



Freedom of Information Policy

This policy sets out the Group's response to request for information and for using the Publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Document Status	
Owner	Director of Governance
Author	Director of Governance
Date of Origin	December 2019
Colleges covered	City of Westminster College, College of North West London
Version	Approved
Date of Approval	06 July 2022
Date of Next Review	July 2025
Approval Body	Corporation

Freedom of Information Policy

Introduction

1. This policy is in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It sets out the College's arrangements for making information available to the public under its publication scheme and in dealing with requests for information.
2. The publication scheme follows the Definition Document for Colleges of Further Education 2013 published by the Information Commissioner's Office. This sets out the type of information the College is expected to provide to meet these requirements. It also reflects the Department of Education Guidance on what academies, free schools and colleges should publish online (updated in November 2020).
3. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) came into force in the UK on 1 January 2005 and provides individuals or organisations with the right to request information held by a public authority. The public authority must tell the applicant whether it holds the information requested and would normally supply the information, in the requested format, within 20 working days. The purpose of the FOIA is to promote greater openness by public authorities, which includes Further Education Colleges.
4. This policy sets out the process for making a request for information and the publication scheme is at Annex A.

How to access information?

5. United Colleges Group will make available information it holds, whether listed or not under the publication scheme, unless it is not available under one or more of the exemptions set out under the FOIA. Documents that are routinely available to the public are included in the Publication Scheme. Some documents which are part of the scheme are published in electronic format on the individual college websites or the UCG website.

<https://www.cnwl.ac.uk/>

<https://www.cwc.ac.uk/>

<https://www.ucg.ac.uk/>

6. Other documents are available on request, and can be provided in either electronic or hard copy. These are listed in the Publication Scheme together with any fees payable (see below).
7. If the information being sought is not listed in the Publication Scheme, the information can still be requested under the FOIA. Requests must be made in writing, including by email. The requester must provide their name and address and must clearly state the information being requested, and the desired format. It is not necessary for the reason for the request to be disclosed. A Freedom of Information Request Form is included in this policy at Annex B. This is intended to assist requestors of information but it is not mandatory for it to be used.
8. In responding to requests for information, the Group will confirm the request has been received and whether the information is held. Should the requested information be exempt, the requestor will be informed and advised of the exemption that has been applied.

9. The Group will normally reply to requests for information within 20 working days as set out under the FOIA. However, an extension to this may be necessary if the information may be exempt under a qualified exemption and require a public interest test. The requestor will be kept informed of any extension and be given an estimate of the date when a response will be provided.

Fees

10. Printed information on courses and services offered, and advertised jobs by the Group is available free of charge. The Group reserves the right to charge a fee for responding to any freedom of information requests. This will be consistent with guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office and would cover disproportionate administrative or printing costs. The Group will inform the requestor if a fee is likely and the level of the fee.

11. Requests for information should be addressed to:

Freedom of Information Officer
Director of Governance
United Colleges Group
City of Westminster College
Paddington Green
London W2 1NB

Email: zoe.lawrence@cwc.ac.uk

12. Complaints about how information requests are dealt with should be addressed to:

Chief Executive Officer
United Colleges Group
City of Westminster College
Paddington Green
London W2 1NB

Email: Stephen.Davis@cnwl.ac.uk

13. The Group will aim to fulfil all requests for information in line with the requirements of this policy. However, if the Group is unable to resolve a complaint the requestor can write to the Information Commissioner, which is an independent body which oversees the implementation of the FOIA. The address of the Information Commissioner is:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House, Water Lane
Wilmslow, Cheshire
SK9 5AF

14. The Director of Governance is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy which will be approved by the Corporation on recommendation of the Audit Committee. This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis or sooner should requirements change.

PUBLICATION SCHEME

The United Colleges Group Publication Scheme comprises seven classes of information:

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

This Publication Scheme includes information on:

Class	– examples of information that are included in this class
Description	- a brief description to aid understanding of the type of information
Manner	– the media in which the information is to be provided, hard copy or electronic
Fee	– whether there is a charge for the information in each class.

The information listed is not exhaustive but is indicative of possible information available. If the information is not shown in the Publication Scheme, please contact the Freedom of Information Officer to make a request. Some information may be exempt from disclosure under the exemptions included under the FOIA.

