

Introduction to Freedom of Information

1. Legal requirement

- 1.1 Adopting a publication scheme is a requirement of the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#) ('the Act'). 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. Canterbury Christ Church University is covered by the Act.

2. What is the Publication Scheme?

- 2.1 The publication scheme is a document that describes the information the University 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 University's **commitment** to make available the information described.
- 2.2 The publication scheme sets out the classes, or categories, of information published. It also makes clear how the information described can be accessed and whether or not charges will be made.
- 2.3 This is the publication scheme for the University, drawn up under Section 19 of the Act.

3. The 'model' publication scheme for higher education

- 3.1 **Canterbury Christ Church University** has adopted the model publication scheme developed by the Information Commissioners Office for the Higher Education sector and is therefore committed to publishing the information it describes.

4. Who are we

- 4.1 **Canterbury Christ Church University** is set in the heart of the historic and picturesque city centre of Canterbury - a location close to the Channel port of Dover and the Eurostar rail link to the Continent. London is within easy reach by rail and coach. The University is one of the largest and most popular Higher Education institutions of its kind, renowned not only for academic excellence, but also for its friendly, welcoming atmosphere and community spirit
- 4.2 The student population numbers 20,000, including many mature and part-time students, and is studying a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, all contributing something different to the life of the University, and creating between them a lively and varied student body. In addition to Canterbury, there are campuses and centres at

Broadstairs, Medway and Tunbridge Wells.

- 4.3 The University is the predominant centre of higher education in Kent for the public services - notably teacher training, nursing, and social care - and is a significant provider of vocationally oriented programmes in a wide range of academic and professional areas.

5. Accessing information covered by the Publication Scheme

- 5.1 The classes of information we publish are described in the Publication Scheme.
- 5.2 For each class we have indicated the manner in which the information described will be available.
- 5.3 Most information can be downloaded from the Canterbury Christ Church University website. Some documents are available only in a paper form, as they are not at present available on the website, although in time the information may become available through this means.
- 5.4 Publications are free unless otherwise stated. Where there is a charge, payment is required in advance. We indicate whether charges apply to material in each class.
- 5.5 Alternative formats may be arranged by special request, but there will be a charge to cover production costs.
- 5.6 Please note that a publication scheme relates to 'published' information. Therefore, material covered has already been prepared in a format ready for distribution.

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

- 6.1 You have the right, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, to request any information that the University has not already made available through the Publication Scheme.
- 6.2 Requests will have to be made in writing and, in general, the University will have 20 working days to respond. The University may charge a fee, which will be calculated according to the Fees Regulations. The University will not be required to release information to which an exemption in the Act legitimately applies. However, the University will explain why we are not releasing information. We may also have to justify this to the Information Commissioner.

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 the Publication Scheme Co-ordinator below.

Robert Melville
Assistant University Secretary
North Holmes Road
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 1QU

Email: foi@canterbury.ac.uk

8. Freedom of Information Complaints Procedure

- 8.1 The University is committed to providing satisfactory responses to requests made under the Freedom of Information Act. If you have a complaint about any aspect, we will seek to resolve the complaint speedily and to this end you are invited to submit your complaint to:

Robert Melville
Assistant University Secretary
North Holmes Road
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 1QU

Email: foi@canterbury.ac.uk

- 8.2 Please provide your name and address and the details of your complaint.
- 8.3 If this informal resolution of your complaint does not produce a satisfactory conclusion, you may then make a formal complaint
- 8.4 We will then investigate the complaint. The results of this investigation will be communicated to you as soon as they are available.
- 8.5 If we are unable to resolve any complaint, you can complain to the Information Commissioner, the independent body that oversees the Freedom of Information Act:

Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Tel: 01625 545700

Fax: 01625 545510

Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

9. Further information

More information about the Freedom of Information Act is available on the Information Commissioner's website at:

www.ico.gov.uk