

It is intended that this policy is 'fair to all'. Where any part could potentially lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

SWINDON COLLEGE: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Title: Access to Information and Publication Scheme

Owner: Clerk to the Corporation

Date: October 2018

Review Date: October 2020

Introduction

Swindon 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.

Freedom of Information Act 2000: Publication Scheme

Adopting a publication scheme is a requirement of Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The purpose of the Act is to promote greater openness by public authorities, which include further education colleges.

Swindon College has adopted the Model Publication Scheme produced by the Information Commissioner's Officer for Further Education colleges. The Scheme provides a description of the "classes" or types of information that the Information Commissioner expects colleges of Further Education to make available. The Model Publication Scheme is attached as Appendix 1 to this policy document.

A guide to the specific information held under each of the classes of information identified in the scheme can be found on the Information Commissioner's website at: <https://ico.org.uk/media/1131/definition-document-colleges-of-further-education.pdf>

How to access information

Swindon College will make available information it holds whether or not listed in the Guide to the Publication Scheme unless identified as not available under one of the exemptions provided for by the legislation. Any documents routinely available to the public are noted in the Guide in the descriptions of the different classes of information.

Some documents covered by the scheme are published in electronic format via the college's website at www.swindon.ac.uk or other websites as indicated. Other documents are only available in hard copy and will be provided on request.

We ask that requests are made in writing and a response will normally be made within 20 working days. A Freedom of Information Request Form is attached to this policy as Appendix 2.

Charging Policy

Printed information on courses and services offered by the College is available free of charge, as are packs issued to people responding to notices of job vacancies. If requested, the College will produce publications and documents in other formats where it is reasonably practical to do so. For items not routinely available on request free of charge, or for items in other requested formats which incur additional cost, the College will usually make a charge. The charge will normally comprise the cost of photocopying or scanning (current photocopying charges and scanning charges are each 5p plus VAT per page) or the direct cost of putting the information into other requested formats, plus postage if applicable. In certain circumstances, the College may waive the fee at its absolute discretion.

Contact and Complaints

The contact for requests for documents, questions, comments or complaints about this policy or the publication scheme is:

Freedom of Information Requests
Clerk to the Corporation
Swindon College
North Star Avenue
Swindon
SN2 1DY

Email foi@swindon.ac.uk

Any complaints about the implementation of this policy should be made under the College's Compliments and Complaints policy.

Complaints outside the College

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

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK95AF

Appendix 1: ICO Model publication scheme

Freedom of Information Act

This model publication scheme has been prepared and approved by the Information Commissioner. It may be adopted without modification by any public authority without further approval and will be valid until further notice.

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

Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the Information Commissioner.

The scheme commits an authority:

- To proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- To specify the information which is held by the authority 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 the authority 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 the authority that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the authority is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so; to publish the dataset, where reasonably practicable, in an electronic form that is capable of re-use; and, if any information in the dataset is a relevant copyright work and the public authority is the only owner, to make the information available for re-use under the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, if they apply, and otherwise under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act section 19. The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of the Freedom of Information Act. The term 'relevant copyright work' is defined in section 19(8) of that Act.

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.

The method by which information published under this scheme will be made available

The authority will indicate clearly to the public what information is covered by this scheme and how it can be obtained.

Where it is within the capability of a public authority, information will be provided on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, a public authority will indicate how information can be obtained by other means and provide it by those means.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. Where this manner is specified, contact details will be provided. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where an authority is legally required to translate any information, it will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

Material which is published and accessed on a website will be provided free of charge.

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament.

Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

Charges may also be made for making datasets (or parts of datasets) that are relevant copyright works available for re-use. These charges will be in accordance with the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, where they apply, or with regulations made under section 11B of the Freedom of Information Act, or with other statutory powers of the public authority.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written requests

Information held by a public authority that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Swindon College

Freedom of Information Act 2000 Information Access Request Form

Please read carefully the College Access to Information Policy/ Publication Scheme before you complete this form. It explains in detail the nature of Freedom of Information Requests and tells you what is expected from you and what you should expect from us.

Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4 must be completed as fully as possible.

1. Personal details of the applicant

Title (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms)	
First Name	Surname
Address	
Telephone	E-mail address

2. Details of the information required, continue on separate sheet if necessary.

(Please provide as much detail about the information you would like to have and to be as concise and as clear as possible in order that we can identify and process your request promptly. Any vagueness or ambiguity in your request will delay the processing).

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3. Other Information (Please provide any other details to identify or locate the information which would help us process your request e.g. your preferred format of the information requested, contact details of staff who may have your requested information, number of copies you would like etc.)

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4. Data Protection Notice – The personal details you have provided to Swindon College on this form will be used to process your request for information. These will also be used to keep a register of requests so we can monitor our responses, ensure consistency and analyse trends. We will not disclose your details to any external third parties without your consent.

Signature
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Date
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Important note – if the information you have asked for requires a fee, we will let you know following receipt of your request. If you choose to accept this fee charge, we will process your request upon receipt of payment

Please send your completed request form to:

Freedom of Information Requests
Clerk to the Corporation
Swindon College
North Star Avenue
Swindon
SN2 1DY

Email foi@swindon.ac.uk