1. Who we are and what we do				
	Class	Description	Manner	Fee
a)	Legal Framework	Legal status – conferred by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. The Act is available at http://www.legislation.gov.uk - LINK to Act Instruments and Articles of Government https://www.ucg.ac.uk/governance Charitable status – United Colleges Group is an exempt charity under the provisions of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992	Internet Internet / by email and paper copy	N/A N/A
b)	How we are organised	Corporation and Committee structures including Terms of Reference. This is available in the Standing Orders. https://www.ucg.ac.uk/governance College structure chart including the names and job titles of key personnel.	Internet/ by email or paper copy	N/A
c)	Our Partnership Organisations	Education Skills Funding Agency https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency Ofsted https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted	Internet	NA

		<p>Department of Education https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education</p> <p>Education and Training Foundation https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/</p> <p>Association of Colleges https://www.aoc.co.uk/</p> <p>Office for Students https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/</p> <p>Information about working with schools, universities, employers and community.</p> <p>CWC Enterprises – A wholly owned subsidiary of United Colleges Group established for the letting of facilities and ancillary services</p>	Email or paper copy Email or paper copy	
d)	Locations and contact details	<p>United Colleges Group Paddington Green Campus Paddington Green London W2 1NB</p> <p>020 7723 8826 or 020 8208 5000</p> <p>https://www.cnwl.ac.uk/ https://www.cwc.ac.uk/ https://www.ucg.ac.uk/</p>	Internet / website	
e)	Student Associations and activities	Student Council Constitution, Student Council Annual Reports and details of current activities and events	Email or paper copy	N/A

2. What we spend and how we spend it

	Class	Description	Manner	Fee
a)	Funding/Income	Sources of funding and income, such as funding grants, tuition fees, endowment, rents and investment income.	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
b)	Budgetary and accounts information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Audited Financial Statements Annual budget as approved by the Corporation Management Accounts as reported to the Corporation Budgetary and planning procedures Contracting and tendering procedures 	Website Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
c)	Financial Audit Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Audited Financial Statements Regularity Self-Assessment as approved by the Corporation Annual Internal Audit Service Report Annual Report of the Audit Committee 	Website Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
d)	Capital Programmes	Summary information on major capital expenditure	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee

e)	Financial Regulations and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing Financial Instructions Financial Memorandum 	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
f)	Pay policy	Statement of our policy and procedures regarding staff pay	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
g)	Staff pay and grading structures	Pay scales as part of the organisational structure	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
h)	Staff allowance and expenses	Staff expenses policy	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
i)	Governors allowances	Governors' expenses policy Total payments paid to individual governors	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
j)	Register of suppliers	Summary level list of suppliers	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
k)	Procurement and tender procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing Financial Instructions include procurement policy and procedures Contracts available for public tender Reports of contracts awarded 	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
l)	Contracts	List of current major contracts (Summary level only of sufficient size to require a formal tendering process)	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee

3. What our priorities are and how we are doing				
	Class	Description	Manner	Fee
a)	Annual Reports	Annual Report and Financial Statements	Website	N/A
b)	Self-assessment report	Annual Self-Assessment Report	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
c)	Corporate and business plans	Mission, vision and values Strategic Plan	Website Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
d)	Teaching and learning strategy	Summary information of Self-Assessment Review, Quality Improvement Plan, and post inspection audits	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
e)	Academic and quality standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Self-Assessment Report Teaching and Learning Quality Policy Moderation procedures 	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
f)	Ofsted reports	Ofsted Inspection reports available from https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted	Website	N/A
g)	External review information	<p>Ofsted Inspection reports available from https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted</p> <p>HE provision - Office for Students https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/</p> <p>Department of Education – Performance tables https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/school/130423/united-colleges-group/16-to-18</p>	Website	N/A

h)	Corporate relations	Information relating to the Group's links with employers, sponsors and the development of learning programmes. Commercial Strategy	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
i)	Government and regulatory reports	Accreditation and monitoring reports by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies and information that the Group is legally obliged to make available to its funding bodies e.g reports and returns to ESFA, inspectorates and government departments.	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee

4. How we make decisions

	Class	Description	Manner	Fee
a)	Corporation agendas, minutes and papers	The non-confidential minutes of the Corporation are published on the UCG website https://www.ucg.ac.uk/ Non-confidential minutes of the Corporation's committee meetings are available by request. Minutes of the Search Governance and Remuneration Committee are likely to be confidential under GDPR as they may include personal data. Non-confidential papers of meetings are available on request.	Website or email Email or paper	N/A or fee

5. Our policies and procedures

	Class	Description	Manner	Fee
a)	The way business is conducted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing Orders (including Committee Terms of Reference) Corporation Code of Conduct Procedures for handling requests for information 	Website Email and paper copy	N/A
b)	Delivery of academic services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admission arrangements Guidelines for the observation of teaching and learning Basic and key skills policies HE policies Policies on changing course or withdrawal Policies on student assessment Appeal procedures Exam policy/ breach of assessment regulations Behaviour Policy 	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
c)	Delivery of student services	Current policy information relating to the delivery of student services	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
d)	Human resources	All HR related policies.	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee

