

# College Information Policy



## PART ONE: Purpose, Scope and Principles

### 1. Purpose of the Policy

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1.1 The purpose of the policy is to ensure:

1.1.1 All information disseminated or made available to students and members of the public, is accurate, transparent, easily accessible and complete, in accordance with the requirements set by QAA.

1.1.2 All public information complies with the requirements and guidance set by QAA, any relevant Awarding Body partner and is amended promptly in response to Awarding Body, Partner or other stakeholder feedback and recommendations.

1.2 This is a revised document which seeks to ensure that CLC policies are in line with the Quality Code for Higher Education; Part C: Information about higher education provision, a draft of which is currently out for consultation. The QAA Principles with which CLC will seek to comply are currently stated in the following terms.

1.2.1 **Principle 1:** Higher education, its processes and its values should be comprehensible to the general public, students, and other stakeholders. Information about higher education, produced by higher education providers, should therefore be clear, timely, current, transparent and focused on the needs of the intended audiences. Consequently, information about higher education should be accessible. The UK Quality Code for Higher Education should be retrievable and accessible where all audiences and information users can reasonably expect to find it. The format and delivery of the information takes account of the requirements for equality of access.

1.2.2 **Principle 2:** Higher education providers have responsibility and accountability for the information they produce about the higher education experience they offer. At the same time, providers have autonomy regarding the mechanisms they use to communicate this information.

1.2.3 **Principle 3:** Information should be available and retrievable where intended audiences and information users can reasonably expect to find it. The format and delivery of information should take account of the access requirements of a diverse audience.

1.2.4 **Principle 4:** Information produced by higher education providers should offer a fair and accurate reflection of the higher education Learning opportunities offered. Further to the above, degree-awarding bodies ensure that they have effective control over the accuracy of all public information, publicity and promotional activity relating

to learning opportunities delivered with others which lead to their awards. Information is produced for prospective and current students which is fit for purpose, accessibly and trustworthy.

Key indicators:

1.3.1 To ensure that all publicity, marketing materials and promotions are accurate, clear, timely, transparent and focused on the needs of the intended audiences.

1.3.2 To ensure that all Terms and Conditions related to recruitment, admissions and refunds are clear to students and available and accessible at the appropriate time in the enrolment process.

1.3.3 To ensure that all publications both for students and for publicity purposes, conform to guidelines set by individual external partners.

1.3.4 To ensure that any promotions and offers relating to courses are clear in terms of the terms and conditions and validity of the promotion.

1.3.5 To ensure that information, responses and views published by CLC in the media are accurate and not misleading.

1.3 While this policy is designed to assure the quality and accuracy of public information provided by the College, it is not intended to limit in any way the freedom that staff have within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions. While the academic freedom of individual members of staff to express and publish *individual* opinions is not affected by this policy, it does establish procedures and operational controls that limit and regulate the publication of information for and on behalf of the College.

## 2. Scope of the Policy

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2.1 The policy applies to CLC.

2.2.1 Prospective students including web-based marketing materials (websites, landing pages, ppc adverts and affiliate marketing channels, hard-copy marketing materials, advertorial press releases, student prospectuses and factsheets, course promotions and other similar material;

2.1.1 Recruiters and Agents including recruiter guidance, agent guidance, training materials on product updates for CLC recruiters and agents, training materials for CLC recruiters and agents on new course and educational products, course application forms, visa guidance, admissions criteria guidance;

2.1.2 Enrolling students including admissions and course guidance, student induction packs and similar material;

2.1.3 Students enrolled on courses at CLC including student handbooks, assessment guidance and timetables;

2.1.4 The general public and other stakeholders. The publications listed above are examples of publications that fall within the scope of this policy. This does not constitute an exhaustive list.

## 3. Communication and Publicity: Guiding Principles

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3.1

This policy seeks to ensure that all communications produced are clear, accurate, comprehensive and unambiguous. The Policy extends to all internal and external communications, publications and collateral marketing materials, audio/visual materials produced, designed and/or edited by SMT.

3.2

The SMT is responsible for coordinating all external communications regarding news or media releases, announcement, events social media updates, and any media engagement and non-paid for external communication, as well as internal staff communication.

3.3

The IT manager co-ordinates and update all website and online content, advertising, broadcasting or paid communication for circulation or reception in the UK or elsewhere.

- 3.4 Programme Leaders are responsible for checking materials prior to release for publication.
- 3.5 The timing of review of publications is set according to the frequency of re-publication or re-release. There is also provision for changes to be made in response to external factors, such as changes in the law or regulations.

#### **4. External Communication with the Media**

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- 4.1 Examples of communications:
- 4.1.1 All media liaison
  - 4.1.2 All non-paid for public relations activities
  - 4.1.3 Events (such as speeches, staff and students training development workshop and public)
  - 4.1.4 Graduation celebration events
  - 4.1.5 All social media platforms and online engagement
  - 4.1.6 Reputation management
  - 4.1.7 Public Affairs engagement
- 4.2 All CLC generated news releases must be approved by the SMT before being released to the media or public communication, as communicated to staff members will be vetted, checked and signed-off before being released externally to the media.
- 4.4 All key external contacts are managed as far as possible by a single contact at CLC or a defined team, in order to avoid duplication and ensure consistency of message.

