

Freedom of Information Policy

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Policy owner:	Principal		

Approval required

SMT Y/N	Y	SMT approved/review date	14 th November 2023
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Publication

Website Y/N	Y	Intranet Y/N	Y	Student VLE Y/N	Y	Date published	
Audience		Staff, Students, External Stakeholders					
Area/s of Staff Intranet		Strategies and Policies					

Changes made

Version	Author	Date	Section	Changes summary
1	Anita Lall	November 2023	All Appendix 1 Appendix 2 Appendix 3	Use of updated template Included full detail of the model publication scheme related to the College Separated policy from procedure Freedom of Information (FOI) request process as flowchart added
2	Anita Lall	February 2024	Scope	Clarification around fees/costs with reference made to section 4 under appendix 3

Freedom of Information Policy

Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) promotes greater openness and accountability across the public sector by giving the public a right of access to all recorded information held by colleges & other public authorities. Craven College is committed to making as much information as possible about College activities generally available to the public either through published documents (including those published on the College website), or on request.

The model publication scheme and definition document provided by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for Colleges of Further Education has been adopted by Craven College.

1. Purpose

Craven College is committed to adhering to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and this policy sets out the College's arrangements for ensuring it meets legislative responsibilities under FOIA.

The information colleges routinely publish falls into the following classes of information as determined by the ICO as part of the publication scheme:

- Who we are and what we do
- What we spend and how we spend it
- What our priorities are and how we are doing
- How we make decisions
- Our policies and procedures
- Lists and registers
- The services we offer

The classes of information will generally not 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

2. Scope

The College recognises that it has a statutory obligation under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to promote open access to information held by the college in carrying out its business activities.

The College will adhere to a publication scheme which will enable the direct download of publications and documents from its website or where necessary give direct contact details for information requests other than by download.

Information not held in the publication scheme is available on request and these requests are responded to in a timely manner.

Where information may be exempt, or other legislation (such as data protection laws) is triggered, consideration will be given to assess if it is appropriate to release the information. If the College cannot supply requested information an explanation will be given. Some information is generally exempt from release. Exemptions include:

- Information already available elsewhere. If this is the case we will, where we can, direct you to where you will find the information you are looking for
- Information provided in confidence. You should note that certain information is supplied to us in confidence and the FOI Act obliges us to hold things confidentially and not to disclose them
- Personal information. This is covered by the Data Protection Act and is only available to the individual concerned
- Investigations and proceedings. If an investigation is on-going, it is unlikely that we will be able to let you have information until all proceedings are finalised
- Information intended for future publications. If we intend to publish the information you want, you may have to wait until it is published before you can have access to it.
- Information that the Principal of the college decides is not in the public interest to disclose
- Information provided on request will be free of charge unless the cost of producing this information is more than £450 (multiple copies will be charged per additional copy). See appendix 2 section 4 for further information on costs

3. Responsibilities

- a. The Principal will be the overall owner of the policy,
- b. The Vice-Principal Finance & Resources is responsible for the management and implementation of the scheme
- c. All managers are responsible for ensuring their teams adhere to the policy when responding to freedom of information requests.

- d. All freedom of information requests will be responded to by the Customer Services team (enquiries@craven-college.ac.uk) with support from the Data Protection Officer and/or Vice Principal – Finance & Resources.

4. Communication

The following principles are fundamental to the communication of the Freedom of Information Policy and procedure:

- a. This policy is for anyone who is thinking of requesting information under the FOI Act
- b. Freedom of Information Policy and procedure will be published on a standardised template
- c. Freedom of Information Policy and procedure will be reviewed by the Principal, before being escalated to the Senior team for approval.
- d. This policy will be referred to the Audit Committee for approval.
- e. The audience of this policy is any staff member who receives a Freedom of Information request.
- f. The Freedom of Information Policy and Procedure will be published on the College website and intranet.

5. Implementation

The implementation of this scheme is the responsibility of the Data Protection Officer and Vice Principal – Finance & Resources

6. Monitoring

The monitoring of this scheme is the responsibility of the Data Protection Officer and Vice Principal – Finance & Resources.

Reporting of Freedom of Information requests will be made to the Audit Committee on an annual basis.

7. Associated Documentation

The College's Model Publication Scheme is attached to this policy as Appendix 1.

The College's procedure for dealing with Freedom of Information requests is attached to this policy as Appendix 2

Appendix 3 outlines the internal Freedom of Information (FOI) request process

This policy is linked to:

- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Access to Information and Publication Scheme
- Data Protection Policy

Appendix 1 Model Publication Scheme for FE Colleges

A publication scheme is a document which describes the information a public authority (in this case, the College) publishes or intends to publish. In this context, 'publish' means to make information available, routinely. These descriptions are called 'classes of information'. The scheme is not a list of the actual publications, because this will change as new material is published or existing material revised. It is, however, the College's commitment to make available the information described.