e)	Recruitment	Policies on the recruitment of staff and governors	Website Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
f)	Corporation Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing Orders (including Committee Terms of Reference) Corporation Code of Conduct 	Website	N/A
g)	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy EDI Working Group ToR EDI Action Plan 	Website	N/A
h)	Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety policy Health and Safety reports No smoking policy Health and Safety induction procedures Health and Safety Committee Terms of Reference 	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
i)	Estates Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposal Policy Estates Strategic Plan Facilities management policies Grounds and building maintenance 	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
k)	Complaints Policy and procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints policies and procedures Complaints against Corporation Member or Director of Governance (included in Standing Orders) Complaints against FOIA/ Publication Scheme Whistleblowing Policy 	Website	N/A
l)	Records and data management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCG Data Protection Policy UCG Processing personal data UCG Your rights as a data subject UCG Personal Data UCG Third Party Organisations who we share data with UCG Privacy Notice for Students and Applicants UCG Privacy Notice for Visitors <p>https://www.ucg.ac.uk/policies/data-and-privacy</p>	Website	N/A
m)	Charging regimes	Tuition Fees policy Publication Scheme fees		

6. Lists and registers				
	Class	Description	Manner	Fee
a)	Assets	Assets/ capital register (summary level only) and information asset register	Email and paper copy	N/A or fee
b)	CCTV	Locations of any overt CCTV surveillance cameras in the building or general geographic area	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
c)	Disclosure logs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register of requests made under the FOIA and responses issued Register of disclosed interests of Corporation member and senior managers Register of gifts and hospitality in accordance with the Anti-bribery and Gifts and Hospitality policy. 	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee

7. The services we offer				
	Class	Description	Manner	Fee
a)	Prospectus and course content	Prospectus and course information https://www.cwc.ac.uk/courses https://www.cnwl.ac.uk/courses	Website Email and paper copy	N/A
b)	Health advice	Health and welfare support and advice https://www.cnwl.ac.uk/college-life/student-services https://www.cwc.ac.uk/student-support/welfare	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
c)	Welfare and counselling services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for Looked After Young People and recent Care Leavers • Housing advice and support for young people needing emergency accommodation • Rights, entitlements and support for asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees and people subject to immigration regulations • Domestic violence - emergency advice and referrals to specialist support services • Sexual health - free condoms and referrals to specialist services • Benefits e.g. Job Seeker's Allowance / Income Support https://www.cwc.ac.uk/student-support/welfare https://www.cnwl.ac.uk/college-life/student-services	Website	N/A
d)	Funding available to students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare • Financial Support for 16-18 Year-olds & Continuing Learners Aged 19 • Financial Support for 19+ Year-olds • Free Meals in FE • 19+ Advanced Learner Loans • Money & Support for Looked after Children, Care Leavers & Young People Living Alone https://www.cwc.ac.uk/student-support/financial-support https://www.cnwl.ac.uk/college-life/student-services	Website	N/A
e)	Careers advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying to university: navigating UCAS • Apprenticeship advice • Finding work: including CV, applications and interview tips • Student Finance: including 19+ Learning Loan • Volunteering and gap year advice 	Website	N/A or fee

		https://www.cwc.ac.uk/student-support/careers-advice		
f)	Chaplaincy and multi-faith provision	British Values / Multi-faith approach	Website	N/A
g)	Fee recovery	Tuition fees policy	Email or paper copy	N/A
h)	Sports and enrichment activities	Student handbook Staff benefits – gym, fitness classes	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
i)	Museums, libraries, special collections and archives	Library catalogues	Email or paper copy	N/A or fee
k)	Conference facilities	Information on letting of premises at Paddington Green https://www.cwc.ac.uk/private-hire	Website	N/A
l)	Advice and guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student handbook • Rights for international students • Information for refugees and asylum seekers 	Email and paper copy	N/A or fee
m)	Local campaigns	Information relating to current campaigns and activities	Website	N/A
n)	Media releases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News pages on college websites • Press releases 	Website	N/A

INFORMATION REQUEST FORM

Please read the Group's Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme before completing this form. Information may already be available on the colleges or UCG websites.

Full name*:
Postal address*:
Email address:
Telephone number (optional)

*mandatory information. Please provide email address if you would like the information in an electronic format.

Please provide the details of your information request below. To avoid delays please be specific in your request and include for example whether your request concerns the College Group as a whole, one particular campus, the academic year or range of years for data for example.

--

Manner of request – please tick

Electronic

Paper

Data Protection

The personal information you have provided to United Colleges Group on this form will only be used to process your request for information and will be kept on the register of information requests. We will not disclose your personal information or use it for any other purpose without your explicit consent.

Signature:

Date:

Please return this form to:

Director of Governance
Freedom of Information Officer
United Colleges Group
City of Westminster College
Paddington Green
London W2 1NB

Email: zoe.lawrence@cw.ac.uk