

BEDFORD COLLEGE

PUBLICATION

SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

1 Legal requirement

- 1.1 Adopting a publication scheme is a requirement of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This Act promotes greater openness and accountability across the public sector by requiring all 'public authorities' to make information available proactively, through a publication scheme.
- 1.2 'Public authorities' are defined in the Act and include universities, further education colleges and sixth form colleges.

2 What is a publication scheme?

- 2.1 A publication scheme is a document that describes the information a public authority 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 public authority's commitment to make available the information described.
- 2.2 A publication scheme must set out the classes, or categories, of information published. It must also make clear how the information described can be accessed and whether or not charges will be made.

3 The 'model' publication scheme for further education

- 3.1 Bedford 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 This model is designed for further education colleges and sixth form colleges across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The purpose of the model is to save colleges duplicating effort in producing individual schemes and to assist the public in accessing information from across the sector. However, to reflect the diversity in size and function of colleges, a number of optional classes of information are included. As a result, models within the sector will vary slightly. Any optional classes relevant to us have been included in our scheme.

4 Who we are

- 4.1 Bedford College, formerly the Bedford College of Higher Education, was established in 1958, to provide education and training to the community of Bedford and the surrounding area.

5 Accessing information covered by the publication scheme

5.1 The classes of information we publish are described in the second part of the scheme.

5.2 For each class we have indicated the manner in which the information described is available.

5.3 All information available from the College's website is available free of charge, and this is normally the case for whole documents available and requested to be sent by e-mail. A fee may be payable where extracts of an existing document are requested, or where for example an exemption exists which prevents disclosure of a complete document. A fee is charged for supplying paper-based information to defray the costs of retrieval, photocopying, postage and general administration. The fees are banded either:

- A - up to 10 sheets - £2
- B - 11 to 30 sheets - £5
- C - 31 to 50 sheets - £10

5.4 Where requests are for more complex pieces of information e.g more than 50 sheets, full-colour documents or for archived copies of documents which are not easily accessible or available on the web site, the fee will be available on application. In these cases please write, email or telephone the Freedom of Information Co-ordinator in the College who will let you know in advance the fee that will have to be paid.

5.5 To calculate the fee, add the cost for each document to the total. Where multiple items are required from a single entry, e.g. minutes, count the fee once for the number of copies requested. A few documents are available free of charge. Charges will be reviewed regularly.

5.6 In a few exceptional cases we require you to come to the College in person to view the information. This is mainly for technical reasons such as the information being supplied by a specialist database that cannot be viewed beyond College boundaries. These cases are clearly indicated against the entries.

5.7 To request paper based information (by post or email) or if you have a query with accessing any website information, please contact:

The Freedom of Information Co-Ordinator
Bedford College
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AH

5.8 Please note that the publication scheme relates to ‘published’ information. Therefore, material covered has already been prepared in a format ready for distribution.

6 What about information not covered by the publication scheme?

6.1 You have the right, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, to request other information held by us which we have not already made available through our publication scheme.

6.2 Requests will have to be made in writing and, in general, we will have 20 working days to respond. We may charge a fee, which will have to be calculated according to Fees Regulations.

6.3 We will not be required to release information for which an exemption in the Act legitimately applies. However, we may be required to explain to you why we are not releasing information and may also have to justify this to the Information Commissioner.

7 Feedback

7.1 It is important that this publication scheme meets your needs. If you find the scheme difficult to understand, please let us know. We also welcome suggestions as to how our scheme might be improved. Any questions, comments or complaints about this scheme should be sent in writing to:

The Freedom of Information Co-Ordinator
Bedford College
Cauldwell Street
Bedford
MK42 9AH

7.2 If we are unable to resolve any complaint, you can complain to the Information Commissioner, the independent body who oversees the Freedom of Information Act:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

8 Further information

8.1 More information about the Freedom of Information Act is available on the Information Commissioner’s website at:

www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

MAIN GROUPS OF CLASSES OF INFORMATION

- 1 GOVERNANCE
- 2 FINANCIAL RESOURCES
- 3 HUMAN RESOURCES
- 4 PHYSICAL RESOURCES
- 5 STUDENT ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORT
- 6 INFORMATION SERVICES
- 7 TEACHING AND LEARNING
- 8 EXTERNAL RELATIONS

1 Governance

Introduction

This section covers information relating to the way the College is governed and how decisions are made. It includes information on the legal status of the College, 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 College or that may threaten the health and safety of specific individuals.

