

Freedom of Information Policy 2023-2026

If you require a copy of this Policy in any other format, please contact enquiries@tcg.ac.uk with your specific accessible requirements and we will send you a modified copy.

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Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. How to access information	3
3. Freedom of Information Scheme Charging Procedure	3
4. Contact and Complaints.....	5
Appendix 1 – Publication scheme	6
Appendix 2 – Freedom of Information Request Form	15

External References:

- A. <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/definition-documents-2021/4018868/dd-colleges-of-further-education-20211029.pdf>
- B. <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents>
- C. <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>
- D. <https://trafford.ac.uk/corporate-information/data-protection-information-requests/>
- E. <https://stockport.ac.uk/corporate-information/data-protection-information-requests/>
- F. <https://cheadle.ac.uk/corporate-information/data-protection-information-requests/>
- G. <https://marple.ac.uk/corporate-information/data-protection-information-requests/>
- H. <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1227/definition-document-museums.pdf>

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides public access to information held by public authorities. It does this in two ways:
 - public authorities are obliged to publish certain information about their activities; and
 - members of the public are entitled to request information from public authorities.
- 1.2 Trafford College Group (TCG or the Group) as a Further Education Corporation is considered a public authority and has adopted the model publication scheme. This publication scheme commits TCG to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. Details of what is included in this scheme can be found on the Information Commissioners website at the link provided at reference A on page 2.
- 1.3 As well as responding to requests for information, the Group publishes information proactively. Our commitment to the scheme ensures that we publish information on our website such as policies and procedures, minutes of meetings, annual reports and financial information in line with the model publication scheme.
- 1.4 Further detail on what we publish under the model publication scheme can be found at Appendix 1.

2. How to access information

- 2.1 TCG will make available via its websites (references provided on page 2) information it holds whether or not listed in the Guide to the Publication Scheme unless identified as not available under one of the exemptions provided for by the legislation.
- 2.2 Other documents are only available in hard copy and will be provided on request. A Freedom of Information Request Form is provided at Appendix 2 and attached to this document. If you cannot make your request in writing because of a disability, please contact us and we will help you to make the request another way - for example over the phone.

3. Freedom of Information Scheme Charging Procedure

- 3.1 Fees will only be applicable in cases where TCG incurs a direct cost to produce the information. Charges made by TCG for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum. In the following circumstances, a fee will not be charged: -
 - Information that is available on the website;
 - Information that is available and can be emailed; and
 - Information that is routinely made available.

- 3.2 Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament. Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as: -
- Photocopying;
 - Postage and packaging; and
 - The costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information.
- 3.3 TCG will consider each request and may either waive its right to charge or, if it is considered necessary for a charge to be levied, will adhere to the charges outlined in below.

Postage

- Postage at standard second class postage rate
- Courier charges incurred by TCG

Photocopying

- A4 Black and white £0.10 per sheet
- A3 Black and white £0.20 per sheet
- A4 Colour print £0.25 per sheet
- A3 Colour print £0.50 per sheet

- 3.4 A charge may also be made in the following circumstances: -
- The need to charge in order to guarantee the continued collection and publication of the information;
 - Where information has been collected and analysed for commercial purposes and where this has required professional time and skill; and
 - Information which is normally made available on commercial terms as part of the authority's trading activities.
- 3.5 In the above cases charged would be based on the cost incurred by TCG (excluding staff costs). Where TCG needs to recover research fees for retrieving archived material then the cost will be based on the actual staff rate.
- 3.6 Charges are subject to a periodic review.
- 3.7 The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (the Fees Regulations) govern TCG's ability to charge for information requests under the above acts. The regulations detail the requirements placed upon public bodies on what is considered appropriate for them to charge for requests, made under the Freedom of Information and the Data Protection Acts.
- 3.8 Full details of the regulations can be found using the website link provided reference B on page 2. In summary, TCG is allowed to charge a fee for providing information in response to a Freedom of Information Act 2000 request, and the fee must be determined in accordance with the Fees Regulations.
- 3.9 TCG does not have to comply with a request for information if the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit, as set out in the Fees Regulations. The appropriate limit for the Group is £450.

