



# **Freedom of Information Publication Scheme**

Required under Sections 213 and 24 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, designated under Section 3 as Public Authorities and Schedule 1, Part 5 (47):

The Board of Management of a College of Further Education (expressions used in this paragraph having the same meaning as in Section 36 (1) of the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 (c.37).

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Introduction to the Freedom of Information Act**

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 gives a general right of access to all types of information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that general right and places a number of obligations on Scottish public authorities. The Act aims to increase openness and accountability in government and across the public sector by ensuring people have the right to access information held by public authorities.

As a Scottish public authority the College is required, under Section 23 of the Act, to adopt and maintain a Publication Scheme. The scheme sets out: the categories (classes) of information which the College publishes or intends to publish, the manner in which it is published, and details of any charges for receiving the information.

The Publication Scheme adopted is that approved by the Scottish Information Commissioner for Scottish Further Education Colleges. It has been compiled with regard to the public interest in allowing public access to information relating to the provision of services by Further Education Colleges, the cost of providing them, the standards attained, and the reasons for decisions made by the Colleges.

The Board of Management of Oatridge College is committed to openness and transparency and to making information publicly available wherever possible.

You should contact Cathi Wotherspoon, Principal's Office, Oatridge College if you require any information under the Publication Scheme.

### **1.2. About the College**

Oatridge College is the trading name of Oatridge Agricultural College which was established in 1967. It is the largest specialist landbased college in Scotland with 3,000 enrolments of which 400 are full-time in session 2003-04. Accommodation is provided for 200 students in purpose-built residences on campus.

The College was incorporated in 1993 under the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 1992 which can be found at the HMSO website at [www.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.hmso.gov.uk)

The College's 283 hectare estate includes a commercial farm and a 9 hole pay and play golf course. Extensive practical facilities enable the College to provide a high level of practical instruction. College programmes provide students with the practical skills base required to develop and apply underpinning theory and principles.

Full and part-time courses are provided to HND level in Agriculture, Animal Care, Engineering, Environmental Studies, Equine Studies, Farriery, Greenkeeping, Horticulture and Landscaping. Students attend the College from throughout Scotland with some students attracted from England and abroad.

A major redevelopment of the College campus is planned for 2005/06 providing improved equine, farriery and engineering facilities with new purpose built classroom accommodation.

To find out more about the College and the courses we offer visit our website at [www.oatridge.ac.uk](http://www.oatridge.ac.uk).

### **1.3. Formulating the Scheme**

The College has adopted the Model Publication Scheme prepared by the Association of Scottish Colleges (ASC) in partnership with Universities Scotland's Freedom of Information Working Group. ASC made the draft available to a number of stakeholders, including the trades unions recognised by ASC member institutions, the National Union of Students and the Scottish Consumers Council.

### **1.4. Responsibility for the Publication Scheme**

Overall responsibility for Freedom of Information in the College lies with Penny Skett, Assistant Principal (Finance and Resources).

If you have any queries, concerns or require further information on this Publication Scheme please contact the postholder below who has day to day responsibility for running the scheme.

Name	Cathi Wotherspoon
Title	Personal Assistant
Address	Principal's Office Oatridge College Ecclesmachan West Lothian EH52 6NH
Email	<a href="mailto:cwotherspoon@oatridge.ac.uk">cwotherspoon@oatridge.ac.uk</a>
Telephone	01506 864800
Fax	01506 853373

## **1.5. Exemptions**

While the College aims to be as open as possible there may be information withheld from any of the classes of information listed below where we consider that disclosure may seriously prejudice law enforcement, legal proceedings or our regulatory or enforcement activity or where the disclosure is otherwise prohibited by law. We may also withhold information if its disclosure would breach the laws of confidentiality or seriously prejudice the commercial interests of any person or organisation, including statistical information in cases where small numbers may allow the identification of individuals. We may also withhold information which is personal information under the Data Protection Act 1998.

## **1.6. Archiving Policy**

The College is committed to maintaining records for no longer than that required legally or for the proper management of its business. Records are required to be disposed of securely at the end of their retention period. The College is developing a Records Schedule detailing records held, retention periods and methods of disposal.

## **1.7. Copyright**

Information obtained from this publication scheme can be copied or reproduced without formal permission provided it is copied or reproduced accurately, is not used in a misleading context and provided that the source of the material is identified and the copyright status acknowledged.

## **1.8. Accessing Information Under the Publication Scheme**

Requests for information can be made in person, via the telephone, by email, or by post. When making a request please provide the following:

- your name, address, telephone number and email address if available
- the information or documents you would like to access
- the way you would like the information to be sent to you

We will endeavour to provide information requested within 20 working days of receipt of the confirmed request or 20 working days of receipt of payment if there is a charge. You will be informed if we cannot meet this timescale.

## **1.9. Charging Policy**

The College will not charge for access to information available online, or if it is sent to you by email.

Printed copies of information will be charged at 20 pence per page of copy. You will be advised of the total charge for your request which must be paid prior to the delivery of the information. This charge may include postage.

There will be no charge for single copies of information that is normally freely available, e.g. College prospectus, information leaflets.

The College reserves the right to waive charges where the cost of recovery is greater than the fee.

Information will not be sent until full payment of fee is received. Cheques should be made payable to 'Oatridge College'.

### **1.10. Complaints**

If you have any complaints about this Publication Scheme, including information that we have deemed exempt from disclosure contact Cathi Wotherspoon, Personal Assistant.

### **1.11. Feedback**

The College welcomes your comments on your experience of using the Publication Scheme e.g. ease of use, additional information you would like to see available through the scheme. A Publication Scheme Feedback form is available.