

Freedom of Information Policy

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 ('the Act') gives the right of access to information held by the City of Liverpool College. Any person who makes a request for information is entitled to be informed in writing whether the information is held as stated in the request; and to have information the public authority holds relating to the request communicated to them.

A request to The College for recorded information will be treated as a request under the Act, other than information given out as part of routine business, for example, standard responses to general enquiries; a request for environmental information; or the requester's own personal data.

2 Initial Assessment

2.1 Valid FOIs must be:

- In writing (via letter, email, web)
- Include the requestor's name. Requests can be made on behalf of an individual or organisation.
- Include a return address for correspondence (i.e., Postal address, email address)
- Describe the information requested. The requestor does not need to specify the exact document, if they describe the information they are requesting.

Requests can be electronically sent to FOI@liv-coll.ac.uk or mailed to the college at the following address:

The City of Liverpool College
Arts Centre
Myrtle Street
Liverpool
L7 7JA

The College acknowledges the obligation to resolve invalid requests. If an invalid request is received, the college will contact the requestor with an explanation of information that is missing to process the request.

3 Vexatious or Repeated Requests

- 3.1 The College can refuse to comply with a request that is vexatious. To assess whether a request falls within this category, The College will consider the context and history of a request. This can include the identity of the requestor and the previous contact with them; however, it is the request that The College would refuse in these cases, not the requestor. Further requests from the same requestor would be assessed individually. Repeated requests for the same information will not be accepted if they have been previously refused.

The decision to refuse a request on this basis would follow a series of requests and correspondence, signalling a disproportionate level of distress, disruption, or irritation.

- 3.2 If it is necessary to refuse a request, The College will issue a refusal notice within 20 working days of initially receiving the request. The notice will contain an explanation of the reasons for refusal and the complaints procedure. The requestor will also be made aware of their right to complain to the ICO and how to do this.

4 Responding to Requests

- 4.1 Once a request has been received The College will provide the required information with twenty working days (this does not include weekends or bank holidays).
- 4.2 The College will first determine whether the information is held. If the requested information is not held by The College, this will be communicated to the requestor within twenty working days. If it is believed that the requested information is held by a different public body, the requestor will be made aware of this so they can redirect their request.
- 4.3 In response to valid FOI requests, The College will confirm whether the information is held and provide the information requested. However, in some circumstances the college may not be able to provide the information requested, even if it is held due to conflict with other legislation (e.g., GDPR). In circumstances where even confirming whether the information is held would conflict with other legislation, The College will neither confirm nor deny whether it is held in line with section 21 in Part II of FOIA.
- 4.4 Costs for processing the FOI, will be calculated in line with the FOIA. If a request would exceed the cost limit, The College may choose to refuse the request. Under Section 10(2) of the FOIA, the period between issuing a “fees notice” and receiving payment, is not included in the 20 working-day period in which The College must respond to the request.

5 Publication Scheme

5.1 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.

In October 2008, The City of Liverpool College 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 the Information Commissioner expects colleges of further education to make available.

The model publication scheme can be found here: <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1153/model-publication-scheme.pdf>

In addition to the model scheme, organisations are obliged to produce a guide to the specific information held under each class of information identified in the scheme, please see Appendix A for the College's Publication Scheme. This guide is not an exclusive list of information that can be requested.

6 Appeals

6.1 Each requestor retains the right to complain following their request. Appeals may be about the range, amount, and format of information we have sent following a request. You can also appeal about the way a request was managed (e.g., the time it took to respond, or the way letters were worded).

6.2 Appeals should be sent to either FOI@liv-coll.ac.uk or to

The City of Liverpool College
Arts Centre
Myrtle Street
Liverpool
L7 7JA

6.3 Appeals should contain the reference number provided by The College in previous correspondence. The appeals process involves a formal review of the College's response by a senior manager to the original request. You will receive a formal reply detailing our decision within twenty working days.

6.4 The outcome of the review will be one of the following:

- i) To uphold The College's original response, with an explanation as to why The College believes the request was fulfilled
- ii) Where it is evident an appropriate response was not provided, in compliance with the Act, or provide a high quality, timely service and make any necessary corrections, apologise and where appropriate, provide you with the information requested.

6.5 If the College is unable to resolve appeals, these can be sent to the Information Commissioner's Office at the following address:

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

7 Appendix A

Classes of Information	Information	Availability
Who we are and what we do	Articles of Government Organisational Structure Gender Pay Gap Reporting Contracts Student Union Procurement and Tender Report	Online/College Website/By Request Articles of Government Gender Pay Gap Reporting
What we spend and how we spend it	Financial Audit Reports Allowances and Expenses Pay and Grading Structures Register of Suppliers Budget Reports	Online/College Website/By Request Financial Audit Reporting
What our priorities are and how we are doing	Annual Report Strategic Plan OFSTED Reports	Online/College Website/By Request Annual Report Strategic Plan Ofsted Report
How we make decisions	Minutes of Board Meetings	Online/College Website/By Request Board Meeting Minutes
Our policies and procedures	Policies and Procedures relating to academic & student services, Human Resources, and the corporation	Online/College Website/By Request College Policies
Lists and registers	Public registers and registers held as public records	Online/College Website/By Request
The services we offer	Course content Course fees Prospectus	Online/College Website/By Request College Courses