3.10 TCG must still confirm or deny whether it holds the information requested, unless the cost of this alone would exceed the appropriate limit. In estimating whether complying with a request would exceed the appropriate limit, TCG can only take into account the costs it reasonably expects to incur in: -

- Determining whether it holds the information;
- Locating the information, or a document containing it;
- Retrieving the information, or a document containing it; and
- Extracting the information from a document containing it.

4. Contact and Complaints

4.1 The contact for requests for documents, questions, comments or complaints about this policy or the publication scheme is: -

Data Protection Officer
The Trafford College Group
Manchester Road
West Timperley
Altrincham
WA14 5PR
Tel 0161 886 7070

Email: Data Protection Officer DPO@tcg.ac.uk

4.2 If TCG is unable to resolve a complaint, enquirers have the right to complain to the Office of the Information Commissioner, the independent body that regulates the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

4.3 For more detail on how to complain follow the link provided at reference C on page 2 or alternatively send your complaint to:

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

Appendix 1 – Publication scheme

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
Class 1 – Who we are and what we do				
Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts				
1.1	Legal framework, Instrument and Articles of Government	Legislation concerning the corporate status of FE corporations, in particular and the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 is publicly available, and also contained within the Corporation's financial statements.	Any of the Group's websites	Corporation Secretary
1.2	Organisational Structure	Information on who the Governors are is available alongside information concerning the Executive and Leadership team including roles and names.	Any of the Group's websites	Corporation Secretary
		The structure, membership and description of the Board of the Corporation and its committees is also available.	Any of the Group's websites	Corporation Secretary
		Organisational structures can be provided upon request.	Available on request	Director of HR and Performance
1.3	Gender Pay Gap Reporting	The Group is required to publish its Gender pay Gap report by 30 th March each year based on the snapshot date of 31 st March in the preceding year	Any of the Group's websites	Director of HR and Performance
1.4	Lists of and information relating to organisations you work in partnership with and any companies you wholly or partially own	All subcontracting arrangement are included within the Subcontracting Procedure. Any companies that are wholly or partially owned are contained within the financial statements, which are publicly available. Other employers and partners the Group works with can be made available on request.	Any of the Group's websites Available on request	Chief Finance Officer Assistant Principal: Adults and Employer Engagement
1.5	Location and contact details	All information relating to each campus is included within that campus' website. Information can also be found	Any of the Group's websites	Director of Marketing and External Relations

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
1.6	Student activities	Information relating to the operation and activities of the students is provided within the Student Life section of the website, tailored to each campus	Any of the Group's websites	Director of Marketing and External Relations
Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it				
Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit. Make available your financial information for the current and previous two financial years, as a minimum.				
2.1	Funding or income	Information on the sources of funding and income, such as funding grants, tuition fees, endowment, rents and investment income (including investment strategy), as well as income generation schemes.	Financial Statements available on any of the Group's websites	Director of Finance
2.2	Budgetary and account information	Annual statement of accounts and other information to allow the public to see where you are spending money or planning to spend it and the difference between the two. Include revenue budgets and budgets for capital expenditure to be included.	Financial Statements available on any of the Group's websites	Director of Finance
2.3	Expenditure	Details of items of expenditure over £15,000, including costs, supplier and transaction information. Publish this at least annually or, if practical for you to do so, on a quarterly or six-monthly interval.	Hard copy can be provided on request	Director of Finance
2.4	Financial audit reports	Audit reports prepared by third parties cannot be published or shared without their express permission. Statements of internal control included within the financial statements along with details of audit concluded in the financial year	Only shared with the express permission of the third party	Director of Finance
2.5	Capital programme	Information on major plans for capital expenditure, including any private finance initiative and public or private partnership contracts.	Capital commitments included within the Financial Statements	Director of Finance
2.6	Financial regulations and procedures	The financial regulations are available on request	A copy can be emailed on request	Director of Finance
2.7	Staff pay and grading structures	As a minimum, include the details of senior staff salaries in bands of £5,000. For all other posts, identify levels of pay by salary range.	Included within the Financial Statements	Director of Finance

