

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PUBLICATION SCHEME 2024-2026

PART ONE: About the Publication Scheme

1. Legal requirement

- 1.1. Adopting a publication scheme is a requirement of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This Act promotes greater openness and accountability across the public sector by requiring all public authorities to make information available proactively, through a publication scheme.
- 1.2. Public authorities are defined in the Act and include universities, further education colleges and sixth form colleges.

2. What is a publication scheme?

- 2.1. A publication scheme is a document which describes the information a public authority publishes, or intends to publish. In this context, 'publish' means to make information available, routinely. These descriptions are called 'classes of information'. The scheme is not a list of the actual publications, because this will change as new material is published or existing material revised. It is, however, the Group's commitment to make available the information described.
- 2.2. A publication scheme must set out the classes, or categories, of information published. It must also make clear how the information described can be accessed and whether or not charges will be made. In all circumstances where the Group reserves the right to make a charge, this may be waived where the time and work involved in providing the information is not significant.

3. The 'model' publication scheme for further education

- 3.1. The Group has adopted the model publication scheme developed for the Further Education sector and is therefore committed to publishing the information it describes. It is based on good practice guidance issued by the Information Commissioner's Office.
- 3.2. This model is designed for further education colleges and sixth form colleges across England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The purpose of the model is to save institutions duplicating effort in producing individual schemes and to assist the public in accessing information from across the sector. However, to reflect the diversity in size and function of institution, a number of optional classes of information are included.

4. Who we are

- 4.1. On 1st August 2017 the South Thames Colleges Group was created through the merger of Carshalton College, Kingston College and South Thames College. The Group is led by the Senior Leadership Team comprising the Principal & Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and College Principals.
- 4.2. Carshalton College is situated in the London Borough of Sutton, in the heart of Carshalton, close to Sutton and Croydon. Kingston College is situated in Kingston town centre, in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames. Merton College is situated in the London Borough of Merton, not far from Modern Underground Station. South Thames College is situated in the heart of the London Borough of Wandsworth, opposite

Wandsworth Town Hall.

4.3. The Group's mission statement:

"To achieve the ambitions of more students and partners than ever before".

4.4. The Group strategic objectives were reviewed and amended for 2023-2024. Further details can be found on the Group and individual College websites.

5. Accessing information covered by the publication scheme

The classes of information we publish are described in the second part of the scheme. To request information which is not already published on either Group website, please contact:

- Fol@stcg.ac.uk

6. What about information not covered by the publication scheme?

6.1. Under the Freedom of Information Act you can request any information held by a public authority that it has not already made available through its publication scheme. Exceptions to this are personal and sensitive data/information covered by the UK General Data Protection Regulation (the UK GDPR) or the Data Protection Act 2018 (the DPA 2018) and information that is subject to an exemption under the Freedom of Information Act. However, public authorities may be required to explain to the applicant why they are not releasing information and they may also have to justify this to the Information Commissioner.

6.2. Requests must be made in writing and, in general, public authorities have 20 working days to respond. Under the Freedom of Information Act, Further Education Colleges are subject to the same response times as schools i.e. if a request is received during college holidays, the response timeline of 20 days starts from the next official working day. If the request requires significant resource to collate the information required, we reserve the right to charge a fee, which will be calculated according to Fees Regulations. Where fees are warranted, the Group will advise the applicant accordingly.

7. Feedback

7.1. It is important that this publication scheme meets your needs. If you find the scheme difficult to understand, please let us know. We also welcome suggestions as to how our scheme might be improved. Any questions, comments or complaints about this scheme should be sent in writing to:

- Vice-Principal Quality & Digital Innovation, Quality & Learning Services, South Thames Colleges Group, Kingston Hall Road, Kingston Upon Thames KT1 2AQ

7.2. If we are unable to resolve any complaint, you can complain to the Information Commissioner, the independent body who oversees the Freedom of Information Act:

Customer Contact Department, Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire, SK9 5AF

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More information about the Freedom of Information Act is available on the Information Commissioner's website at: <https://ico.org.uk/>

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PART TWO: Publication Scheme for Further Education

In some instances information will be exempt from disclosure where it contains personal information; information that may damage the commercial interests of the Group or that may threaten the health and safety of specific individuals. This list is compliant with the Information Commission Model Publication Scheme [Definition document for colleges of further education](#) v4. 2021

Class	Description	Source Email / Paper / College Website / Internet Websites	Fee Y/N
1. Who are we and what we do			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal framework 	The corporate status of the Group Corporation is conferred by the relevant statutes, in particular the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.	HMSO Website Further & Higher Education Act 1992	N
	Every educational institution (University, Further or Higher Education College) has a legal basis, which forms its legal status. The College Corporation's legal status is derived from the Instruments and Articles of Government.	South Thames Colleges Group Instruments & Articles of Governance	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational Structure 	Organisation Chart	Email	N
	Governance arrangements	Email	N
	Governing Body	South Thames Colleges website - Meet Our Governors	N
	Senior Team Structure	Email	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender Pay Gap Reporting 	From 2017, if you are an employer who has a headcount of 250 or more on you must comply with regulations on gender pay gap reporting. Gender pay gap calculations are based on employer payroll data drawn from a specific date each year.	Gender Pay Gap Service	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations with whom the Group works in partnership and any companies wholly or partially owned by the Group 	Business and community organisations	Paper	Y
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Location and contact details 	Postal and email addresses	South Thames Colleges website	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student activities 	Operation and activities of the Student Union or its equivalent and other clubs.	Email	N