	Class	Description	Format
1.1	Legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further and Higher Education Act 1992: Further Education Corporations' Instruments and Articles of Government Order 2001 	DfES website; Paper
1.2	College organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational structure charts 	Paper
1.3	Institutional context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission statement • Strategic Plan • Development Plan 	Paper Paper Paper
1.4	Management structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure, Membership & Terms of Reference of the Executive • Structure, Membership & Terms of Reference of the Academic Board • Corporation Structure Chart • Membership of the Corporation • Role & Person Specification for Corporation members • Committee Structure (Audit; Finance, Estates & Strategy; Human Resources; Search; Standards & Achievement; Remuneration; Corporate Governance) • Calendar of Board & Committee meetings • Corporation papers & minutes of Committee meetings • Minutes of Board meetings • Code of Ethics • Policy on Openness and Confidentiality • Search Committee papers & minutes • Corporation Standing Orders incorporating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a statement of policy on access to Corporation and committee meetings ➤ a statement of policy on the publication of the minutes of committee meetings 	Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Code of Conduct for Corporation members ➤ Procedure for the Selection of new Corporation members ➤ Disciplinary Rules & Procedure for Senior Postholders ➤ Terms of Reference of Board Committees • Register of Interests and Declaration of Members' Eligibility 	<p>Paper</p>
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2 Financial Resources

Introduction

This section covers information on the College's strategy and management of financial resources. Information that may damage the College's commercial interests will be excluded from publication.

	Class	Description	Format
2.1	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial regulations, including policy on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Procurement and contracting ➤ Income contracts ➤ Asset management ➤ Banking and treasury management ➤ Framework of financial authorities ➤ Staff travel and subsistence • Treasury policy • Staff expenses policy • Annual report and financial statements, including information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Staff pensions ➤ Staff remuneration ➤ Income and expenditure ➤ Capital spending • Budget holders' limits of authority 	<p>Paper; e-mail</p> <p>Paper; e-mail</p> <p>Paper; e-mail</p> <p>Paper; e-mail</p>
2.2	Resource planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic plan, incorporating development plan • 3 year financial plan, including annual revenue budget and financial objectives • Financial Regulations (budget planning and monitoring) • Accommodation Strategy 	<p>Paper; e-mail</p> <p>Paper; e-mail</p> <p>Paper; e-mail</p> <p>Paper</p>

3 Human Resources

Introduction

This section covers information on the College’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).

	Class	Description	Format
3.1	Employment and employee relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General terms and conditions of employment • Probation Procedure • Disciplinary Procedure • Harassment Procedure • Employee Assistance Programme • Current vacancies 	Paper; e-mail Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper; website
3.2	Equal Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal Opportunities Policy 	Paper
3.3	Staff Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and Development Policy 	Paper

4 Physical Resources

Introduction

Classes in this section cover information at a strategic level relating to the College's management of its physical resources. Information that provides specific details of the College's future plans to alter its estate (eg proposals to purchase additional property) may be exempt from disclosure where such disclosure would damage the College's commercial interests.

	Class	Description	Format
4.1	Estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodation Strategy • List of trading locations • Estate Plan • Site Maps • Environmental Policy 	Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper

5 Student Administration and Support

Introduction

This section contains information on how the College 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.

