

# FE Sector Publication Scheme

| Author/Responsibility | Document Version | Date Implemented | Next Review Due |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Lois McKean           | 3                | September 2025   | September 2027  |
| Date Approved at LMT: |                  |                  |                 |

# Publication Scheme

## 1. Introduction

Further Education (FE) Colleges are the main providers of vocational and technical education and training in Northern Ireland (NI). The nature of College provision is diverse and broad based ranging from A levels and GCSEs to BTECs, HNCs, HNDs, Apprenticeships, Foundation Degrees, Degrees and other specific training programmes. The FE Sector plays a central role in raising levels of literacy and numeracy and in up-skilling and re-skilling the population through a broad range of courses leading to qualification, particularly in Level 2 to Level 6.

There are 6 FE Colleges within Northern Ireland; Belfast Metropolitan College (BMC), Northern Regional College (NRC, North West Regional College (NWRC), South Eastern Regional College (SERC), South West College (SWC) and Southern Regional College (SRC).

As Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB), the Colleges are subject to legislation regarding information governance such as the Freedom of Information (2000).

The Freedom of Information Act (2000) (FOIA) gives everyone the right to request information from public authorities, helping them to understand better how the College works, how we spend public money and how and why we make our decisions.

The Colleges encourage collaboration across the FE Sector where similar functions exist to embed a coordinated strategy towards best practice. The Sector has collaborated to develop a joint Publication Scheme and adopt agreed protocols regarding the release of information which is subject to FOIA.

## 2. What is the Publication Scheme and why do we have one?

Section 19 of the FOIA requires Public Authorities (i.e., Government and other public sector bodies, including Universities and Further Education Colleges) to produce "Publication Schemes", which are schedules of information to be routinely published by the Public Authorities.

In this context, '*publish*' is defined as 'to make information routinely available'.

The publication of information is designed to increase the transparency and accountability of the Public Authority by enabling members of the public to routinely access information relating to its functions. Information may be available via links to website information, documents and where possible it should be made available in a re-usable format (dataset).

In compliance with our obligations, the FE Sector will:

1. Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by the College and falls within the classifications below.
2. Specify the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
3. Proactively publish or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
4. Produce and publish the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
5. Review and update on a regular basis the information the authority makes available under this scheme.
6. Produce a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
7. Make this publication scheme available to the public.

The format is in compliance with the ICO Model Publication Scheme and the FE Sector has based the categories of information we publish primarily on the [Definition Document - Northern Ireland Non Departmental Public Bodies v 4.0](#) and in addition, guidance from the ICO to use [Definition Document - Colleges of Further Education](#)

### **3. Classifications of information**

The Publication Scheme is a structured way of presenting this information to the public.

The FE Sector is committed to publishing the following categories of information:

1. Who we are and what we do
2. What we spend and how we spend it
3. What are our priorities and how are we doing
4. How we make decisions
5. Policies and Procedures
6. Lists and Registers
7. The Services we offer

#### **4. Information not covered by the Publication Scheme**

Information held by the College but not listed as available via the Publication Scheme may be requested by submitting a Freedom of Information request to the College. Details on how to make this request and how the College will process it are available in the FE Sector Access to Information Policy. All requests will be processed in compliance with the FOIA and the FE Sector Freedom of Information Procedure.

#### **5. How to use the Publication Scheme**

The FE Sector has provided the table below to enable individuals to browse our index of published information.

The Publication Scheme is divided into the categories listed above (See section 3). Next to each category, the Colleges have provided the method by which the information is available. In most cases, a hyperlink will be provided to the information directly.

In some instances, e.g. where the information is too voluminous to publish online, the College will provide this upon request. Where this applies, the Publication Scheme will detail the appropriate contact details to direct such requests.

Requests for information which are or form part of a dataset or where the requester expresses a preference for the information to be electronic, will be released.

Data sets published via the Publication Scheme will be periodically refreshed. This time will be determined by the business area.

#### **6. Fees**

Information which is published on the website or which can be transmitted electronically will incur no fee.

We may charge for providing information in paper copy or on removable storage devices such as Computer discs or USB drives. Charges will reflect the actual costs of reproduction, consumables, and postage and will not exceed the costs accrued by the College or staff time.

If we intend to charge, we will tell you:

- the charge
- how it has been calculated
- how to pay

The requester will be made aware of any charges in advance of the information being collated.

## 7. Other formats

If you would like this scheme, or any of the information it covers, in a more accessible format, please contact the **Data Protection & Information Compliance Officer** to discuss additional ways in which the information may be made available to you.