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2. What we spend and how we spend it			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Information for current and previous two financial years 	Funding or income	Email	N
	Annual Accounts	South Thames Colleges Group website - Governance	N
	Expenditure over £15,000	Email	N
	Financial Audit Reports	Audit Committee minutes	N
	Information about Capital Programmes	Email	N
	Property Strategy	Email	N
	Financial Regulations including Procurement Procedures	Email	N
	Staff Pay and Grading Structures	Email	N
	Staff allowances and expenses	Email	N
	Governors' allowances	Email	N
	Register of Suppliers	Email	N
	Contracts	Email	N
	Remuneration of Senior Staff	Email	N
	Trade Union facility time reporting	Email	N
3. What our priorities are and how we are doing			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporation and Business Plans 	Annual Report	South Thames Colleges Group website - Governance	N
	College Strategic Plan	South Thames Colleges Group website	N
	Self-Assessment Report	Email	N
	Teaching, learning and assessment policy	South Thames Colleges Group - Policies & Procedures	N
	Academic quality and standards	Email	N
	Ofsted reports	Ofsted website - Find an inspection report	N
	Exam and assessment results	Email	N
	Performance Tables	Compare the performance of schools and colleges in England	N
	Data Protection impact assessments or any other impact assessment (e.g. Health & Safety, Equality Impact) as appropriate or relevant	Email	N
	Quality assurance procedures	Email	N

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> External Review Information 	Board Minutes	South Thames Colleges website - Governance	
	Ofsted Reports	Ofsted website - Find an inspection report	N
	Other External Review Reports (HE, British Council, etc)	Email	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Relations 	Links with Stakeholders	Paper	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government and Regulatory Reports 	Internal and Financial Statements Audit Reports (Exec Summaries)	South Thames Colleges website - Governance	N
4. How we make decisions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board / Committee Minutes and other Groups 	Agendas and Public Minutes of Full Corporation Meetings	South Thames Colleges website - Governance	N
	Agendas and Public Minutes of Corporation Committees	South Thames Colleges website - Governance	N
	Staff and student consultation meetings	Email	N
	Quality Committees	South Thames Colleges website - Governance	N
	Safeguarding Committee Meeting Minutes	Email	N
	Students' Union Meeting Minutes	Email	N
5. Policies, procedures and other supporting documentation			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and procedures for conducting college Business/General 		South Thames Colleges Group - Policies & Procedures	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures and Policies relating to Academic services 	Full range of policies relating to academic services. Examples include: Assessment and IV Policy, English & maths Policy and Procedure,	South Thames Colleges Group - Policies & Procedures	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procedures and Policies relating to Student services 	Full range of policies relating to student services. Examples include: Admissions Policy, Attendance, Behaviour and Commitment to Study (ABC), Complaints, Compliments and Feedback Policy, Student Code of Conduct, Undergraduate Admissions Policy, Withdrawing Undergraduate Student Fee Policy	South Thames Colleges Group - Policies & Procedures	N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and other documents 	Full range of policies relating to student services. Examples include: Fees Policy, General Data Protection Policy, Children Looked After Care Leavers Policy, Information Security Policy, Safeguarding Policies,	South Thames Colleges Group - Policies & Procedures	N

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• Procedures and Policies relating to Human Resources	Full range of policies relating to staff.	Email	N
• Procedures and Policies relating to Pay	Full range of policies relating to pay	Email	N
• Procedures and Policies relating to Recruitment	Recruitment and Retention Policy	Email	N
• Code of Conduct for Members of the Governing Body	Governor Handbook	Code of Conduct for South Thames Colleges Group Governors	N
• Estate Management	Full range of policies relating to Estates.	Email	N
• Complaints Policies and Procedures	Complaints Policy and Procedure	South Thames Colleges Group - Policies & Procedures	N
• Records Management and Personal Data Policies	Data Protection Policy Freedom of Information Publication Scheme	South Thames Colleges Group - Policies & Procedures	N N
• Procedures and Policies relating to Finance	Full range of policies relating to finance	Email	N
6. Lists and Registers			
• Lists and Registers	Corporation members' Register of Interests	Email	N
	College Asset Register	Email	N
	CCTV locations	Email	N
	Senior staff declaration of interests	Email	N
	Register of gifts and hospitality provided to senior staff	Email	
• Disclosure Logs	Freedom of Information Disclosure Logs	Email	N
7. The Services We Offer			
• Facilities	College Sites	South Thames Colleges website	N
	Hairdressing & Beauty Therapy Salons	South Thames Colleges website	N
	Sports and Recreational Facilities	South Thames Colleges website	N
• Student Services / Marketing & Student Recruitment	Health Advice to enrolled students	South Thames Colleges website	N
	Welfare and counselling services to enrolled students	South Thames Colleges website	N
	Information Advice and Guidance and careers programme to enrolled students, and information on course choices to prospective students	South Thames Colleges website	N
	Funding, such as grants and bursaries, available to students	South Thames Colleges website	N
	Learning Resource Centres	South Thames Colleges website	N
	Prospectus, course content and media releases	South Thames Colleges website	N

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