



**BRIDGWATER  
& TAUNTON  
COLLEGE**

# **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY**

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Date:	May 2022
Review date:	May 2023

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) imposes a number of obligations on public authorities, which for these purposes includes Bridgwater & Taunton College, to provide the public with wide rights of access to the College's records. This policy describes the ways in which the College is complying with the FOIA.

## **2. POLICY STATEMENT**

The College is committed to being open and honest in the conduct of its operations and to comply fully with the FOIA

## **3. SCOPE**

The Policy applies to all staff, students and members of the public who wish to exercise their right to access to College records. This policy should be read with reference to the Bridgwater & Taunton College Data Protection Policy and Procedure.

## **4. POLICY**

### **4.1 Publication scheme**

The College has adopted the model publication scheme [Scheme] developed by the Information Commissioner's Office and can be found at <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1153/model-publication-scheme.pdf>. The Scheme describes the information that a public authority publishes, or intends to publish. The Scheme is not a list of the actual publications, because this will change as new materials are published or existing material is revised. It is, however, the College's commitment to make available the information described. The College will make available information it holds whether or not listed in the Scheme unless identified as not available under Exemptions section below.

### **4.2 Accessing information**

Requests for information should be made to [FOI@btc.ac.uk](mailto:FOI@btc.ac.uk) or made in writing to:

Director of Finance & Estates  
Bridgwater & Taunton College  
Bridgwater Campus  
Bath Road  
Bridgwater  
TA6 4PZ

### **4.3 Timescales**

The College will respond to any requests for information in accordance with the FOIA's requirement of 20 working days. In cases where there is an absolute exemption or other qualified exemption for not releasing the information the requestor will be informed of the reasons in writing within the 20 working day limit.

#### 4.4 Exemptions

There will be occasions when the College will not be able to supply all the information requested in accordance as follows:

- The information is not held.
- The information is exempt under of the FOIA's exemptions, or its release is prohibited under another statute.
- The information is readily and publicly available from an external website to which we have already provided a direct link.
- The information is archived, out of date or otherwise inaccessible.
- It would be impractical or resource-intensive to prepare the material for the release.

On such occasions the College will always state the reasons why the information has been withheld.

#### 4.5 Costs for information requests

For most requests the College will issue no charges. However, where the quantity of work required to satisfy the request exceeds reasonable limits the College will either refuse to provide the information or charge for its collation. The College will however consult with the requestor to discuss our decision and reasons. The College will also offer advice on how the request could be modified to avoid charges or refusal. For more information on charges and the reasons for their application please see the ICO's guidance note

[https://ico.org.uk/media/1635/fees\\_cost\\_of\\_compliance\\_exceeds\\_appropriate\\_limit.pdf](https://ico.org.uk/media/1635/fees_cost_of_compliance_exceeds_appropriate_limit.pdf)

#### 4.6 Complaints

If the matter cannot be resolved by the Director of Finance & Estates, a formal complaint should be made following the College's Complaint procedure, please see <https://www.btc.ac.uk/the-college/about-us/complaints/>.

If the College is unable to resolve the complaint, the requestor can complain to the Information Commissioner, the independent body who oversees the FOIA, at

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