

# Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme

## Introduction

The United Learning Trust is committed to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and to the principles of accountability and the general rights of access to information, subject to legal exemptions. This policy outlines our response to the FOIA and the framework for managing requests.

## Background

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 for all schools. From 1<sup>st</sup> January 2011 all Academies will also be included. Under the Act, any person has a legal right to ask for information held by the United Learning Trust (ULT). They are entitled to be told whether ULT holds the information, and to receive a copy, subject to certain exemptions.

All information that ULT routinely makes available to the public is included in the Publication Scheme. Requests for other information should be dealt with in accordance with the statutory guidance. While the Act assumes openness, it recognises that certain information is sensitive. There are exemptions to protect this information. The Act is fully retrospective, any past records which ULT holds are included. ULT fully complies with the Retention Schedule produced by the Records Management Society of Great Britain, details are found in our Record Management and Retention Policy. It is an offence to wilfully conceal, damage or destroy information in order to avoid responding to an enquiry.

Requests for information can be made to any member of staff, staff need to be aware of the procedure to forward all requests to the Company Secretary immediately. Requests must be in writing (including email), and should include the enquirers name and address and state what information they require. They do not have to mention the FOIA or why they want the information. ULT has a duty to respond to each request appropriately within 20 days or within 60 days if the request is made during the school holidays. Please refer to the Freedom of Information Procedure for information on the process upon receiving a request.

## Obligations and Duties

ULT recognises its duty to:

- Provide advice and assistance to anyone requesting information.
- Tell enquirers whether or not we hold the information they are requesting (the duty to confirm or deny), and provide access to the information we hold in accordance with the ULT Freedom of Information Procedures.

## United Learning Trust Publication Scheme

The ULT Publication Scheme contains all information available under the FOIA. The Publication Scheme sets out the following:

- The classes of information which we publish or intend to publish;
- The manner in which the information will be published;
- Whether the information is available free of charge or on payment.

The scheme covers information already published and information which is to be published in the future. The Publication Scheme and the materials it covers will be readily available in hard copy from ULT. It is also available on the ULT and Academies' websites.

This publication scheme conforms to the model scheme for Academies approved by the Information Commissioner.

## Dealing with Requests

All requests will be responded to in accordance with the ULT Freedom of Information Procedure.

## Exemptions

Certain information is subject to either absolute or qualified exemptions. Details can be found in the ULT Freedom of Information Procedure. When we wish to apply a qualified exemption to a request we will invoke the public interest test procedures to determine if public interest in applying the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. ULT will maintain a register of requests where we have refused to supply information and the reasons for the refusal. Information will be retained for 5 years.

## Public Interest Test

Unless it is in the public interest to withhold information, it has to be released. ULT will apply the Public Interest Test before any qualified exemptions are applied.

Information on applying the Public Interest Test is available in the ULT Freedom of Information Procedure.

## Charging

We reserve the right to refuse to supply information where the cost of doing so exceeds the current statutory maximum of £450.

Information published on the ULT and Academies websites is free although you may incur costs from an internet service provider. If you do not have access to the internet, you can access our websites using a local library or internet cafe.

## Postage and Copying

Where the cost of postage, printing or photocopying is below £10, we will not make a charge. Where it is over £10, the first £10 will be free of charge; after that, we will charge the full estimated cost of postage and copying. Before we produce the information we will tell you how much it will cost. If you decide not to pay, then we will not release the information.

If you decide to refine the request so it reduces the cost of, say, copying we are happy to discuss that with you.

## Classes of Information Currently Published

Who Are We and What Do We Do - organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

Description	Availability HC (Hard Copy) W (Website)
Who's who in the Academy	HC and some academy websites
Governing body members and the basis of their appointment	HC and some academy websites
Instrument of Government	HC and some academy websites
Contact details of the Principal and governing body	HC and W
School Prospectus	HC and most academy websites
Senior staff structure	HC and some academy websites

School session times and term dates	HC and most academy websites
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What We Spend and How We Spend It – current and previous year financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit

Description	Availability
Annual budget plan and financial statements	HC and the Charity Commission website <a href="http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk">www.charity-commission.gov.uk</a>
Capitalised Funding	HC and the Department for Education <a href="http://www.education.gov.uk">www.education.gov.uk</a>
Additional funding	HC
Procurement and projects	HC
Pay policy	HC
Staff grading and structure	HC

Our Priorities – strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews

Description	Availability
School Profile Government supplied performance data Latest Ofsted report	HC and some academy websites, also available at <a href="http://www.ofsted.gov.uk">www.ofsted.gov.uk</a>
Performance management policy and procedure	HC and some academy websites
Schools future plans	HC
Safeguarding policies and procedures	HC

Decision Making – processes and records for last 3 years

Description	Availability
Admissions policy and decisions (not individual decisions)	HC and most academy websites
Governing body meeting agendas	HC
Governing body meeting minutes (excluding information properly regarded as private to the meetings)	HC

Policies and Procedures – current written protocols, policies and procedures

Description	Availability
<b>School Policies</b>	
Charging and Remissions Policy	HC and most academy websites
Health and Safety Policy	HC and most academy websites
Complaints Procedure	HC and most academy websites
Staff Conduct Policy	HC and most academy websites
Discipline and Grievance Policy	HC and most academy websites
Freedom of Information Policy and Procedure	HC and W
Equal Opportunities Policy	HC and most academy websites

Recruitment and Selection Policy	HC and most academy websites
<b>Pupil and Curriculum Policies</b>	
Home School Agreement	HC and most academy websites
Curriculum Policy	HC and most academy websites
Sex Education Policy	HC and most academy websites
Special Educational Needs Policy	HC and most academy websites
Accessibility Policy	HC and most academy websites
Race Equality Policy	HC and most academy websites
Collective Worship Policy	HC and most academy websites
Career Education Policy	HC and most academy websites
Pupil discipline Policy	HC and most academy websites
<b>Records Management and Personal Data Policies</b>	
Information security Policies	HC
Records Retention Policy	HC
Data Protection Policy	HC
<b>Charging Regimes and Policies</b>	

Lists and Registers – currently maintained only

<b>Description</b>	<b>Availability</b>
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	HC
Disclosure logs	HC
Asset register	HC

Services – services we offer including leaflets, guidance and newsletters

<b>Description</b>	<b>Availability</b>
Extra-curricular activities	HC and most academy websites
Out of school clubs	HC and most academy websites
School Publications	HC and most academy websites
Leaflets and books	HC and most academy websites
Newsletters	HC and most academy websites

## 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, Fairline House, Nene Valley Business Park, Oundle, Peterborough, PE8 4HN.**

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:** 01625 545700

**Web:** [www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk)