FREEDOM OF INFORMATION POLICY

Version 3.0

Non-Statutory

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Director of Governance & Compliance

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Version History

Version	Date Approved	Amendments (Briefly Detail Changes and section/page number)	Substantive or Operational Amendment	Approved By: Substantive – Trust Board Operational – Head of Function/CEO
Example 1.0	*06.01.2026*	*Page 4 – update to the relevant legislation* *Page 6 – update to the role holder in the Trust*	*Operational*	*CEO*
2.0	22.09.2022		Substantive	Trust Board
3.0	*01.10.2026*	*Policy template adopted from PHP Law (DPO)* *Updated titles and responsibilities.* *Updated UK GDPR terminology.* *Updated EMAT address*	*Operational*	*Director of Governance & Compliance*

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Freedom of Information Policy

1.0 Freedom of Information Policy

Esteem Multi-Academy Trust (EMAT) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI) as a public authority, and as such, must comply with any requests for information in accordance with the principles laid out in the Act.

This means that the trust must hold and publish a FOI Publication Scheme, to communicate what information we hold is readily available to the public, and where it can be found.

All public authorities must also have processes in place to manage and FOI requests that are made.

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

The EMAT Publication Scheme has been developed from the Information Commissioner's Office template documents. It is EMAT's aim to ensure that the publication of information is accessible for individuals. Much of the information listed is routinely published on individual Academy websites and in their individual prospectuses.

The Publication Scheme and the material it covers will be readily available in hard copy from the Trust or Academy, depending on the source of the information.

Schedule of charges under Freedom of Information Publication Scheme.

Type of Charge	**Description**	**Basis of charge**
Disbursement cost	Photocopying/Printing @ 10p per sheet	Actual cost 10p
	Photocopying/Printing @ 50p per sheet	Actual cost 50p
	Postage	Actual cost of Royal Mail standard second class

Where the cost of postage, printing or photocopying is below £10.00, we will not make a charge.

Where it is over £10.00, the first £10.00 will be free of charge, after that we will charge the full estimated cost of postage and copying.

Before we produce the information, we shall inform you of the total cost. You may wish to refine the request in order to reduce the cost and we would be happy to discuss this with you.

2.0 Freedom of Information requests

Any request for any information from the Trust will be considered to see if it meets the criteria of FOI. This is irrespective of whether or not the individual making the request mentions the FOI.

If the request is simple and the information is to be released, then the individual who received the request can release the information but must ensure that this is done within the timescale set out below.

A copy of the request and response should then be sent to the EMAT Director of Governance and Compliance.

All other requests should be referred in the first instance to GDPR Lead at the Academy who may co-ordinate the process with other staff.

All requests under FOI are treated as if made by any member of the general public. Any information released will be within the public domain and may not be marked restricted or confidential.

3.0 Time limits for FOI requests

The Trust must respond as soon as possible, and in any event, within 20 working days of the date of receipt of the request.

When calculating the 20-working day deadline, a "working day" is a school day (one in which pupils are in attendance), subject to an absolute maximum of 60 normal working days (not school days) to respond.

4.0 Part 1 – Identifying the types of information

As an organisation we hold different types of information:

- Organisational information, prospectus, locations and contacts, constitutional and legal governance, schemes of delegation, Trust and individual academy arrangements.
- Financial information about income and expenditure, financial audit, funding agreements, procurement, tendering and contracts.
- Plans, strategies, aims and objectives, performance indicators, audits, inspections, and reviews.
- Decision making processes and records of decisions, internal criteria, and procedures.
- Policies and procedures – protocols, policies, and procedures for delivering services and compliance with our statutory and regulatory obligations.
- Lists and registers required by law and other key information.
- Details of our curriculum and wider educational offering

5.0 Part 2 - Considering the nature of the request

FOI requests will be fully complied with unless an exemption applies.

Common exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act 2000 include:

- Section 40 (1) – the request is for the applicant's personal data. This must be dealt with under the subject access regime in the UK GDPR, see the Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices.
- Section 40 (2) – compliance with the request would involve releasing third party personal data, and this would be in breach of the UK GDPR principles as set out in Data Protection Policy.
- Section 41 – information that has been sent to the Academy Trust (but not the Academy's own information) which is confidential.
- Section 21 – information that is already publicly available, even if payment of a fee is required to access that information.
- Section 22 – information that the Academy Trust intends to publish at a future date.
- Section 43 – information that would prejudice the commercial interests of the Academy and / or a third party.
- Section 38 – information that could prejudice the physical health, mental health or safety of an individual (this may apply particularly to safeguarding information).
- Section 31 – information which may prejudice the effective detection and prevention of crime – such as the location of CCTV cameras.
- Section 36 – information which, in the opinion of the chair of trustees of the Academy Trust, would prejudice the effective conduct of the Academy. There is a special form for this on the ICO's website to assist with the obtaining of the chair's opinion.
- Information within these exemptions must be considered and weighed up about the general principal that information should be disclosed wherever applicable.

6.0 Part 3 – Responding to a request

When responding to a request where it is necessary to withhold some or all of the information, we will explain why the information has been withheld, quoting the appropriate section number and explaining how the information requested fits within that exemption. If the public interest test has been applied, this will be set out.

In these circumstances the requester can seek a review form with the Trust and correspondence should be addressed in the first instance to the Director of Governance and Compliance, Esteem Multi-Academy Trust, One Oakwood Court, Little Oak Drive, Annesley, Nottingham, NG15 0DR - or via email at info@esteemmat.co.uk.