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
2.8	Staff allowances and expenses	Details of the allowances and expenses that can be incurred or claimed. Include the total of the allowances and expenses paid to individual senior staff members by reference to categories. Produce this information in line with your policies, practices and procedures. As a minimum, include travel, subsistence and accommodation.	A copy can be emailed on request	Director of HR and Performance
2.9	Governors' allowances	Details of allowances or expenses that can be claimed or incurred, and a record of total payments made to individual governors.	A copy can be emailed on request	Corporation Secretary
2.10	Register of suppliers	Procurement and tender procedures and reports, and contracts. Provide details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services and details of contracts that have gone through a formal tendering process.	A copy can be emailed on request	Director of Finance
2.11	TU facility time reporting	As a public sector employer, you must report and publish information on facility time for your employees who are trade union representatives	Included within the Financial Statements,	Director of HR and Performance
<p>Class 3 – What our priorities are and how we are doing</p> <p>Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews. Make information in this class available for at least the current and previous three years.</p>				
3.1	Annual report	Information, or a direct link to publicly available information	Available on request	Director of Marketing and External Relations
3.2	Self-assessment report	Self-Assessment Report validated and approved by Governors	Available on request.	Director of Quality, Performance & Standards
3.3	Corporate and business plans		Strategic Plan available on any of the Group's websites.	Director of Quality, Performance & Standards
3.4	Teaching and learning strategy	Information, or a direct link to publicly available information, on your internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards and qualitative data on the quality and standards of learning and teaching	Excellence in Teaching and Learning Strategy available on request	Director of Quality, Performance & Standards

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
3.5	Academic quality and standards	Information, or a direct link to publicly available information, on your internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards and qualitative data on the quality and standards of learning and teaching	Quality Assurance Policy available on request	Director of Quality, Performance & Standards
3.6	Most recent Ofsted, Estyn or Education and Training Inspectorate inspection report	Information, or a direct link to publicly available information	Available on request	Director of Quality, Performance & Standards
3.7	Exam and assessment results	Information, or a direct link to publicly available information	Available on request and a link provided on all of the Group's websites	Assistant Principal: Planning, funding and Performance
3.8	Performance tables	Direct link to publicly available information	Available on request	Assistant Principal: Planning, Funding and Performance
3.9	Data Protection impact assessments or any other impact assessment as appropriate and relevant	Health & Safety Impact Assessment, Equality Impact Assessments etc (in full or summary format)	Available on request	Data Protection Officer
3.10	Quality assurance procedures	Information, or a direct link to publicly available information, on your internal procedures for assuring academic quality and standards and qualitative data on the quality and standards of learning and teaching	Quality Assurance Policy available on request	Director of Quality, Performance & Standards
3.11	External review information	Include information such as the annual monitoring and review process together with a statement of roles, responsibilities and authority of different bodies within your institution involved in programme approval and review.	Available on request	Director of Quality, Performance & Standards
3.12	Corporate relations	Information relating to your links with employers and sponsors, in both the public and private sectors, and the development of learning programmes.	Available on request	Assistant Principal: Adults and Employer Engagement

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
3.13	Government and regulatory reports	Provide details about accreditation and monitoring reports by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies and information that you are legally obliged to make available to funding and /or monitoring bodies.	Information can be available on request.	Corporation Secretary
Class 4 – How we make decisions				
Decision making processes and records of decisions. Make information in this class available for at least the current and previous three years.				
4.1	Minutes, agendas and papers from the governing body, council, academic boards, steering groups and committees.	Provide minutes of meetings where you made key decisions about the operation of the college. Include information such as teaching and learning committee minutes, minutes of staff or student consultation meetings and appointment committees. Exclude material that is properly considered to be exempt from disclosure.	All non-confidential minutes are available on any of the Group's websites	Corporation Secretary
Class 5 – Our policies and procedures				
Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering our services and responsibilities				
5.1	Policies and procedures for conducting college business	Include codes of practice, memoranda of understanding, procedural rules, standing orders and similar information. Include procedures for handling requests for information.	Available on any of the Group's websites	Corporation Secretary
5.2	Welsh Language standards (Wales only)	Include details of how you comply with the requirements of either the Welsh Language Act 1993 or the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011, or both.	Not applicable	Director of Marketing and External Relations
5.3	Procedures and policies relating to academic services	Include policies such as policies and procedures relating to changing course, student assessment, appeals and breach of assessment regulations.	Available on request	Director of Quality, Performance & Standards
5.4	Procedures and policies relating to student services	Include relevant policies and procedures about student admission and registration, and accommodation.	Available on any of the Group's websites	Assistant Principal: Student Engagement & Support