## 8. Contact details

Further details regarding this document please contact:

**Lois McKean**

**Data Protection & Information Compliance Officer**

North West Regional College

78-80 Strand Road

Derry~Londonderry

BT48 7AL

Email: [lois.mckean@nwrc.ac.uk](mailto:lois.mckean@nwrc.ac.uk)

Tel No: 02871 276154

## 9. ICO Guidance

The FE Sector will continually refer to legislation and ICO guidance when processing Publication Scheme information requests.

Further information is available to the public on the ICO website at [Publication schemes: a guide | ICO](#)

## **Who we are and what we do**

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

Expected scope of information: Current information

| Definition document  | Explanation  | Availability   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Legal framework / Instrument of Government / Articles of Association</b>          | Information relating to the legal and corporate status of the institution.   | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a>   |
| <b>Roles and responsibilities</b>  | NDPBs should be providing both outline and detailed information about their roles and responsibilities and the roles and responsibilities of those working in them at senior level.  | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a><br><a href="#">Governing Body</a>   |
| <b>Organisational structure</b>  | An explanation of the internal structures of the NDPB, referring to its functions and how the structure relates to the roles and responsibilities.   | Information available on request.  |
| <b>Information relating to the legislation relevant to the authority's functions</b> | An explanation of the legislative basis of the activities of the NDPB. If appropriate an explanation of any legislation for which the NDPB takes the lead.   | <a href="#">The Further Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1997</a><br><a href="#">DfE annual reports and accounts - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a> |
| <b>Student activities</b>  | Information relating to the operation and activities of the Student Union or its equivalent and other clubs, associations and non-academic activities that are organised for or by the students may also be included, where this information is held by the college. | <a href="#">NWRC Students Union</a>  |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Lists of and information relating to organisations with which the NDPB works in partnership</b>  | It is expected that this information need be only sufficient for the purposes of identifying the relationship between these bodies and the NDPB. This will include the identity of the sponsoring government department.                                  | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a><br><a href="#">Our Partners</a>  |
| <b>Meetings of Chief Executive or Board members with Ministers and external organisations (including meetings with newspaper and other media proprietors, editors, and senior executives)</b> |   | Information not held.   |
| <b>Senior executives and management board members</b>   | Identification of, responsibilities of and biographical details of those making strategic and operational decisions about the provision of the NDPB's services. Any biographical details that are not work related should be published only with consent. | <a href="#">Governing Body Committee Meetings</a><br><br>Meetings of Leadership and Management Team are available on request. |
| <b>Location and contact details of the NDPB</b>   | This should cover the NDPB at all levels from the central body to any offices open to the public for the conduct of the NDPB's business. It always assists to provide a named contact where this can be done  | <a href="#">Campus and Facilities</a>   |

## **What we spend and how we spend it**

**Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit**

**Expected scope of information:** Expect a minimum that financial information for the current and previous two financial years to be available

| <b>Definition document</b>                                     | <b>Explanation</b>  | <b>Availability</b>                    |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Funding / income</b>  | Information on the sources of funding and income, such as funding grants, tuition fees, endowment, rents, and investment income (including investment strategy), as well as income generation schemes.  | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a> |
| <b>Financial statements, budgets, and variance reports</b>     | Details of authority spending over £25,000 (monthly). Details of authority contracts and tender's worth over £10,000. Details of government procurement card spend over £500.   | Information available on request.      |
| <b>Capital programme</b>                                       | Information should be made available on major plans for capital expenditure including any private finance initiative and public private partnership contracts.  | Estates Strategy available on request. |
| <b>Spending reviews</b>  |   | Information not held.                  |
| <b>Financial audit reports</b>                                 |   | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a> |
| <b>Senior staff and board members' allowances and expenses</b> | For the purposes of this document, senior staff are defined as those earning at least £63,994 per annum (equivalent to Grade 5 NICS). Details of the allowances and expenses that can be claimed or incurred. It should include the total of the allowances and expenses, by reference to categories, paid to or incurred by individual members of senior staff and management board members produced in line with the NDPB's policies, practices and procedures. Categories will be under such headings as travel, subsistence, accommodation. | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a> |
| <b>Pay Policy</b>  | The statement of the college's policy and procedures regarding staff pay  | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a> |



