DOCUMENT DETAILS

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Summary	The purpose of this document is to set out the policy for processing Freedom of Information requests			

DOCUMENT CONSULTATION & APPROVAL

Consultation person / body	**Date passed**
Audit Committee	June 2026

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Board	July 2026

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A significant negative impact has been identified in the following area and a full impact assessment / risk assessment is available.

Equality & diversity	No
GDPR	No
Health & safety	No
Safeguarding	No

Friendly version of policy available	No

POLICY CHANGES

Key updates	**Impact**	**Section reference**

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) gives the public a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right, and places a number of obligations on public authorities.

1.2 Every public authority must:

1.2.1 Proactively publish information in a Publication Scheme

1.2.2 Respond to written requests for information within 20 working days

1.3 The Act promotes greater openness and accountability across the public sector, and is enforced by the Information Commissioner.

2. OBJECTIVE

2.1 This policy sets out the college's position in response to its responsibilities as a public authority under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

2.2 This policy applies to all recorded information held by the college that relates to the business of the college. This includes information in paper files, electronic documents, emails, databases and audio or video material.

3. INFORMATION AND HOW TO REQUEST IT

3.1 Adopting a publication scheme is a requirement of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Nottingham College has adopted the model publication scheme developed for the further education sector, and is therefore committed to publishing the information it describes.

3.2 Nottingham College's publication scheme is available on the college website. The classes of information we publish are shown, together with the manner in which information is available. We also indicate whether charges apply.

3.3 The publication scheme relates to 'published' information. This is material that has already been prepared in a format ready for distribution.

3.4 To request information through the college publication scheme please email the Freedom of Information mailbox: freedomofinformation@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk, or write to: Publications Scheme Enquiry, c/o Jo Welham, Nottingham College, 111 Canal St, Nottingham NG1 7HB.

3.5 Individuals have the right under the Act to request any information held by the college (subject to exemptions) which it has not already made available through its publication scheme.

3.6 Requests must be made in writing and, in general, the college has 20 working days to respond. There may be a charge for the release of some information.

3.7 Requests can be made to anyone in the college, and do not have to mention the Freedom of Information Act. As such all staff will be made aware of the process for dealing with requests, which is to refer the request immediately upon receipt, to the Data Protection

Officer. The request will be logged. The Data Protection Officer will coordinate the collation of the requested information and the response on behalf of the college. The college will respond to all requests, informing the applicant whether or not the information is held, and supplying any information that is held, subject to any exemptions.

3.8 It is helpful (but not essential) if applicants indicate that the request is being made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and are submitted to the freedom of information mailbox: freedomofinformation@nottinghamcollege.ac.uk

3.9 If any part of a request submitted under the Freedom of Information Act includes personal information, consideration will be given to Data Protection legislation.

4. FEES AND APPROPRIATE LIMITS

4.1 Section 9 of the Act requires that a public authority intending to charge a fee for providing information in response to a request must issue a fees notice to the applicant.

4.2 If a fee is to be charged, the college will only provide the requested information on receipt of the fee. The 20 day response period is placed 'on hold' from the data of issue of the fees notice, until the fee is received. If no fee is received within 3 months of the fees notice, the request will be closed.

4.3 Section 12 of the Act allows the college to refuse a request for information if it estimates that meeting the request would exceed the appropriate limit cost as set out in the Act regulations.

4.4 The cost limit is currently set at £450 and equates to 18 hours at £25 per hour (irrespective of who is involved). If the college estimates that this cost will be exceeded, it will first seek to narrow down with the applicant what has been requested, in order to meet the applicant's needs within the limit. If the applicant refuses, then either a fees notice will be issued, or the request will be refused.

4.5 Limited disbursement costs, for example photocopying or postage, may be reclaimed if the cost of complying exceeds £25.

5. CRIMINAL ACTIONS

5.1 It is a criminal offence under the Act for members of staff to alter, deface or remove any record (including emails) following receipt of an information request.

6. RECORDS

6.1 A record will be maintained, by the Data Protection Officer, of all requests received in order to maintain compliance and to respond to any complaints made internally or through the Information Commissioner's Office.

7. REFERENCES

7.1 The College policies and guidelines which should be reviewed in conjunction with this policy include:

7.1.1 Data Protection Policy
7.1.2 Social Media Guidelines
7.1.3 Information Security Policy
7.1.4 Data Retention & Disposal Policy
7.1.5 Disciplinary ~~Procedure~~ Policy
7.1.6 Safeguarding Policy

7.2 Relevant legislation includes:

7.2.1 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000;
7.2.2 The Communications Act 2003;
7.2.3 Data Protection Act 2018/ UK General Data Protection Regulation/ Data Use and Access Act 2025
7.2.4 The Human Rights Act 1998;
7.2.5 The Defamation Act 2013 and the Equality Act 2010;
7.2.6 Malicious Communications Act 1988;
7.2.7 Computer Misuse Act 1990;
7.2.8 Freedom of Information Act 2000

8. COMPLAINTS

8.1 If Nottingham College does not supply the information requested, or the applicant is dissatisfied with the response received, or feels that a fee has been applied unfairly, they may ask for an internal review of decisions. The college has put a procedure in place for dealing with such requests which is notified to the requester in the response sent.

~~8.2~~ If an applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review with regard to a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act then contact should be made in writing to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO): https://ico.org.uk. ~~at the following address:~~

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