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
		<p>Include relevant policies and procedures about management of the student records system</p> <p>Include relevant policies and procedures about internal student complaints and appeals, student support services and code of student discipline.</p>		<p>Director of Quality, Performance & Standards</p> <p>Assistant Principal: Planning, Funding and Performance</p>
5.5	Group policies and other documents	Include policies such as your behaviour, anti-bullying, valued and ethos etc policies. As a minimum, include policies, procedures and documents that you are required to have by statute, by your funding agreement or equivalent.	Available on any of the Group's websites	Assistant Principal: Student Experience and Support
5.6	Procedures and policies relating to human resources	Include the full range of human resources policies and procedures such as generic terms and conditions of employment, collective bargaining and consultation with trade unions, grievance, disciplinary, harassment and bullying, public interest disclosure, staff development (such as induction, probation, appraisal, promotions).	Available on request	Director of HR and Performance
5.7	Pay policy	The statement of your policy and procedures regarding staff pay.	Available on request	Director of HR and Performance
5.8	Procedures and policies relating to recruitment	Make details of current vacancies readily available, if they are advertised as part of recruitment policies.	Available on any of the Group's websites	Director of HR and Performance
5.9	Code of Conduct for members of governing bodies		Available on any of the Group's websites	Corporation Secretary
5.10	Equality and Diversity policies, Equality Scheme	Include policies, schemes, statements, procedures and guidelines relating to your commitment to the promotion and advancement of equal opportunities, including details of your compliance with the public sector equality duty.	Available on any of the Group's websites	Director of HR and Performance
5.11	Health and safety	Health and Safety Policy including Health and Safety Charter	Available on any of the Group's websites	Head of Health & Safety

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
5.12	Estate management	Include estates strategy and plan, facilities management policies, grounds and building maintenance.	Available on request	Director of Premises
5.13	Complaints policies and procedures	Include those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme.	Available on any of the Group's websites	Chief Financial Officer
5.14	Records management, personal data and access to information policies	Include information security policies, file plans, records retention and archive policies, and data protection (including data sharing and CCTV usage) policies.	Available on request	Assistant Principal: Planning, funding and Performance / Director of IT and Digital
5.15	Charging regimes and policies	Provide details of any statutory charging regimes. Include charging policies about charges made for information routinely published. Clearly state what costs you are recovering, the basis on which you make them, and how they are calculated.	Available on any of the Group's websites	Chief Financial Officer
Class 6 – Lists and registers				
Only information contained in currently maintained lists and registers.				
6.1	Register of Interests	Any information you are currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers	Available on request	Corporation Secretary
6.2	Asset registers	Make the location of public land and building assets that is normally recorded on an asset register available, along with some other information from capital asset registers, if you hold such registers.	Available on request	Chief Financial Officer
6.3	Information asset register	Make the location of key attribute information available.	Available on request	Chief Financial Officer
6.4	CCTV	Details of the locations of any overt CCTV surveillance cameras operated by you or on your behalf. You should decide on the level of detail which is appropriate. This could be by building or more general geographic locations e.g., postcodes or partial postcodes, depending on the security issues raised.	CCTV is in operation on all campuses. Details can be provided on request	Director of Premises

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
6.5	Disclosure logs	If you produce a disclosure log indicating the information provided in response to FOIA and EIR requests, make it readily available. Disclosure logs are recommended as good practice.	Available on request	Data Protection Officer
6.6	Any register of interests you keep		Available on request	Corporation Secretary
6.7	Senior staff declaration of interests	Include the names, departments and job titles of all senior staff who have made entries.	Available on request	Corporation Secretary
6.8	Register of gifts and hospitality provided to senior staff	Include details of gifts given or received and details of any hospitality afforded by which organisation.	Available on request	Corporation Secretary
<p>Class 7 – The services we offer</p> <p>Information about the services you offer, including leaflets, guidance and newsletters. Generally, this is an extension of part of the first class of information. While the first class provides information on your roles and responsibilities, this class includes details of the services you provide as a result of them. It may also relate to information covered in other classes.</p>				
7.1	Prospectus and course content	We prepare prospectuses for adult learners and school leavers	Tailored to each of the Group's websites Hard copies available on request	Director of Marketing and External Relations
7.2	Services for outside bodies		Available on Request	Director of Finance
7.3	Health, including medical services	The Groupe does not directly provide health or medical services	n/a	n/a
7.4	Welfare and counselling services	Support available to students, available on the website and on request	Tailored to each of the Group's websites Hard copies available on request	Assistant Principal: Student Experience & Support