If anyone has any concerns, questions or complaints in relation to this policy or the publication scheme contained within it they should contact the EMAT Governance and Compliance Director at the EMAT address/email previously stated.

If you require a paper version of any information set out under the FOI Publication Scheme, or want to ask whether information is available, contact the trust using the details set out below.

7.0 Contact

As outlined above, please contact the following for any FOI requests:

- FOI requests related to information held by an academy within the EMAT – please contact the academy direct by marking your FOI request for the GDPR Lead.
- FOI requests related to two or more academies within the EMAT, in relation to data held at Trust level or if the FOI request is of a more complex nature – please contact the EMAT directly in writing and mark your FOI request for the attention of the EMAT Governance and Compliance Director at the EMAT address/email within this policy.
- You can also visit our website www.esteemmat.co.uk.
- To help us process requests quickly, any correspondence should be clearly marked 'FOI Request'.

If you are not satisfied with the assistance that you get or if we have not been able to resolve your complaint and you feel that a formal complaint needs to be made, then this should be addressed to:

Information Commissioners Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5A

Telephone: 0303 123 1113
Website: www.ico.org.uk

8.0 Appendix A – Publication Scheme

Esteem Multi-Academy Trust
The Publication Scheme

This is a list of information we hold.
Not all will be released as part of an FoI request.
All requests will be considered in line with our policy and obligations.

Information available	How the information can be obtained	Charge
Information, structure, locations and contacts Current information only		
Who's who in Esteem MAT	Website	No charge
Governing body – names and contact details of the governors and the basis of their appointment	Individual Academy websites	No charge
Instrument of Government – Funding Agreements	DfE website	No charge
Staffing structure	Trust & Individual Academy Websites	No charge
Academy Session times, term dates and holidays	Trust & Individual Academy Websites	No charge
Location & Contact information – address, telephone numbers & website	Trust & Individual Academy Websites	No charge
Contact details for the Executive Head/Headteacher and the Governing Body	Trust & Individual Academy Websites	No charge
Academy Prospectus	Individual Academy Websites	No charge

Information available	How the information can be obtained	Charge
Financial information relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, procurement, contracts and financial audit (Minimum of current and the previous two years financial year)		
Annual financial statements, capital funding and income generation for prior years	Hard copy and on website	No charge
Statutory Accounts	Trust/Companies House website	No charge
Details of capital funding allocated to the Academy along with information on related building projects and other capital projects or sources of funding for current year	Electronic copy through request to the GDPR Lead at the relevant Academy	No charge
Procurement and contracts, subject to the commercial/confidential public interest test	Electronic copy through request to the GDPR Lead at relevant Academy.	No charge
Pay Policy – statement on general procedures	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Staff grading and structure	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Governors' allowances – details if allowances/expenses that can be claimed/incurred	EMAT website	Schedule of charges

Information available	How the information can be obtained	Charge
Strategies and plans, performance indicators, audits, inspections and reviews Current information as a minimum		
Academy Profile -Government supplied data Latest OFSTED report – summary and full report Examination results	DfE Website Ofsted website Academy website Academy website	Schedule of charges No charge No charge
Performance Management policy and procedures	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Future plans	Trust & Individual Academy Websites	No charge
Safeguarding policies and procedures	Hard copy & Academy Website	Schedule of charges

Information available	How the information can be obtained	Charge
Decision making processes and records of decisions Current and previous three years as a minimum		
Admissions policy and decisions (not individual decisions)	Individual Academy websites	No charge
Governing Board meeting agendas and minutes – (this will exclude information that is properly regarded as confidential to the meeting)	Hard copy Individual	Schedule of charges

Information available	How the information can be obtained	Charge
Current written protocols, policies and procedures for delivery our services and responsibilities Current information as a minimum		
Policies including: Charging and remission policy Health & Safety and Risk Assessment Complaints procedure Staff, discipline, grievance, pay and conduct Policies Staffing structure implementation plan Equal Opportunities policies – including equality & diversities Staff Recruitment & Selection policies Child Protection Policy	Hard copy & Individual Academy websites	No charge
***Pupil and curriculum policies including**:* Home School Agreement Curriculum Policy Sex Education Policy Special Needs Educational Policy/Information Report Accessibility Policy	Hard copy & Individual Academy websites	No charge

Information available	How the information can be obtained	Charge
Procedures and Policies Current information as a minimum		
Pupil and curriculum policies including: (cont'd) Equality Policy Education Policy Pupil Behaviour, Discipline Exclusion Policy	Hard copy & Individual Academy websites	No charge
Records Management and Personal Data Policies: Information security policies Records retention policies Destruction and archive policies Data Protection policies	Hard copy	No charge
Charging Regimes and policies: includes details of any statutory charging regimes – charges made for information routinely published. Clearly stating what costs are to be recovered, the basis on which they are made and how they are calculated.	Hard copy	No charge

Information available	How the information can be obtained	Charge
Lists and Registers only		
Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Disclosure Logs	In Academy	Schedule of charges
Asset Register	In Academy	Schedule of charges
Any information the Trust are currently legally required to hold in publicly available registers	Hard copy	Schedule of charges
Information services Currently information only		
Extra-curricular activities Out of School Clubs	Individual Academy websites	No charge
Academy publications	Individual Academy websites	No charge
Services for which the Academy is entitled to recover a fee, together with those fees	Individual Academy websites	No charge
Leaflets, booklets and newsletters	Individual Academy websites	No charge