Who we are and what we do Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts		
<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Manner</i>
Legal framework	<p>The College's legal status stems from the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, as amended by the Learning and Skills Act 2000. The 1992 Act established the College as an independent corporation, with exempt charity status. As a result, legally, the College's Corporation Board is responsible for how the College is run but within the framework of the 1992 Act, as set out in the Instruments and Articles of Government.</p> <p>Supporting Documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruments and Articles of Government • http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga 	Government website
Organisational Structure	<p>Details of Governing Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Code of Conduct • Standing Orders • Financial Plans • Corporation and Committee • Structure • Committees (including membership) • Terms of Reference <p>Details of College's Senior Leadership Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Leadership Team structure / role profiles • College policies and procedures 	All available on the College website
Location and contact details	Details of College address, contact telephone numbers, email addresses, and directions	Website
Partnerships	<p>Craven College work in partnership with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding agencies • Ofsted • Awarding Bodies 	Available on request

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers • Local Authorities • FE College • University of Hull 	
Gender Pay Gap Reporting	Annual staff published in accordance with Government guidance	Website
Marketing, recruitment and public relations	Publications relating to student recruitment and publicising our facilities and activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prospectus (including entry requirements for courses) • Open days • Press releases • Course Brochures • Newsletters • Social Media 	Website/Paper Website/Social Media Website Website /Paper Website / Paper Social Media
What we spend and how we spend it Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit		
<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Manner</i>
Funding/Income	Information on the sources of funding and income, such as funding grants, tuition fees, endowment and investment income: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report / Financial Statement • Fee Policy • Subcontractor fees and charges policy 	Available on the website
Budgetary and account information	Annual statement of accounts and other information to allow the public to see where money is being spent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report / Financial Statement 	Website
Financial audit reports	Audit opinion as contained within the annual report and financial statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report / Financial Statement • External Audit Report (part of financial statements) 	Available on the website
Capital programme	Information of major plans for capital expenditure. Information related to capital expenditure upon completion of the project when accounts have been audited.	Available on request
Financial regulations and procedures	Financial regulations and procedures including procurement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Regulations 	Available on the website
Register of Suppliers	List of suppliers used within the College	Available on request
Procurement and Tendering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services • Supplier terms and conditions of goods and services 	Available on request Website
Staff pay and grading structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remuneration of senior staff as published in financial statements 	Website

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on the grading structures used within College and the associated salaries Pension Scheme information as contained in the financial statements 	<p>Available on request</p> <p>Website</p>
What our priorities are and how we are doing Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews		
<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Manner</i>
Corporate and business plans	Strategic plan	Website
Vision and values	College vision and values	Website
Academic quality and standards	Information relating to the College's performance and its standards. The Self-Assessment Report includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement results Retention results Attendance levels Quality Improvement Plan 	Available on request
	Information about the College's internal quality audit programme and annual Review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Policy - Accredited provision 	Available on request
Government and regulatory reports	Information that the College is legally obliged to make available to its funding and/or monitoring bodies. Such material may provide information as to how well the institution is performing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ofsted Inspection report 	Ofsted website
	Government reports on FE such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualification Success Rates Education and Skills Funding Agency DfE performance tables 	Associated websites
How we make decisions Decision making processes and records of decisions		
<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Manner</i>
Minutes from the governing board/committee meetings	Supporting documents include minutes from Governing Board meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full Governing Board Finance, Resources & Investment Committee Audit Committee Quality and Curriculum Committee (previously called Learning, Teaching & Assessment Committee) Search and Governance Committee 	<p>Website</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Available on request</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staffing & Remuneration Committee 	Available on request
Our policies and procedures Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities		
<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Manner</i>
Policies and procedures relating to academic services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IT Acceptable Use policy Work Experience policy Freedom of Speech policy Observation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment policy Appeals policy HE FE Student Academic Misconduct Policy HE Student Academic Misconduct Policy Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policy HE Quality of Education Policy 	Website Website Website Available on request Available on request Website Website Website Website
Policies and procedures relating to student services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admissions policy for HE Admissions Policy FE Fees and Refund Policy HE Student Support Strategy Student Criminal Conviction policy External Speaker/Guest policy Student positive behaviour policy Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adult policy Drug, Substance and Alcohol Abuse Policy Student Code of Conduct Student Trips and Visits policy Stop and Search policy Exam Access Arrangements Policy Financial Support for FE Students Sexual Harassment, misconduct and sexual violence policy Student Support, Mental health and Wellbeing Fitness to Study Policy 	Website Website Website Website Available on request Available on request Website Website Website Available on request Available on request Available on request Available on request Website Available on request Available on request Available on request
Policies and procedures relating to human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whistle blowing policy Staff code of conduct IT Acceptable Use policy Social & Electronic Media and Policy Conflict of Interest Policy Performance Management Policy Disciplinary Policy Grievance Policy Absence Management Policy Flexible Working Policy Parental Leave Policy Staff engagement Policy Staff Malpractice and Maladministration Policy 	Website Website Website Website Website All available on request request

