



*Ali porta civitatis sum scientia et*

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# Public Information Policy

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**Reviewed and  
Approved by  
Academic  
Board July  
2014**

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This policy available on ECHE's website  
Revised: July 2014  
Review: July 2016

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European College for Higher Education is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

This Policy applies to all College programmes except those for which the applicable policy is that of a validating Higher Education institution or other Awarding Body.

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments. Equality Impact Assessments are carried out to see whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on grounds of race, gender, disability, age, religion/belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity or sexual orientation.

We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of the policy.

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

Academic Committee:

Tel: 0208 800 1200

Email: [admin@eche.co.uk](mailto:admin@eche.co.uk)

## **Equality Impact Assessed:**

## **Footnote**

**In an effort to keep costs to a minimum a conscious decision has been made not to print out this document and it would be appreciated that you refer to the copy and relevant Appendices available on our website [www.eche.co.uk](http://www.eche.co.uk).**

## Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 imposes a number of obligations on the College, and provides the public with a general entitlement to all information held by the College, subject to certain exemptions. Members of the public have a statutory right:

- a. As from 29<sup>th</sup> July 2014, to obtain (either from the College's website or in some other form) all the information covered by the College's Publication Scheme;
- b. As from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014, to request all information held by the College, regardless of when it was created, by whom, or the form in which it is recorded, subject to certain exemptions. European College takes its responsibilities with regard to the management of the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 seriously. This document provides the policy framework through which this effective management can be achieved and audited. It covers:

1. Scope of the policy
2. Responsibilities
3. Relationship with existing policies
4. Available Guidance
5. The College's Publication Scheme
6. Specific Requests for Information
7. Charges
8. Complaints
9. Exemptions
10. Contacts

### 1. Scope and purpose of the Policy

The policy applies to all the information created, received and maintained by staff and officers of the College. The information can be held in all types of media, but usually will be either paper or electronic. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 are adhered to and in particular that:

- a significant amount of routinely published information about the College is made available to the public as a matter of course through the Publication Scheme;
- other information not included in the Publication Scheme is readily available on request and such a request is dealt with in a timely manner; and in cases where information is covered by an exemption, consideration is given as to whether or not the information should be released.

### 2. Responsibilities

The College recognises its corporate responsibility under the Act to provide a general right of access to information held. The Senior Officer with overall responsibility for this policy is the Senior Bursar.

### 3. Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been formulated with reference to the context of the College Data Protection Policy.

#### 4. Available Guidance

Guidance on the procedures necessary to comply with this Policy is available from the College Archivist or within the Staff Handbook.

#### 5. The College's Publication Scheme

The College's Publication Scheme is available on the web at <http://www.eche.co.uk> or in hard copy by request. The Publication specifies:

- What information the College makes routinely available to the public as a matter of course
- How it will do so, and whether or not this information is made available free of charge or on payment of a fee.

#### 6. Specific Requests for Information

Information not already made available in the College's Publication will be accessible from 1st September 2013 through a specific request for information. In this regard the Freedom of Information Act establishes two related rights:

- the right to be told whether information exists, and
- the right to receive the information (subject to exemptions)

These rights can be exercised by anyone - natural or legal persons, worldwide. These specific requests for information not listed in the Publication Scheme will be dealt with by the Freedom of Information Officer. Any request must be made in a permanent form (for example in writing or by e-mail) and include a contact address. A charge may be made for dealing with any request. Requestors will not be entitled to information to which any of the exemptions in the Act apply. However, only those specific pieces of information to which the exemption applies will be withheld, and information covered by an exemption will be subject to review. The College must respond to any request within 20 working days although further reasonable details can be requested in order to identify and locate the information. If a fee is required, the period of 20 working days is extended by up to 3 months until the fee is paid.

#### 7. Charges

Unless otherwise specified information made available through the College's Publication will be free of charge, except for any copying and postage expenses. The College may however charge an appropriate fee for dealing with a specific request for information not listed in the publication scheme. This charge will be calculated according to the published 'Fees Regulations'.

#### 8. Complaints

The Freedom of Information Officer will coordinate any complaints received in respect of this policy.

<b>Public Information Policy</b>	
Policy Ref: ECHE 2014	
Version Number	2.0
Version Date	July 2014
Name of Developer/Reviewer	Raza Shah
Policy Owner (College/Centre/Unit)	Academic Committee, Directors of the College.
Person responsible for implementation (postholder)	Directors of College
Approving Committee/Board	Committee
Date approved	July 2014
Effective from	July 2014
Dissemination method (e.g. website)	College website
Review Frequency	2 years
Reviewing Committee	Academic Committee, Directors of the College
Consultation History (individuals/groups consulted with dates)	Drafts of the policy have been considered by: Directors of college Academic Committee