|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Pay and grading structures</b>                   | This may be provided as part of the organisational structure and should also identify, as a minimum, senior staff, and £5,000 salary bands for them. For junior posts, levels of pay should be identified by salary ranges.   | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a><br>Pay Scales information available on request. |
| <b>Procurement and tendering procedures</b>         | Details of procedures used for the acquisition of goods and services. Contracts currently available for public tender.  | Information available on request.  |
| <b>Governors' allowances</b>                        | Details of allowances or expenses that can be claimed or incurred, and a record of total payments made to individual governors.   | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a>   |
| <b>Register of Suppliers</b>                        |   | Information available on request.  |
| <b>Contracts</b>                                    | We would expect normally that it should be necessary only to publish details of contracts that are of sufficient size to have gone through a formal tendering process.  | Information available on request.  |
| <b>Financial statements for projects and events</b> | Where there are identifiable projects, we would expect the publication scheme to cover at least the financial reports that indicate actual expenditure against original project budgets. The larger the project, the greater the detail that should be available. Similarly, where organised events are publicised, their cost should be made available through the scheme. | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a>   |
| <b>Internal financial regulations</b>               | The College has various financial policies and regulations available.   | Information available on request.  |

### **What our priorities are and how we are doing**

Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews. Any other reports or recorded information demonstrating the NDPB's planned or actual performance should normally be included.

**Expected scope of information:** Expect information in this class to be available at least for the current and previous three years.

| Definition document   | Description   | Availability   |
|---|---|--|
| Strategic plans   | College Annual Accounts Report<br>Curriculum Development Plan | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a>                                |
| Self-assessment report  | College Annual Accounts Report                                | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a><br><a href="#">ETI Website</a> |
| Teaching and learning strategy                                    | Curriculum Development Plan                                   | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a>                                |
| Academic quality and standards                                    | Curriculum Development Plan                                   | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a>                                |
| Annual business plan  | Curriculum Development Plan                                   | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a>                                |
| Annual report   | College Annual Accounts Report<br>Curriculum Development Plan | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a>                                |
| Internal and external performance reviews                         | College Annual Accounts Report<br>Curriculum Development Plan | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a>                                |
| Reports to Assembly   | Information not held internally.                              | <a href="#">Committee for the Economy</a>  |
| Inspection reports where the NDPB is subject to formal inspection | Includes Internal Audit in Annual Report and QAA Reports.     | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a><br><a href="#">ETI Website</a> |
| Privacy impact assessments (in full or summary format)            |   | Information is available on request.   |
| Corporate Relations   |   | Information not held   |
| Government and Regulatory Reports                                 |   | <a href="#">Corporate Information and Reports</a>                                |
| Service standards   |   | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a>   |
| Statistics produced in accordance with the NDPB's requirements    |   | <a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a>   |
| Public service agreements   |   | Information available on request.  |

## **How we make decisions**

**Decision making processes and records of decisions.**

**Expected scope of information:** Expect information in this class to be available at least for the current and previous three years.

| <b>Definition document</b>   | <b>Description</b>   | <b>Availability</b>  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Major policy proposals and decisions</b>  | Information that can be made available to the public without damaging international relations or internal policy development.  | Information available on request.<br>Equality/Rural screening information available at <a href="#">NWRC Equality</a>   |
| <b>Background information relating to major policy proposals and decisions</b>                                     | This will include facts, and analyses of facts, relevant and important to the framing of major policy proposals and decisions.   | <a href="#">NWRC Equality</a>  |
| <b>Public consultations</b>  | Details of consultation exercises with access to the consultation papers or information about where the papers can be obtained. The results of consultation exercises.   | <a href="#">NWRC Equality</a>  |
| <b>Minutes of senior level meetings</b>  | We would expect management board minutes and the minutes of similar meetings where decisions are made about the provision of services, excluding material that is properly considered to be private, to be readily available to the public.  | This information is readily available via <a href="#">Governing Body Committee Minutes</a><br><br>Leadership and Management Team information available on request.                     |
| <b>Reports and papers provided for consideration at senior level meetings</b>                                      | Information presented to those at meetings making executive  | Information available on request.  |
| <b>Minutes, agendas and papers from governing body, council, academic boards, steering groups, and committees.</b> | We would expect minutes of meetings where key decisions are made about the operation of the college, excluding material that is properly considered to be private, to be readily available to the public. These may include, but are not limited to, such items as teaching and learning committee minutes, minutes of staff / student consultation meetings and appointment committees. | This information is readily available and can be accessed via <a href="#">Governing Body Committee Minutes</a><br><br>Leadership and Management Team information available on request. |

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| <b>Internal communications guidance and criteria used for decision making i.e. process systems and key personnel</b> | Where access to internal instructions, manuals, and guidelines for dealing with the business of the NDPB would assist public understanding of the way decisions are made these should be readily available. We would not expect information that might damage the operations of the NDPB to be revealed. | Information available on request. |
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## ***Policies and Procedures***

**Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivering services and responsibilities.**

**Expected scope of information:** We would expect information in this class to be current information only. If there is particular reason to provide information that is not still current, this should also be included.

