



St Helens College



University Centre  
St Helens

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# Public Information Policy and Procedure



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## Public Information Policy and Procedure

Related policies: Freedom of Information Publication Scheme; Social Media Policy, Branding Guidelines.

### 1. Introduction

The Public Information Policy supports SK College Group's (the College) procedure for oversight, control, quality and review over public domain information about SK College Group and associated brands including St Helens College 14–16 Academy, St Helens College, Knowsley Community College, University Centre St Helens, Northern Logistics Academy and any subcontractors of the College which is produced and distributed by SK College Group.

All information for public distribution is the responsibility of the Director of Marketing, Recruitment and Customer Relations.

### 2. Aim

SK College Group is committed to ensuring that the information it publishes about all course provision, associated academic services, college facilities and student attainment is clear, accurate, free from bias and is designed in accordance with established guidelines.

To ensure that SK College Group and any associated subcontractors publishes information which is:

- Accurate
- Fit for purpose
- Trustworthy
- Transparent and open
- Timely and up to date
- Accessible
- Adheres to awarding body regulations
- Legally compliant
- Free from bias

This policy is to ensure that all published information, published under any one of the College brand names, or by any subcontractors enables audiences to form an accurate and true impression of SK College Group, and any of its subcontracted providers, facilitating informed decision making, allowing for clear and effective communication about and within the College and meet any applicable legal obligations. For example, in relation to the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988, the Consumer Rights Act 2015, and the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all public information in printed, electronic or broadcast form which is intended to be made public which refers to all of SK College Group's or subcontractors courses and activities.

### **4. Policy**

- 4.1 SK College Group has adopted the guidance provided by the Information Commissioner in order to comply with Freedom of Information.
- 4.2 Information must be published in a manner that adequately meets the standards required by legislation, awarding bodies, regulatory bodies and stakeholder requirements.
- 4.3 All documents will be checked for grammar, punctuation, spelling and format prior to publication.
- 4.4 Public information provided will be in accordance with the College values.
- 4.5 All staff should ensure that information provided, including that on the website, intranet and through social media channels complies with college policies, meets the college's standards of quality, is accurate, timely, up to date, reliable and fit for purpose.
- 4.6 Information will be provided in accessible formats. SK College Group will endeavour to meet the requests of individuals where this is deemed reasonable.
- 4.7 Information will meet any applicable legal obligations e.g. in relation to copyright and the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.
- 4.8 All communications with the press and media will be through the Marketing Department only.

### **5. Procedure**

The Marketing Department, on behalf of SK College Group takes responsibility for all marketing communications, printed and non-printed. All information that is intended for public distribution or consumption by an external audience must first be approved by the Marketing team.

Any external or third party requests to display or distribute information, printed or non-printed must also be approved by the Marketing Department.

#### **5.1 College Standards**

- 5.1.1 For any externally published document, this should be done in collaboration with the Marketing Department.

5.1.2 Authors of Policies and Procedures particularly, but also other information sources should ensure that they are referenced to the requirements of legislation and regulatory bodies where appropriate.

5.1.3 Authors are responsible for ensuring that information is published according to the College standards.

5.1.4 The Marketing Department is responsible for ensuring that standards are in place and available to staff.

5.1.5 All information published externally must be signed off by the Marketing Department. If the information relates to funding eligibility, statistics, success rates, league table performance etc. This must be signed off by MIS and the Principal before being published.

5.1.6 The College logo(s) can only be used with adherence to the College standards and subject to Brand Guidelines.

5.1.7 Communication via social media sites and tools must protect the College's institutional voice by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. College staff who use personal social media accounts must not give the impression that their social media site represents the explicit positioning of SK College Group. Social media channels are powerful communication tools but they carry significant risks to the reputation of the College and its members. A prominent risk arises from the blurring of the lines between personal voice and institutional voice (see Social Media Policy).

5.1.8 Only approved communications by the Director of Marketing or Head of Marketing can be distributed to third parties, including for example the Press or other media agencies.

## **5.2 Policies, Procedures and Strategies**

5.2.1 Responsibility for authoring and review of college policies and strategies will be allocated to appropriate managers. SLT are responsible for the evaluation and approval of each policy, procedure and strategy.

5.2.2 Policies which directly affect students and relate to recruitment, admissions, complaints and appeals, examinations and student discipline are available on the College website.

## **5.3 Course Related Information**

5.3.1 All advertised courses must have an accurate, up to date Programme Information Sheet, which must be published on the website.

5.3.2 Programme Information Sheets for new courses should be prepared and included in the course approval process (IVP).

5.3.3 Programme Information Sheets must be updated as required to accurately reflect current provision.

- 5.3.4 College prospectuses and course guides are produced annually in line with recruitment cycles, applicant need and the timeline of production of course related information.
- 5.3.5 Out of date course information must be removed from circulation. The Marketing Department should be notified to action updates to Programme Information Sheets.
- 5.3.6 All course and College marketing materials must meet the guidelines of the relevant awarding bodies and where applicable is formally approved by the validating university partners following their own internal quality assurance processes.
- 5.3.7 All University Centre St Helens communications must be CMA compliant and are subject to annual monitoring, audit and approval by the Higher Education Strategy Group.
- 5.3.8 All University Centre St Helens communications are subject to awarding body approval and ratification before distribution.
- 5.3.9 University Centre St Helens information for public distribution is subject to review and audit by the respective validating university partners.
- 5.3.10 All subcontracted provision will be subject to marketing audits for quality, accuracy consistency and compliance with CMA.
- 5.3.11 All higher education programme communications and information for public distribution will be reviewed annually in line with standard marketing communications operating procedures, and in line with traditional student recruitment cycles. All University Centre St Helens communications and information for public distribution will be universally published across all communication channels, across all College brands.

**Lead Author:** Director of Marketing, Recruitment and Customer Relations  
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