



# Freedom of Information Policy

<b>Policy Code:</b>	IT2
<b>Policy Start Date:</b>	July 2024
<b>Policy Review Date:</b>	July 2025



**Statement of intent**

As an educational provider, all sites with CIT have an obligation to publish a Freedom of Information statement, outlining how we will meet our duties under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and associated regulations. The development and effective implementation of this policy fulfils that requirement.

More specifically, this policy outlines our school's/Trust's policy and procedures for:

- The release and publication of private data and public records;
- Providing applicants with advice and assistance throughout the duration of their requests.

It also clarifies our position regarding the appropriate limit to the costs incurred by the school/Trust in obtaining any requested information, and on charging fees for its provision.

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- 3.9 Requests for information that is not recorded by the school/Trust (e.g. requests for explanations, clarification of policy and comments on the school's/Trust's business) will not be considered valid requests. In these cases, the applicant will be provided with an explanation of why their request will not be treated under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the school/Trust will respond to the applicant through other channels as appropriate.
- 3.10 The information provided to the applicant will be in the format that they have requested, where possible.
- 3.11 Where it is not possible to provide the information in the requested format, the school/Trust will assist the applicant by discussing alternative formats in which it can be provided.
- 3.12 The information provided will also be in the language in which it is held, or another language that is legally required.
- 3.13 If, under relevant disability and discrimination regulations, the school/Trust is legally obliged to provide the information in other forms and formats, it will do so.
- 3.14 In some cases, a request may be dealt with under more than one access regime, e.g. if the request involves both information about the school/Trust and personal information, it will be dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 3.15 Staff are made aware that it is a criminal offence to alter, deface, block, erase, destroy or conceal any information held by the school/Trust with the intention of preventing disclosure following a request.

#### **4. The appropriate limit**

- 4.1 The school/Trust will not comply with any freedom of information request that exceeds the statutorily imposed appropriate limit of £450.
- 4.2 When determining whether the cost of complying with a freedom of information request is within the appropriate limit, the school/Trust will take account only of the costs we reasonably expect to incur in relation to:

Determining whether it holds the information;  
Locating the information, or a document which may contain the information;  
Retrieving the information, or a document which may contain the information;  
Extracting the information from a document containing it;  
Costs related to the time spent by any person undertaking any of the activities outlined in section 4.2 of this policy on behalf of the school/Trust, are to be estimated at a rate of £25 per person per hour.

- 4.3 The school/Trust is not required to search4.3



The provision to the applicant of a digest, or summary of the information, in permanent form or in another form acceptable to the applicant.

- 6.2 Where a preference is not stated by the applicant, the school/Trust will communicate by any means which are reasonable under the circumstances. For example, where an applicant uses Twitter to make a request, the school may respond via an alternative medium as Twitter restricts the length of a response.

## **7. Providing advice and assistance**

- 7.1 The school/Trust will meet its duty to provide advice and assistance, as far as is reasonable, to any person who proposes to make, or has made, requests for information to the school/Trust.

- 7.2 The school/Trust may offer advice and assistance in the following circumstances:

If an individual requests to know what types of information the school/Trust holds and the format in which it is available, as well as information on the fees regulations and charging procedures;

If a request has been made, but the school/Trust is unable to regard it as a valid request due to insufficient information, leading to an inability to identify and locate the information;

If a request has been refused, e.g. due to an excessive cost, and it is necessary for the school/Trust to assist the individual who has submitted the request.

- 7.3 The school/Trust will provide assistance for each individual on a case-by-case basis; examples of how the school/Trust will provide assistance include the following:

Informing an applicant of their rights under the Freedom of Information Act 2000;

Assisting an individual in the focus of their request, e.g. by advising of the types of information available within the requested category;

Advising an applicant if information is available elsewhere and how to access this information;

Keeping an applicant informed on the progress of their request.

- 7.4 Where the school/Trust wishes to ask a different public authority to deal with a request by transferring it to them, this will only be done with the agreement of the applicant.

- 7.5 In order to provide assistance as outlined above, the school/Trust will engage in the following good practice procedures:

Make early contact with an individual and keep them informed of the process of their request;

Accurately record and document all correspondence concerning the clarification and handling of any request;

Give consideration to the most appropriate means of contacting the applicant, taking into account their individual circumstances;

Discuss with the applicant whether they would prefer to receive the information in an alternative format, in cases where it is not possible to provide the information requested in the manner originally specified;

Remain prepared to assist an applicant who has had their request denied due to an exemption.



7.6 The school/Trust will give particular consideration to what level of assistance is required for an applicant who has difficulty submitting a written request.

7.7 In circumstances where an applicant has difficulty submitting a written request, the school/Trust will:

Make a note of the application over the telephone and then send the note to the applicant to confirm and return – the statutory time limit for a reply would begin here; Direct the individual to a different agency that may be able to assist with framing their request.

NB. This list is not exhaustive, and the school/Trust may decide to take additional assistance measures that are appropriate to the case.

