

# Freedom of Information Policy

Please read this procedure document in conjunction with the Publication Scheme.

## Introduction

This document explains the procedure for requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

## How to Request Information under the Freedom of Information Act

If you require hard copies of any of the documents within the Publication Scheme, please contact the Company Secretary at:

Address: United Learning, Worldwide House, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, PE3 6SB

Email: [FOI@unitedlearning.org.uk](mailto:FOI@unitedlearning.org.uk)

To help us process your request quickly please clearly mark any correspondence '**PUBLICATION SCHEME REQUEST**' (in CAPITALS please)

All requests should:

- Be in writing (including email or fax)
- State the enquirers name and contact details.
- Describe the information requested so that it is clearly identifiable.
- Not be covered by other legislation (e.g. data protection or environmental information)
- If the information you are looking for is not available via the publication scheme or on our website please contact us on the details above to ask if we hold the information.
- Verbal requests are not covered under the FOIA.
- Enquiries will be dealt with within 20 working days (or 60 days whichever is shorter). If this deadline cannot be met ULT will inform the enquirer.

## Non-Disclosure of Requested Information

Information will not be disclosed if one or more of the following applies:

- An exemption to disclosure;
- The information sought is not held
- Requests are considered vexatious or repeated.
- The cost of compliance exceeds the statutory threshold (£450)

If the cost of compliance exceeds the statutory threshold and you would like to refine your request, we would be happy to discuss this with you.

If we do not disclose the information requested we will explain which exemption we have applied and the reasons why the exemption is applicable.

## Exemptions

There are 2 general categories for exemptions:

- Absolute – where there is no obligation to confirm or deny the information is held, disclose the information or consider the public interest test.
- Qualified – where, even if an exemption applies, there is a duty to consider the public interest test.

## Applying the Public Interest Test

Once it has been established that a qualified exemption applies to a request, ULT will apply the public interest test to establish whether the public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.

It is worth noting that what is in the public interest may not be the same as that which may be of interest to the public.

Factors taken into account when weighing up public interest include but are not limited to:

For Disclosure	Against Disclosure
Is the disclosure likely to increase access to information held by the school	Is disclosure likely to distort public reporting or be misleading because it is incomplete?
Is disclosure likely to give the reasons for a decision or allow individuals to understand decisions affecting their lives or assist them in challenging those decisions?	Is premature disclosure likely to prejudice fair scrutiny, or release sensitive issues still on the internal agenda or evolving?
Is disclosure likely to improve the accountability and transparency of the academy in the use of funds and help show that it obtains value for money?	Is disclosure likely to cause unnecessary public alarm or confusion?
Is disclosure likely to contribute to public debate and assist the understanding of existing or proposed policy?	Is disclosure likely to seriously jeopardise the academy's legal or contractual position?
Is disclosure likely to increase public participation in decision making?	Is disclosure likely to infringe other legislation?
Is disclosure likely to increase public participation in political processes in general?	Is disclosure likely to create a controversial precedent on the release of information or impair your ability to obtain information in the future?
Is disclosure likely to bring to light information affecting public safety?	Is disclosure likely to adversely affect the schools proper functioning and discourage openness in expressing opinions?
Is disclosure likely to reduce further enquiries on the topic?	If a large amount of information on the topic has already been made available, would further disclosure shed any more light or serve any useful purpose?

## Comments and Complaints

We welcome comments and suggestions you may have about the scheme. If you want to make any comments about the publication scheme or if you require further assistance or wish to make a complaint this should be addressed to: **The Company Secretary, United Learning, Worldwide House, Thorpe Wood, Peterborough, PE3 6SB**

If you are not satisfied with the assistance that you get or if we have not been able to resolve your complaint and you feel that a formal complaint needs to be made then this should be addressed to the Information Commissioners Office. They can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF  
Tel 0303 123 1113. Website <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>