#### **5. Marketing and Publicity Materials**

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- 5.1 The SMT is responsible for managing all internal and external publications in CLC and works closely with all key CLC stakeholders and academics (where appropriate).
- 5.2 The SMT is responsible for a range of functions, including the production of:
- 5.2.1 Brand guidelines, ensuring brand consistency for all CLC materials
  - 5.2.2 Online and Offline Advertising
  - 5.2.3 Printed Publications
  - 5.2.4 Email shots
  - 5.2.5 Website and landing page content and design
  - 5.2.6 Internal signage

- 5.2.7 Corporate presentations
- 5.2.8 Events & Open Days
- 5.2.9 Social Media
- 5.2.10 Copy creation
- 5.2.11 All other cross-departmental marketing requirements

5.3 The SMT is responsible for the branding aspects of staff profiles on the website. The individual owner of the profile and the relevant programme leaders are responsible for the accuracy of the information contained within that profile.

5.4 **Examples of communications:**

- 5.4.1 Prospectus, factsheets and website content, including information about courses and entry requirements for potential students, as specified by the partner awarding body.
- 5.4.2 Information about fees and terms and conditions for potential students.
- 5.4.3 Promotional materials for public events sponsored or supported by CLC
- 5.4.4 The design of Student Handbooks and Induction Packs, relevant to each course of study offered by CLC with content provided by the relevant stakeholder as and when an item is requested.

**PART TWO: Operational Vetting Procedures to ensure consistent implementation of the College Information Policy**

**6. Vetting Process for College Information Publicity Materials**

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- 6.1 The process to provide adequate essential information to prospective and current students in a clear, timely and accurate manner in line with the policy stated above, is as follows. Stakeholders are required to allow sufficient time for the vetting process to take place; accordingly, submissions should be made in good time before the intended publication date.
- 6.2 Key stakeholders propose an advertisement or other promotional material (both online and offline) to the SMT by completing a Marketing brief. This step is not required if the advertisement or promotional material are proposed by the SMT.

**7. Vetting Process for Website Publicity**

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The process for vetting of the website is to provide adequate, essential and updated information to the public in a clear, timely and accurate manner as follows:

- 7.1 CLC's website is reviewed regularly by the IT Manager to ensure accuracy and up-to- date information and is also checked bi-annually by the SMT
- 7.2 Each website section is reviewed regularly with the responsible Programme Leader verifying accuracy and completeness of information, validity of all dates and figures and general presentation, spelling and grammar.
- 7.2.1 Any minor, regular changes (e.g., updating of "Next Intake" and "Open Day" dates, updates to the names of programme coordinators, etc.) are executed by the responsible Programme Leader as and when required.
- 7.2.2 Whenever the need for significant / major changes is identified either through the bi-annual review process or through ad hoc requests from other stakeholders, the responsible Programme Leader will create a brief for copy and/or artwork/layout changes and forward it to the SMT for approval.
- 7.3 Whenever the need for a new website page/section arises due to the introduction of a new course or other developments, the SMT initiates a creation process for new pages/sections.

7.3.1 The responsible Programme Leader will create a brief for copy and artwork for the new page(s) and forward it to the SMT for approval who will vet the proposed website content to ensure it is accurate, comprehensive and complies with all external partner requirements.

## **8. Responses to Complaints or Feedback related to College Information**

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8.1 Whilst CLC proactively seeks to avoid any instance of misleading or erroneous public information though adherence to this policy, it is acknowledged that corrective action may be necessary in response to complaints or feedback.

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8.2 Complaints or feedback relating to college information is likely to be generated via the following sources:

8.2.1 Student comments and complaints;

8.2.2 Comments or complaints from partner awarding bodies or universities and/or accreditation and regulation bodies;

8.2.3 Comments or complaints from third party stakeholders, e.g., Trading Standards, the Advertising Standards Agency, members of the public.

8.3 In the case of student feedback and complaints relating to College information, these are passed onto the SMT. The complaint is then investigated with the involvement of the CEO and where necessary remedial action is carried out

8.4 Where complaints or comments are received from the Awarding Body, these are delivered to the Contact Person for that Awarding Body. The issues are investigated and addressed as above and a formal response is conveyed to the awarding body with revised text, as required.

8.5 Whenever a complaint is received, the vetting processes will be reviewed and evaluated to assess and mitigate the risks of reoccurrence.

### **Policy Review**

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This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, or if there is a change in legal or other business related requirement.

Review Date	Description	Reviewer
August 2023	College Information Policy	Quality and Standards Committee

#### Document History

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Version Date	Description	Authors
22/01/2018	Policy approved and accepted, by Operational Board	Quality and Standards Committee approval
02/05/2019	College Information Policy	Quality and Standards Committee
02/05/2020	College Information Policy	Quality and Standards Committee
02/05/2021	College Information Policy	Quality and Standards Committee
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