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|--|---|----------------------------------|
| <b>Policies and procedures for the conduct of College business.</b>        | Codes of practice, memoranda of understanding, procedural rules, standing orders and similar information should be included. Procedures for handling requests for information should be included. In Wales this will include the Welsh Language Scheme in accordance with the Welsh Language Act 1993, and in Northern Ireland the equality scheme / statement produced in accordance with section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. | <a href="#">College Policies</a> |
| <b>Procedures and policies relating to student services</b>                | This will include relevant policies and procedures as they apply, for example, to student admission and registration, accommodation, management of the student records system, internal student complaints and appeals, student support services and code of student discipline.  | <a href="#">College Policies</a> |
| <b>Policies and procedures for the provision of academic services</b>      | Some of these policies may already be covered in class 3 'What our priorities are and how we are doing' in the context of external review and academic quality and standards. Additional policies under this heading may include such matters as policies and procedures relating to changing course, regulations and policy on student assessment, appeal procedures and policy on breach of assessment regulations.                   | <a href="#">College Policies</a> |
| <b>Policies and procedures for the recruitment and employment of staff</b> | Codes of practice, memoranda of understanding and the like should be included.  | <a href="#">Job Vacancies</a>    |

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|   | If vacancies are advertised as part of recruitment policies, details of current vacancies will be readily available. A number of policies, for example equality and diversity, health, and safety, will cover both the provision of services and the employment of staff.    |                                   |
| <b>Customer service</b>   | Standards for the provision of services to the NDPB's customers, including the complaint procedure. Complaints procedures will include those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme.   | <a href="#">College Policies</a>  |
| <b>Records management and personal data policies</b>                  | This will include information security policies, records retention, destruction and archive policies, and data protection (including data  | <a href="#">College Policies</a>  |
| <b>Equality and Diversity policies; Equality Scheme</b>               | This will also include policies, statements, procedures and guidelines   | <a href="#">NWRC Equality</a>     |
| <b>Health and Safety</b>  |  | Information available on request. |
| <b>Estate management</b>  | This will include disposals policy, estates strategy and plan, facilities management policies, grounds and building maintenance.   | Information available on request. |
| <b>Complaints policies and procedures</b>                             | Complaints procedures will include those covering requests for information and operating the publication scheme.   | <a href="#">College Policies</a>  |
| <b>Fileplans (high level, for current records management systems)</b> | FE Sector Retention and Disposal available at <a href="#">FE Sector Retention &amp; Disposal Schedule</a>  | Information not held.             |
| <b>Charging regimes and policies</b>                                  | Details of any statutory charging regimes should be provided. Charging policies should include charges made for information routinely published and clearly state what costs are to be recovered together with the basis on which they are made and how they are calculated. | <a href="#">FOI Charging Fees</a> |

## ***Lists and Registers***

**We would expect information in this class to be information contained in currently maintained lists and registers only.**

**Expected scope of information:** We would expect information in this class to be current information only

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|---|--|---|
| <b>Public registers and registers held as public records.</b> | Where an NDPB is obliged to maintain a register and to make the information in it available for inspection by the public, it is accepted that in most circumstances the existing provisions covering access will suffice. We would expect however that NDPBs do publicise which public registers they hold and how the information in them is to be made public. Where registers contain personal information, NDPBs must ensure that this is protected by the data protection principles. | Information not held.   |
| <b>Asset registers and Information Asset Register</b>         | We would not expect NDPBs to publish all details from all asset registers. We would, however, expect the location of public land and building assets and key attribute information that is normally recorded on an asset register to be available along with some other information from capital asset registers. If an NDPB has prepared an information asset register for the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2005, it should publish the contents.                      | Information Asset Register and Capital Asset Register available on request.<br><br><a href="#">Building Locations</a><br><a href="#">Annual Accounts Report</a> |
| <b>CCTV</b>   | Details of the locations of any overt CCTV surveillance cameras operated by or on behalf of the NDPB. The NDPB should decide on the level of detail which is appropriate. This could be by building or more general geographic locations, such as postcodes or partial postcodes, depending on the security issues raised.   | Information available on request.   |
| <b>Disclosure logs</b>  | Where an NDPB produces a disclosure log indicating the information that has been provided in response to FOI requests it should  | <a href="#">NWRC Freedom of Information</a>   |