	Class	Description	Format
5.1	Information on student admission, progression and completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Admissions policy • Admissions procedures • Equal opportunities policy • Equal opportunities statement • Equal opportunities monitoring data • Funding guidance for further education • Retention, achievement and success information • Exams procedures 	Paper Paper Paper, incl large print Paper, website Paper Paper, LSC website Paper Paper
5.2	Student accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaflet on finding accommodation • Leaflet on homelessness • Accommodation list 	Paper Paper Paper
5.3	Student administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding guidance for further education • Student data administration procedures • Student data guidance for academic staff 	Paper, LSC website Paper; email Paper
5.4	Student admission and enrolment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enquiries and Guidance Statement of Service • Admissions Policy • Admissions Procedures • UCAS Procedures (incoming applications) • Funding guidance for further education • Student data administration procedures • Fees and charges policy • Fees and charges regulations 	Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper, LSC website Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email
5.5	Student discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disciplinary procedure • Code of conduct • Student Handbook • Complaints procedure ('Have Your Say') • Grievance procedure 	Paper; email Paper; email Paper, incl large print Paper; email Paper; email

5.6	Student learning support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional support leaflets • Additional support policy • Key skills policy • Basic skills policy • Learning difficulties and disabilities policy • Home tuition policy • Disability statement • Tutorial policy and entitlement • Skills policy • UCAS procedures (outgoing applications) 	<p>Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; website Paper; email Paper; email Paper</p>
5.7	Student liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student council constitution • Student council leaflet 	<p>Paper; email Paper; email</p>
5.8	Student policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Charter • Substance misuse policy • Child protection guidelines 	<p>Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email</p>
5.9	Student welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Handbook • Student Support Fund criteria • Student Support Fund leaflet • Counselling policy • Careers education & guidance policy • Enrichment programme • Information for students on careers, counselling and finance issues 	<p>Paper, incl large print Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email Paper; email</p>
5.10	Student associations and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrichment programme • Student Council terms of Reference 	<p>Paper; email Paper; email</p>

6 Information Services

Introduction

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

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.

	Class	Description	Format
6.1	Availability and conditions of use of facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception opening hours • Learning Resource Centre opening hours • Computer Centre (W5) opening hours • Smoking Policy • Staff Code of Practice for Use of IT Facilities • Student IT Code of Practice • Library and Resources Centre Code of Conduct 	Paper; e-mail Paper; e-mail Paper; e-mail Paper; e-mail Paper; e-mail Paper; e-mail
6.2	Mission statements and related documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ILT Strategy 	Paper; e-mail
6.3	Policies with regard to data and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection Security • Retention Policy 	Paper; e-mail Paper; e-mail
6.4	Procurement and disposal policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Regulations • ILT Strategy 	Paper; e-mail Paper; e-mail
6.5	Scope of collections held	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage Library System 	View by appointment

7 Teaching and Learning

Introduction

This section contains information regarding the management of teaching and learning within the College including mechanisms for reviewing and ensuring the quality of teaching provided.

	Class	Description	Format
7.1	Academic year dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • College Calendar 	Paper, e-mail
7.2	Further course information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Time Prospectus • Part Time Prospectus • Course Leaflets • Application Pack 	Paper, audio, website Paper, audio Paper Paper
7.3	Information on internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Approval Forms • Teaching & Learning Strategy • Curriculum Policy • Individual Learning Plan • Student Surveys • Accessibility audit • Quality Policies & Procedures • Course Review • Teacher Observation Scheme • Self Assessment Report 	Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper Paper
7.4	Staffing structure of teaching centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management Structure • Course Team Lists 	Paper Paper
7.5	Student assessment strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment policy • Tutorial policy 	Paper Paper
7.6	Tuition fees and other charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information for home,EU and international students • Fees policy and regulations 	Paper, website Paper

8 External Relations

Introduction

This section covers information relating to the College’s relationship with its external environment. These include the formal reports the College 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.

Members of the public are also likely to find the same or related information is available from the external partners with which the College has links.

	Class	Description	Format
8.1	Government and Regulator relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection Reports (OFSTED, ALI and LSC) • LSC Provider Performance Review • Annual Report and Financial Statements 	Paper Paper Paper
8.2	Marketing and recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Time Prospectus • Part Time Prospectus 	Paper, audio, website Paper, audio
8.3	Public relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press releases • Full Time Prospectus • Part Time Prospectus • Course Leaflets 	Paper Paper, audio, website Paper, audio Paper