7.8 Where an applicant's request has been refused either because the information is accessible by other means, or because the information is exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the school/Trust will:



**9. Internal reviews**

- 9.1 When responding to requests for information, the details of the school's/Trust's internal review process will be set out, including information about how applicants can request an internal review. Applicants will also be informed of their right to complain to the ICO if they are still dissatisfied following the outcome of the school's/Trust's internal review.
- 9.2 Requests for an internal review should be made in writing to the school/Trust.
- 9.3 For a request for an internal review to be accepted, it must be made within 40 school/Trust days from the date the school/Trust issued an initial response to the request.
- 9.4 Upon receipt of an application, the school/Trust will acknowledge an application and inform the applicant of the intended response date. Responses will usually be delivered within 20 school/Trust days of receipt of the application.

**11. Contracts and outsourced services**

- 11.1 The school/Trust will make clear what information is held by third party contractors on behalf of the school/Trust.
- 11.2 Where a contractor holds information relating to a contract held with the school/Trust on behalf of the school/Trust, this information is considered in the same way as information held by a public authority and so is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 11.3 When entering into a contract, the school/Trust and contractor will agree what information the school/Trust will consider to be held by the contractor on behalf of the school/Trust, this will be indicated in the contract.
- 11.4 Appropriate arrangements will be put in place for the school/Trust to gain access to information held by the contractor on the school's/Trust's behalf, in the event that a freedom of information request is made. These arrangements will be set out in a contract, and will cover areas including, but not limited to, the following:

- How and when the contractor should be approached for information and who the points of contact are;

- How quickly information should be provided to the school/Trust;

- How any disagreement about disclosure between the school/Trust and contractor will be addressed;

- How requests for internal reviews and appeals to the ICO will be managed;

- The contractor's responsibilities



Information in draft form or notes, documents in older versions, emails or other correspondence;

Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

## **2. How information published under this scheme will be made available**

Information covered by this scheme will, as far as possible, be published on the school website. Where this is impracticable, or you do not wish to access the information via the school website, information covered by this scheme can also be obtained by contacting our DPO at: [dpo@citacademies.co.uk](mailto:dpo@citacademies.co.uk)

Requested information under this scheme will be delivered electronically, but paper copies can also be provided.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language(s) that is legally required. Where we are legally required to translate any information, we will do so. Information can be translated into accessible formats where possible.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

To enable us to process your request quickly, please mark correspondence:

**“PUBLICATION SCHEME INFORMATION REQUEST”**

## **3. Freedom of information requests**

Information that is not covered by this scheme can be requested in writing, where its provision will be considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

To enable us to process freedom of information requests within statutory timeframes, please mark94.96 8-3(oce)3(ss)11( )-80(f)-4(r)-3866 0 594 539.71 Tm0 g0ai(ow )4(i)-

Where paper copies of the information covered by this scheme are requested, a small charge may be made to cover disbursements incurred such as:

Photocopying;  
Postage and packaging;  
The costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information.

Where a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Where you wish to charge for making available any copyrighted datasets for re-use

Where a request is made to re-use all, or part, of a copyrighted dataset, a charge may be made – this will be in accordance with the terms of the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015, where applicable, with regulations made under section 11B of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or with any other statutory powers held by the School/Trust.

Where no charges will be made for some paper copies, single paper copies are also available free of charge to parents and prospective parents of the school.

## **5. Feedback**

We welcome any comments or suggestions you may have regarding this scheme, please contact the relevant school.

## **Guide to Information**

Information available from CIT Academies under the publication scheme

This guide covers only information we currently hold.

<b>Class 1 - Who we are and what we do</b> <i>Organisational Information, structures, locations and contacts.</i> <i>Current information only</i>		
<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How you can obtain the information</b>	<b>Cost</b> (*see schedule of charges)
Central office contact details – address, telephone number and enquiries email address	Trust Website	No charge
Academy contact details – address, telephone number and enquiries email address	See each Academy’s individual website, links can be found on the Trust Website	No charge
Articles of association	Trust Website	No charge
Trust prospectus	Trust Website	No charge
Trustees - names, roles, the basis of their appointment and contact details	Trust Website	No charge
Trust staffing structure – names of key personnel; Executive leadership, senior leadership and support hub team	Trust Website	No charge
Academy prospectuses and curriculum	See each Academy’s individual website	No charge
Academy staffing structure – names of key personnel	See each Academy’s individual website	No charge
Academy Local School Board/Governing body’s contact details	See each Academy’s individual website	No charge
Academy session times and term dates	See each Academy’s individual website	No charge
Gender pay gap reporting	Trust Website	No charge



<b>Class 2 – What we spend and how we spend it</b> <i>Financial information about projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit</i> <i>Current and previous two financial year as a minimum</i>		
<b>Information to be published</b>	<b>How you can obtain the information</b>	<b>Cost</b> (*see schedule of charges)
Annual budget plan and financial statements	By request	No charge
Annual accounts or Statutory accounts	Trust website	No charge
Master Funding Agreement	Trust website	No charge
Expenditures	By request	No charge
Capital funding	By request	No charge
Additional funding	By request	No charge



Community Inclusive Trust

Pay policy

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Out of school/academy clubs	See each Academy's individual website	No charge
School publications	See each Academy's individual website	No charge
Services for which we are entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	See each Academy's individual website	No charge
Leaflets, books and newsletters	See each Academy's individual website	No charge

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