

OfS publication scheme

1. The Freedom of Information Act requires every public authority to have a publication scheme approved by the Information Commissioner's Office, and to publish information covered by the scheme. Our publication scheme sets out the different types of information we make available and how to obtain them. It follows the Information Commissioner's model publication scheme and definition document for non-departmental public bodies.
2. The Office for Students (OfS) is committed to making information available as part of our normal business activities whenever we can legally do so, except where we consider release would cause significant harm. In such cases we will withhold information under an appropriate exemption in the Freedom of Information Act. We must also comply with the requirements of the data protection legislation and respect the privacy of individuals.
3. As the OfS is a newly created organisation (legally formed in January 2018), some of the information in the publication scheme will be supplied in due course.

Freedom of Information requests

4. A lot of information is accessible through either our website or our publication scheme. However, if you are unable to find the information that you are looking for by following the links below or on our website, please contact us to submit a request for information.

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1. Who we are and what we do

Organisational information, structures, locations and contacts

5. The OfS website has information on the following topics:
 - [About the OfS](#)
 - [Who we are](#)
 - [What the OfS does](#)
 - [Our regulatory framework](#)

Our relationship to government

6. The OfS was established in January 2018 under the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 to regulate English higher education providers on behalf of all students, and ensure that every student, whatever their background, has a fulfilling experience of higher education that enriches their lives and careers.
7. We are accountable to the Department for Education for the way we work and the funds we distribute. We engage with other government departments, such as the Department of Health and HM Treasury, as necessary. More information on our relationship to government is available on our website.
 - [How we are run](#)
 - [Guidance from government](#).

Working in partnership

8. Working in partnership is central to the delivery of our objectives. Key partners include students, government, higher education providers, employers, and key national agencies. Our [framework](#) document sets out how we engage with government officials.
9. We are currently reviewing our list of partners, and will publish memorandums of understanding on the [partners](#) section of our website.

Location and contact details

10. For more information about the OfS, please view our [contact details](#) and [how to find us](#).

2. What we spend and how we spend it

Financial statements, budgets and variance reports

11. We publish spending over £25,000 on the [transparency](#) section of our website. Contracts and invitations to tender over £10,000 can be viewed on the website [Delta eSourcing](#). Procurement card spending for staff is capped at £500, except in exceptional circumstances.

Annual report and accounts

12. Our annual report and accounts will be published on our website shortly after the end of each financial year.
13. The 2017-18 annual report and accounts for our predecessor organisations, the Higher Education Funding Council for England and the Office for Fair Access, will be available on the [publications](#) section of the gov.uk website by 7 July 2018.

Senior staff salaries and board members' allowances and expenses

14. When available, the salaries and expense claims of OfS staff at director level and above will be published on the [transparency](#) section of our website.

OfS scheme of delegated decision making

15. Our scheme of delegation shows how we use our resources to deliver our objectives. You can download it from the [board and committees](#) section of our website.

Pay and grading structures

16. When available, the salary information for junior and senior staff will be published on the [transparency](#) section of our website.

Guidance letter from the Secretary of State to the OfS

17. The government sets out our annual priorities and tells us how much money to distribute to higher education providers. You can view this on the [guidance from government](#) section of the website.

3. Our priorities and how we are doing

OfS business plan

18. Our [business plan](#) outlines the work we will do in 2018-19 to achieve our strategic objectives.

OfS strategy

19. Our [strategy](#) outlines the four strategic objectives of the OfS, and how we will achieve these.

Standards and performance

20. When available, we will publish information on our standards and performance on the [how we are run](#) section of our website.

Environmental information

21. We will publish environmental information in our sustainability report as part of our annual report.

4. How we make decisions

Major policy proposals, decisions and background information

22. All relevant decisions and policy are made available to the public. Publications are available on the [publications](#) section listed by year.

Public consultations

23. Consultations will be available on the [publications](#) section of the OfS website. Under 'Filter results by category:' select 'Consultations, their outcomes, and statements of policy' from the drop-down list.

Minutes of senior-level meetings

24. Board papers are available on the [papers presented to the OfS board](#) section of the website. From 1 April 2018, board papers will normally be made available on the OfS website three weeks after the meeting at which they are put forward.

25. Papers exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act, including partly exempt papers, are listed for information with the other papers.

Assessing equality impact

26. Subject to relevance and proportionality, equality impact will be assessed on all policies and programmes and the outcomes of those assessments will be published on our website under [publications](#). By assessing equality impact we proactively consider the needs of students, the wider community or our own employees and identify potential steps to advance equality and foster good relations, and ensure that we do not discriminate unlawfully.

5. Our policies and procedures

Equality and diversity

27. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity in all aspects of our work.

28. We aim to publish our equality strategy and action plan by late 2018.

OfS standards

29. When available, we will publish information on how we strive to meet high standards when we conduct our business, make policy decisions, and deal with requests or enquiries, on the [how we are run](#) section of our website.

OfS information charter

30. The OfS information charter lists principles that we follow when handling information. Read our [privacy](#) section for details of our privacy notice and information security. We also have [guidance](#) for dealing with Freedom of Information, Environmental Information Regulations and Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations appeals, and how to make a request for information.

Recruitment policy

31. Our recruitment policy is available on request. Please contact customer services, 0117 931 7317, info@officeforstudents.org.uk.

32. View our [current vacancies](#), and read further information on the [OfS as an employer](#).

Public interest disclosures (whistle-blowing)

33. Information on how to raise a concern, complaint, or whistleblow about a provider is available on the [notifications and complaints](#) section of our website.

Making a complaint

34. Read the information on [making a complaint against the OfS](#).

35. Please note that this procedure cannot be used by students wishing to bring a complaint against their higher education provider. Such complaints should be directed to the provider initially and, if the outcome is not satisfactory, the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#).

Charging regimes and policies

36. We may charge for responding to some information requests, details of which can be found on our [how to request information](#) pages.

6. Lists and registers

Public registers and registers held as public records

- [Register of higher education providers in England](#)
- [Access and Participation Plans and Access Agreements.](#)

Asset registers and information asset register

37. Our asset and information registers are available on request. Please contact customer services, 0117 931 7317, info@officeforstudents.org.uk.

CCTV

38. The OfS has closed circuit television (CCTV) in place at both our London and Bristol sites for the prevention and detection of crime.

Disclosure logs

39. The OfS does not have a public disclosure log. We can provide details on request. Please contact foi@officeforstudents.org.uk.

Gifts and hospitality

40. When available, we will publish our register of gifts and hospitality provided to board members and senior staff on the [transparency](#) section of our website.

Register of interests

41. Read information regarding [board members' interests](#) and [registered interests of Directors](#).

7. The services we offer

Advice and guidance

42. The OfS offers advice and guidance on the following topics:

- [Guidance and help for students](#)
- [Our regulatory framework](#)
- [Teaching excellence and innovation](#)
- [Promoting graduate employment](#)
- [Student information and data](#)
- [Promoting equal opportunities](#)

Data and analysis

43. The OfS produces and publishes student and higher education statistics on the [data and analysis](#) section of our website.

Newsletter and email lists

44. The OfS uses several email lists to send messages to higher education institutions and anyone else with an interest in higher education. We also produce a monthly newsletter.

- [Sign up for email alerts](#)

News and events

- [News and blog posts](#)
- [Press releases](#)
- [Events](#)