Ref	Class	Information to be published	How the information can be obtained	Responsibility
7.5	Funding, such as grants and bursaries, available to students from the college	Included on the website along with forms to complete	Tailored to each of the Group's websites Hard copies available on request	Assistant Principal: Student Experience & Support
7.6	Careers advice and careers programme information	Policy and information available on the website or on request	Tailored to each of the Group's websites Hard copies available on request	Assistant Principal: Adults & Employer Engagement
7.7	Chaplaincy services and multi-faith provision	Support we provide for students, available on the website or on request	Procedures for using the multi-faith room is available on request	Assistant Principal: Student Experience & Support
7.8	Services for which you are entitled to recover a fee together with those fees	Information about available services and fees can be obtained from Customer Services, who will direct enquiries to the appropriate department. This will include courses, gymnasium, restaurant and health spa services as applicable.	Available from Customer Services	Assistant Principal: Student Experience and Support
7.9	Sports and recreational facilities	Information about sports facilities including the Sports Hall and Astroturf can be obtained from the Director of Premises.	Available on request	Director of Premises
7.10	Conference facilities	Availability of resources suitable for hire by external conferences including classrooms, demonstration theatre and other spaces can be verified with the Director of Premises. Information on facilities for bookable restaurant and similar events is obtainable from the Curriculum Leader for Hospitality.	We don't currently offer this service Available on request.	Director of Premises Head of Studies Hospitality & Catering
7.11	Media releases	Media releases are made available on the College's website.	Website news section	Director of Marketing
7.12	Facilities relating to music, art and other cultural activities	All information about the facilities available for activities can be obtained from the Director of Premises.	We don't currently offer this service	Director of Premises

Appendix 2 – Freedom of Information Request Form

You can ask for any information you choose, at any time, but you may not always succeed in getting it. Before you make a request, it may help to consider the following questions.

Is the information you want already available, for example, on our website?

We must make certain information routinely available. You can find out what information is available by checking the authority's publication scheme or guide to information. Do this by looking at our website or by contacting us.

Is the information you want your own personal data?

If your request is for information about yourself, such as your student or employee records, you should make a [subject access request](#) under the Data Protection Act.

Is the Group likely to have the information?

It may save you time if you check with us whether we are likely to have the information you want. For example, you may not be sure whether the information you want is held by your Local Council or the Group. Public authorities must give reasonable advice and assistance to anyone asking for information, so you should feel free to ask for help in making your request.

Is the information you want suitable for general publication?

The aim of the Freedom of Information Act is to make information available to the general public. You can only obtain information that would be given to anybody who asked for it or would be suitable for the general public to see.

If you have explored these options and still want to put in a request for information under the Freedom of information Act, please complete the following form.

Your name / your business name:	
Contact address, including post code:	
Preferred telephone contact number:	
Email address:	
Please indicate your preferred method of contact:	Letter / telephone / email
Please provide details of your request here and feel free to append any relevant documentation:	

What happens next

Send your form to DPO@tcg.ac.uk or send by post to:

Data Protection Officer
The Trafford College Group
Manchester Road
West Timperley
Altrincham
WA14 5PR

We must reply to you within 20 working days. The response may:

- give you the information you've asked for;
- tell you we don't have the information;
- tell you that another authority holds the information or transfer the request on your behalf;
- under the Freedom of Information Act, say that we have the information and offer to provide it if you pay us a fee;
- under the Environmental Information Regulations, make a reasonable charge for providing information in accordance with our published schedule of charges.;
- refuse to give you the information, and explain why; or,
 - under the Freedom of Information Act, say that we need more time to consider the public interest in disclosing or withholding the information, and tell you when to expect a response. This should not be later than 40 working days after the date of your request. We can only extend the time limit in certain circumstances, and we must explain why we think the information may be exempt;
 - under the Environmental Information Regulations, say that we need more time as the information requested is particularly complex and there is a lot of information to provide. In such cases the time limit can be extended by a further 20 working days as long as we respond within the initial time limit stating when we believe we will be able to respond in full.