

**FREEDOM OF  
INFORMATION POLICY**

# Freedom of Information Policy

**Policy Owner:** Resources Committee  
**Date Approved:** 12 December 2024  
**Next Review:** November 2027  
**Responsibility for Review:** Vice Principal Corporate Services  
**Policy Review Frequency:** 3 yearly

Applicable to staff: Yes/~~No~~

Applicable to students: Yes/~~No~~

Publish on College website: Yes/~~No~~

**Consultation:**

Undertaken with:	Yes/No:	Date:
Committee/Board	Board Resources	12 December 2024 28 November 2024
ELT		
SLT		
Unions		
Students		
Employees		
Employers/Stakeholders		

**Any Associated Documentation, for Reference:**

**ELT SIGN-OFF:** Iain Stott, Vice Principal Corporate Services



## **Freedom of Information Policy**

The Freedom of Information Act gives the public a general right of access to information held by colleges (and other public authorities).

This Policy sets out how the College will meet its obligations under the Act. The Corporation Board has overall responsibility for the Policy and for ensuring that it is complied with.

### **Policy Statement**

The College is committed to being open and honest in the conduct of its operations and in complying fully with the Freedom of Information Act. To this end the College will:

- Be open with the general public and the media and will place in the public domain as much information about its activities as is practicable and, subject to the exemptions permitted under the Act, will make all other information available on request.
- Establish records management organisations, structures and procedures which meet the requirements of the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) Code of Practice on the Management of Records.
- Deal with all requests for information in accordance with the ICO Code of Practice.

There will be occasions when the College will not be able to supply all the information requested. Information will only be withheld in accordance with the exemptions laid down in the Act, and in particular those concerning:

- The College's duties under the UK Data Protection Act 2018 to keep confidential sensitive information about individual members of staff and students.
- Other legal and contractual obligations; or
- Material detrimental to the safe and efficient conduct of the College's operations or which is commercially sensitive.
- On such occasions the College will always state the reasons why information has been withheld.

### **Publication Scheme**

The Model Publication Scheme and definition document provided by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for Further Education Colleges and other public authorities has been adopted by Preston College.

The Publication Scheme is a complete guide to the information routinely published by Preston College. It describes the information about Preston College and our activities that we make publicly available. We shall review the Scheme at regular intervals and monitor how it is operating.

The Model Publication Scheme provides a list of the information routinely published by colleges which the ICO expects them to make available unless:

- They do not hold the information

- The information is exempt under one of the FOI exemptions or Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) exceptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute
- The information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible; or, it would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for routine release

The Model Publication Scheme and definition document for further education colleges can be downloaded by following the links from [Publication schemes: a guide | ICO](#)  
Under this publication scheme, the College commits to:

- Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including: environmental information, performance data, finances, strategic planning, the Governing body, which is held by the College and falls within the classifications below;
- Specify the information which is held by the College and falls within the classifications below;
- Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this publication scheme;
- Produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public;
- Review and update on a regular basis the information the College makes available under this publication scheme;
- Produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available;
- Make this publication scheme available to the public;
- Publish any dataset held by the College that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless the College is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so; to publish the dataset, where reasonably practicable, in an electronic form that is capable of re-use; and, if any information in the dataset is a relevant copyright work and the College is the only owner, to make the information available for re-use under the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, if they apply, and otherwise under the terms of section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The terms 'dataset' and 'relevant copyright work' are defined in sections 11(5) and 19(8) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 respectively.

## Classes of information

Information that **is available** under this publication scheme includes:

- **Who we are and what we do:** Organisational information, locations and contacts, information on constitutional and legal governance;
- **What we spend and how we spend it:** Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement and contracts;
- **What our priorities are and how we are doing:** Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments, inspections and reviews;
- **How we make decisions:** Policy proposals and decisions, decision-making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations;
- **Our policies and procedures:** Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities;
- **Lists and registers:** Information held in registers required by law and other lists

- and registers relating to the functions of the College; and
- **The services we offer:** Advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases. A description of the services offered.

The classes of information under this publication scheme **will not generally include:**

- Information the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons

Information covered by this publication scheme will, as far as possible, be published on the College's website: [www.preston.ac.uk](http://www.preston.ac.uk). Where this is impracticable, or if you do not wish to access the information via the College's website, information covered by this publication scheme can also be obtained by contacting our Data Protection Officer via [foi@preston.ac.uk](mailto:foi@preston.ac.uk) (including where you are unable to access the College's website or where the information is required in an alternative format which is appropriate having regard to any disability of the requestor).

Requested information under this publication scheme will ordinarily be delivered electronically, but paper copies can also be provided upon request. Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required. Where the College is legally required to translate any information, the College will do so.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this publication scheme.

## **Rights of Access to Information**

Information held by the College that is not published under the publication scheme can be requested in writing, to the addresses below, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

The College is obliged to respond in writing within 30 working days to specific requests from any individual. You can expect the college, in its response, to: state whether it holds information of the type requested and if it does, subject to certain exemptions (including Data Protection principles), communicate it to you.

You may make a request for information regarding Preston College, in writing, by e-mail or by letter to:

**Data Protection Officer**  
e-mail: [foi@preston.ac.uk](mailto:foi@preston.ac.uk)  
Preston College  
St Vincent's Road  
Preston  
Lancashire  
PR2 8UR

## **Charges for information**

The College may make a reasonable charge for information for actual disbursement incurred such as photocopying, postage and packaging. If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.