



FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Updated September 2017
Approved by the Principal

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 came into force on 1 January 2005.
- 1.2 It gives greater access to information held by all public organisations, local and central government, including schools, colleges and universities, and lets you find out more about what they do, how they arrive at decisions and how they spend public money.
- 1.3 The Act gives any person the right to ask for official information from public authorities.

2. Principles

- 2.1 We must deal with any request for information which may be held in our records, and which is not released as part of our routine business, in accordance with the Act. You may request any information we hold, regardless of how old it is. Information requested must be provided to you if we hold it, unless one of the exemptions in the Act applies.
- 2.2 Our publication scheme at Appendix A details the information we publish or must provide to the public on request. To make a request for other information, please see below.

3. Making a request

- 3.1 In order for your request to qualify under the Act, it must be made in writing. When you make your request, please provide your name, a means to contact you in writing (either your postal or email address), and details of the information you seek. A contact telephone number would also be helpful, in case we need to contact you to discuss your request. Please be as specific as possible about the information you are requesting. If your request is unclear or too general, we may need to contact you for further details, or may be unable to process your request.
- 3.2 Some information may be subject to exemptions that are written into the Act. This includes information that is 'reasonably accessible' elsewhere: for example, within the Publication Scheme or on the Big Creative Academy website. Some other examples of information that may be exempt are: information we intend to publish in the future (e.g. statistics); personal data about other people; and information we have obtained in confidence (e.g. from complainants).
- 3.3 There won't be any charge for supplying information. However, if your request is for a large amount of information, or for information which is difficult to extract, and it will cost more than the limits set out in the Act to provide it, we can refuse the request. Where cost is an issue, we will contact you so you can choose whether you wish to modify your request.

- 3.4 Usually our response to your request will be sent to you within 20 working days. It may take longer if we need to clarify your request or discuss costs with you, or if the information you have requested is exempt and we need more time to consider whether it is in the public interest to disclose it. If your request is delayed for any reason, we will keep you informed of how we are progressing and, as far as possible, give you an expected date for your response.
- 3.5 Requests must be made in writing to the Clerk to the Governing Body at the main Academy address.

APPENDIX A: PUBLICATION SCHEME

Eight main groups (and the classes within them) form the Publication Scheme for Big Creative Academy.

1. Governance

This section covers information relating to the way the institution is governed and how decisions are made. It includes information on the legal status of the institution, which individual member of staff or group within the organisation is responsible for specific functions and where they fit in the overall structure of the organisation. In some instances information from committee minutes will be exempt from disclosure where it contains personal information; information that may damage the commercial interests of the institution or that may threaten the health and safety of specific individuals.

- (a) Legal framework
- (b) How the institution is organised?
- (c) Information on the institutional context
- (d) Management structure

2. Financial Resources

This section covers information on the institution's strategy and management of financial resources. The Finance Division provides accounting, procurement and contracting services, helping to make best use of resources and fulfilling statutory responsibilities. Information that may damage the institution's commercial interests will be excluded from publication.

- (a) Finance
- (b) Resource Planning

3. Human Resources

This section covers information on the institution's strategy and management of human resources, rather than information relating to individual members of staff which is exempt from disclosure as personal information. The information available covers personnel policies and procedures (including terms and conditions of service including all current versions of the information specified in each class)

- (a) Employment and employee relations
- (b) Equal Opportunities/Diversity
- (c) Human Resources Strategy
- (d) Staff Development

4. Physical Resources

Institutions are often substantial land and property owners in their own right. Classes in this section cover information at a strategic level relating to the institution's management of its physical resources. Information that provides specific details of the institution's future plans to alter its estate (e.g. proposals to purchase additional property) may be exempt from disclosure where such disclosure would damage the institution's commercial interests.

- (a) Estates

5. Student Administration and Support

This section contains information on how the institution manages the administration and progression of their students from admission to course completion, including student support services. Information available within this section does not include specific student personal details, by virtue of being personal information.

- (a) Information on student admission, progression and completion
- (b) Student accommodation
- (c) Student administration
- (d) Student admission and enrolment
- (e) Student discipline
- (f) Student learning support services
- (g) Student liaison
- (h) Student policies
- (i) Student welfare
- (j) Student Associations and Activities

6. Information Services

This section covers those functions within the institution that provide access to information to the student body and both academic and administrative staff. These include libraries, computing services and information support services.

Such functions may be managed separately from each other, or in various combinations. These services routinely explain their facilities (and the conditions of their use) to students, staff and the general public, and it is information of this nature that is included within this section. Information services inevitably hold large quantities of personal data that are exempt from general disclosure.

- (a) Availability and conditions of use of facilities
- (b) Mission statements and related documents
- (c) Policies with regard to data and information
- (d) Procurement and disposal policies
- (e) Scope of collections held

7. Teaching and Learning

This section contains information regarding the management of teaching and learning within the institution including mechanisms for reviewing and ensuring the quality of teaching provided. (Institutions may be required to make available much of the information included within this section as part of the recommendations of the Information on quality and standards in higher education ('Cooke Report') see above.)

- (a) Academic year dates
- (b) Further course information
- (c) Information on internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards
- (d) Staffing structure of schools/department
- (e) Student assessment strategy
- (f) Tuition fees

8. External Relations

This section covers information relating to the institution's relationship with its external environment. These include the formal reports the institution is required to provide to its funding bodies, arrangements with other institutions, how it manages its relationship with the local community and how it retains contact with its former staff and students.

By virtue of its nature most institutions will probably find that the majority of these classes are already made available to the public in some means. Members of the public are also likely to find the same or related information is available from the external partners with which the institution has links.

- (a) Community liaison
- (b) Fundraising
- (c) Government and Regulator relations
- (d) Marketing and recruitment
- (e) Public relations