College's Publishing Manager.

Implementation of the Policy

8. The procedures for implementation of this Policy are contained in a College Code of Practice, covering:
 - Management of Records.
 - Requests for Information.

Review

9. The operation of the Policy and its associated Code of Practice will be reviewed periodically by the Enquiries Management Team.

Validation

10. This Revised Policy was approved by the College's Senior Management 10th February 2009.