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|  | be readily available. Disclosure logs are themselves recommended as good practice.  |                                   |
| <b>Register of gifts and hospitality provided to Board members and senior staff</b>  | Details of gifts given or received; hospitality and from which organisation; travel (including overseas, detailed unless properly regarded as non-routine). | Information available on request. |
| <b>Any register of interests kept in the department. Other lists required by law</b> |   | Information available on request. |



## ***The Services we offer***

Generally this is an extension of part of the first class of information. While the first class provides information on the roles and responsibilities of the NDPB, this class includes details of the services which are provided by the NDPB, internationally, nationally and locally. It will be of public benefit to have ready access, for example, to everything from information about the services provided to the government to the information readily available at a public counter.

Expected scope of information: Information about the services we currently provide including leaflets, guidance and newsletters produced.

| Definition Document   | Description | Availability  |
|---|-------------|---|
| Regulatory responsibilities   |             | <a href="#">Competition and Markets Authority</a><br><a href="#">Information Commissioner's Office</a><br><a href="#">Equality Commission</a><br><a href="#">Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman   NIPSO</a><br><a href="#">Ofqual - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</a><br><a href="#">QAA</a><br><a href="#">AccessNI</a><br><a href="#">Northern Ireland Audit Office</a><br><a href="#">Education Training Inspectorate (ETI)</a><br><a href="#">CCEA Regulation</a> |
| Prospectus and course content   |             | <a href="#">NWRC Prospectus</a>   |
| Welfare and counselling services  |             | <a href="#">Safeguarding</a>  |
| Careers advice  |             | <a href="#">Careers Academy</a>   |
| Chaplaincy services & multi-faith provision                                       |             | Services available, information on request  |
| Sports and recreational facilities  |             | <a href="#">Campus and Facilities</a><br><a href="#">Students Union   North West Regional College</a>   |
| Facilities relating to music, art and other cultural activities                   |             | <a href="#">Campus and Facilities</a>   |
| Services for public authorities   |             | <a href="#">Business Support Centre</a>   |
| Services for industry   |             | <a href="#">Business Support Centre</a>   |
| Services for other organisations  |             | <a href="#">About NWRC</a>  |
| Services for members of the public  |             | <a href="#">About NWRC</a>  |
| Services for which the NDPB is entitled to recover a fee together with those fees |             | Information not held.   |
| Leaflets, booklets, and newsletters   |             | <a href="#">NWRC News</a>   |
| Advice and guidance   |             | <a href="#">Student Support</a>   |
| Media releases  |             | <a href="#">NWRC News</a>   |

## SECTION 1

### RECORD OF CHANGES (NWRC Publication Scheme, June 2024)

Modifications made since the last review are as follows:

| Record of Changes |          |  |                |          |
|-------------------|----------|--|----------------|----------|
| Review Date       | Page No. | Change Comment   | Date of Change | Initials |
| Sept 2025         | cover    | Updated Document Version, Review Dates, Date Approved at LMT   | 10.09.2025     | LMcK     |
| Sept 2025         | all      | Added footer ('Official' data classification, page numbers & Policy title)   | 10.09.2025     | LMcK     |
| Sept 2025         | 2        | Updated obsolete ICO link  | 10.09.2025     | LMcK     |
| Sept 2025         | 4        | Updated name & job title & contact details for DPICO<br>Updated obsolete ICO link  | 10.09.2025     | LMcK     |
| Sept 2025         | 5        | Updated obsolete weblinks for DfE Annual Financial Reports & NIPSO   | 10.09.2025     | LMcK     |
| Sept 2025         | 12       | <i>(Procedures &amp; Policies Relating to Student Services)</i> - Provided link to website 'College Policies'. Policies & procedures are updated regularly at different intervals and live links can become invalid. Most updated Policies versions will be uploaded on College website. | 10.09.2025     | LMcK     |
| Sept 2025         | 13       | <i>(Records Management &amp; Personal Data Policies)</i> - As above.   | 10.09.2025     | LMcK     |
| Sept 2025         | 16       | Updated obsolete weblink for Ofqual  | 10.09.2025     | LMcK     |
|                   |          |  |                |          |

[OFFICIAL] - Please treat this information as Official