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay and Reward Policy • Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and Verification Checks of Staff • Recruitment of Ex-Offenders • College Policy & Procedures for the Recruitment, Selection & Induction of Staff 	
Equality and Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual EDI report (including single equality scheme and action plan) • Gender pay report 	Website
Health and safety / Estate management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health & Safety Policy • Environmental and Sustainable Development Strategy • Visitor Policy • First Aid Policy • Lone Working Policy 	Website Available on request
Finance and Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management Policy • Financial Regulations • Anti-Fraud and Anti-Bribery Policy 	Available on request Website Website
Complaints policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints and Compliment Policy • Complaints Against the Board of Governors 	Website Website
Records management and personal data policies and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom of information policy • Data protection policy 	Website Website
Lists and registers		
Information contained only in currently maintained lists and registers		
<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Manner</i>
Information we are legally required to hold in registers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset Register • Freedom of Information request log • Data breach register • Information asset register (IAR) 	Available on request
The services we offer		
Information about the services we offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters		
<i>Class</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Manner</i>
Prospectus and course offer	Prospectus and course offer	Website
Student enrolment and admission	Information relating to admission/enrolment of new students, including policies and procedures covering the assessment of external qualifications, the creation of students' records, the coordination of student funding arrangements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fees and Refund Policy • FE Admissions Policy • College Bursary Policy 	Website Website Available on request

Welfare and counselling services	Information detailing Additional Learning Support offered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy • Student Handbook 	Website Available on request
Other student facilities	Student specific information on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular activities • College catering 	MyCraven student page on website

Appendix 2 Freedom of Information Procedure

1. Introduction

The Freedom of Information procedure provides guidelines on how to submit a request and how this will be dealt with

2. How to obtain information

Most information can be accessed via the College website www.craven-college.ac.uk

Valid requests may be made

- In writing to:

The Principal
Craven College
Aireville Campus
Gargrave Road
Skipton
BD23 1US

- By e-mail to enquiries@craven-college.ac.uk

In all cases, please provide the name of the requestor, a correspondence address and a full description of the information requested.

The College will acknowledge receipt within 5 working days and respond within 20 working days to specific requests from any individual.

3. Rights and Responsibilities

The Freedom of Information Act grants two rights to requestors:

- to be informed whether the college holds information of the type requested, and
- if it does, to have that information provided (subject to exemptions).

The College reserves the right to:

- Refuse to provide the information or charge a fee where the total administrative cost to issue a response is greater than £450 in accordance with section 12 of the FOI Act
- Refuse vexatious or repetitive request
- Direct the public to published information
- Withhold personal information relating to third parties
- Withhold information if it is exempt

4. Costs

Much of our information is available free of charge including copies of publications/information listed in the publication scheme. Printed information on courses and services offered by the College is also available free of charge.

However, the College retains the right granted under the FOI Act 2000 to charge fees where necessary and these will be in accordance with the Act and any other relevant legislation. The following criteria will be considered when determining costs:

- Identifying whether the college actually holds the information
- Locating the information or documents containing the information
- Retrieving such information or a document which may contain the information
- Extracting the information from the document containing it (including editing or redirecting information).

The costs attributable to the time that person(s) are expected to spend on these activities on behalf of the College is set at £25 per person per hour.

If a charge for information is applicable, the person requesting the information will be notified and payment required prior to the information being provided.

5. Continuous Improvement

It is important that this publication scheme meets the requestor's needs. If a user finds the scheme difficult to understand, they should contact the College. The College would also welcome suggestions as to how our scheme might be improved. Any questions, comments or complaints about this scheme should be sent to the postal or email address above, in Section 2

The College will do everything in its power to meet an enquirer's information needs. However, if the College is unable to resolve a complaint, enquirers have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner, the independent body which oversees the Freedom of Information Act.

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Appendix 3 Freedom of Information (FOI) request process

