

Public Information Policy

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External reference points:	External audience and students

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1 Introduction

The Public Information Policy identifies the principles and mechanisms by which the College ensures that all there is full oversight and management of all information published by the College for its stakeholders.

2 Purpose

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that control measures are in place for the information that is published in relation to the College's Higher Education (HE) provision and associated services. The College's public information will enable internal and external audiences to form an accurate impression of the College and make informed decisions. This policy should ensure that the College publishes information which is:

2.1.1 Accurate

2.1.2 Fit for purpose

2.1.3 Trustworthy

2.1.4 Transparent and open

2.1.5 Timely and up to date

2.1.6 Accessible

2.1.7 Legally compliant

3 Scope

This policy covers information published in electronic or printed form, which includes information about the College's academic programmes, services, corporate strategy, staff recruitment, advertisements, and policies.

This policy does not cover letters, verbal communication, presentations, financial statements, audit documentation, or teaching and learning materials used at the College.

4 Aims and Objectives

4.1 To ensure that accurate, relevant, and timely information about the college is available to the public. This aim recognises the importance of providing clear and accessible information to stakeholders, including prospective students, current students, staff, alumni, donors, and members of the wider community. By establishing clear guidelines and procedures for the dissemination of information, the college can help to build trust, confidence, and engagement among its stakeholders.

- 4.2** To promote transparency and accountability in the college's operations and decision-making processes. This aim recognises the importance of openness and honesty in building and maintaining public trust. By providing clear and comprehensive information about the college's policies, procedures, and activities, the college can demonstrate its commitment to responsible governance and ethical conduct.
- 4.3** To protect the privacy and confidentiality of individuals and sensitive information. This aim recognises the importance of safeguarding personal and confidential information, including student records, personnel files, and financial information. By establishing clear policies and procedures for the handling and sharing of information, the college can help to ensure that individuals' rights are respected and that sensitive information is protected from unauthorised access or disclosure.

5 Policy Main Body

5.1 Public Information Policy

The Public Information Policy is required to ensure that all public information communicated by the College complies with relevant policies and legislation including the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) Freedom of Information Act 2000, Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988, the Consumer Rights Act 2015, and the CMA guidance on consumer's rights.

The types of public information covered includes:

- 5.1.1 College guides
- 5.1.2 Website
- 5.1.3 Official social media channels
- 5.1.4 Student information including handbooks, enrolment materials and progression guidance
- 5.1.5 Public institutional information, including the College's Strategic Plan

5.2 Responsibility Structure

The Head of Access Participation and Marketing is ultimately responsible for leading implementation of the Public Information Policy. The following marketing materials are directly managed by the The Head of Access Participation and Marketing:

- 5.2.1 Online and traditional advertising
- 5.2.2 Public relations with both traditional and online media outlets
- 5.2.3 Marketing collateral (including course guides)
- 5.2.4 College-wide social media channels
- 5.2.5 Website content (excluding course outlines)

6 The College Website

6.1 Uses of the website

The OBC website, www.obc.ac.uk, is the first point of contact for many prospective students and the most effective marketing tool of the College.

6.2 The website enables the College:

6.2.1 To promote ourselves to prospective students

6.2.2 To inform prospective students about the College, the courses and its locations

6.2.3 To keep existing students and other stakeholders up to date with developments at the College

The website provides prospective students with access to information about all College campuses, key policies and procedures as well as pre-arrival guidance with local information, academic courses, details of programmes, qualification, methods of teaching and learning, accreditations, entry criteria and College facilities.

6.3 Management of the website

The Marketing Department is responsible for the upkeep of the website. This responsibility includes accuracy of all information, site management and optimisation of the website for marketing purposes. This will ensure that the website has a high profile on search engines. A report with the number of hits and visitors on the website is every quarterly meeting.

6.4 Updating the website

For good housekeeping and ensuring the site is up to date, The Head of Access Participation and Marketing is responsible for ensuring that all material published in the public domain is accurate, timely and reliable. To mitigate the risk of inaccurate information being published, any stakeholder wishing to upload new information on the website, will e-mail the information to The Head of Access Participation and Marketing. After checking and reviewing the content with relevant senior managers, The Head of Access Participation and Marketing will authorise relevant changes to website content and ensure they are implemented. Contents and suggestions for the website are also discussed in the Corporate and Planning Board meeting. Updates of the website are overseen quarterly by the Access Participation and Marketing Committee.

6.5 Marketing materials

Marketing materials are used to promote all the College's programmes in an accurate and transparent manner. The materials that are designed must provide information on the content of the courses offered and possibilities for progression after completing a course. They must enable prospective students to make informed decisions about what they wish to study. Marketing may also include testimonials from students or College Alumni. The content of all marketing material must be checked for accuracy on a weekly basis by staff who report directly to The Head of Access Participation and Marketing. All the process or monitoring, reviewing,

developing, and updating of marketing materials is overseen by the Access Participation and Marketing Committee.

7 Induction Pack and Handbooks

7.1 Induction

Students are provided with pre-arrival packs, College terms & conditions and course contents with offer letters and in response to admissions enquiries.

Students receive an induction pack, a general handbook on their first day at the College and a specific handbook related to their programme of study. In the beginning of every term or semester, students receive their course details, timetable, and study plan containing information about the modules they are taking and the details of assessments.

7.2 Handbooks

The relevant handbook, timetable and study plan is updated every term/semester by the Head of each Programme.

7.3 Transparency

The College aims to be transparent about the information provided to students and prospective students. The College encourages students to read and understand the terms and conditions of their course. To make sure that students go through this documentation, they are asked to sign a declaration, or learning agreement once they have done so. Notice Boards

7.4 Physical notice boards

The College has a number of notice boards in each campus. Where possible, the College uses digital notice boards. Notice boards are used in order to keep students updated with ongoing activities at the College. Staff in each campus must report to The Access Participation and Marketing committee on their use of notice boards in their respective campuses.

7.5 Open Door Policy

Staff at the College have an open-door policy which means that student can approach staff at any time by phone, email or in-person and staff will arrange a time to see them if they are unavailable at that time.

8 Enquiries of Non-Academic Issues

Student Support and Welfare Officers in each campus are a point of contact for students to attain any non-academic assistance or support from the College such as health, learning difficulties, housing, transport, or social activities.