

Public Information Policy & Procedure

1. Introduction

The policy supports ICOM's procedure for oversight, control, quality and review over public domain information about the College, which is produced and distributed by the College. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all published public information is complete, accurate and up to date, whatever its format and audience.

2. Aim

To ensure that ICOM has appropriate arrangements and monitoring procedures to ensure that the information it publishes is:

- accurate
- fit for purpose
- trustworthy
- transparent and open
- timely and up to date
- accessible
- legally compliant

To ensure published information enables audiences to form an accurate impression of ICOM, make informed decisions, allows for a clear and effective communication about and within the college and meet any applicable legal obligations e.g. Consumer Affairs Act (Chapter 378 of the Laws of Malta), Data Protection Act 2018 (Chapter 586 of the Laws of Malta)

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 ICOM's courses and activities.

4. Policy

4.1 The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all published public information is complete, accurate and up to date, whatever its format and audience.

4.2 The Principal allocates responsibilities for the preparation and quality assurance of public information, whatever the intended platform and audience, and operates an effective oversight of processes to ensure that the policy is adhered to.

4.3 The College has adopted the guidance provided by the Information Commissioner in order to comply with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act (Chapter 496). Information will meet any applicable legal obligations e.g. in relation to copyright and the requirements of the Data Protection Act (DPA), Chapter 440.

4.4 Information must be published in a manner that adequately meets the standards required by legislation, and stakeholder requirements.

4.5 Public information provided will be in accordance with the stated college values, i.e. be transparent and processed in an open and honest manner.

4.6 All staff responsible for the production of public information should demonstrate that information provided across all platforms complies with the college public information and other relevant policies. The material developed must meet the College's established standards of quality. It should be accurate, timely, up to date, reliable and fit for purpose. Its presentation, including grammar, punctuation, spelling and formatting should be of a high standard. Appropriate proof-reading services should be in place.

4.7 Information will be provided in accessible formats. The College will endeavour to meet the requests of individuals where this is deemed reasonable.

4.8 All external communications with the press and media will be authorised and managed by College Communications Administrator and overseen by the Principal.

5. Procedure

5.1 College Standards

5.1.1 The author of any document to be published either internally or externally should first submit a Marketing Request Form to the College Communications Administrator using the College template (Appendix 1).

5.1.2 Authors are responsible for ensuring that information drafted is prepared in accordance with College standards.

5.1.4 On behalf of the Principal, the College Communications Administrator will be responsible for ensuring that standards for public information are implemented consistently by authors ensures that appropriate arrangements for proof reading and verification are in place and followed.

5.1.5 All information published internally and externally must be approved by the College Communication Administrator as confirming that College standards have been met on behalf of the Principal. The College Communications Administrator is subsequently responsible to the Principal for the accuracy of all material published once approved.

5.1.6 The College logo can only be used with adherence to the published College standards.

5.2 Freedom of Information

5.2.1 The College's Communications Administrator will be responsible for ensuring that information published by the College is mapped under Freedom of Information legislation.

5.2.2 All formal requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act must be passed to the College Communications Administrator immediately upon receipt.

5.2.3 The College Communications Administrator will maintain a log and manage the request to completion within 20 days.

5.2.4 Requests by the College Communications Administrator to provide records relating to a FOI request must receive urgent and immediate action.

5.3 Policies, procedures and strategies

5.3.1 Responsibility for authoring and review of college policies and strategies lies with the Principal. The College Communications Administrator, in conjunction with the Quality Manager, will be responsible for the evaluation of each policy/procedure and strategy, making recommendations for any changes and drafting policy for approval.

5.3.2 Policies which directly affect students and relate to recruitment, admissions, complaints and appeals, examinations and student discipline will be available in a timely fashion through the College web site and student intranet before the beginning of each recruitment cycle.

5.3.3 The College Communication Administrator, on behalf of the Principal, is responsible for ensuring that communication via social media sites and tools reflect the College's values by remaining professional in tone and in good taste. Appropriate limitations on the content posted should be adhered and monitored.

5.4 Course-related Information

5.4.1 The Principal is responsible for ensuring that public information is accurate and up-to-date.

5.4.2 The processes for preparation of public information relating to the accredited course must be reviewed annually. Normally, the Quality Manager will be responsible for drafting course-related information. All information will be reviewed in accordance with the College's quality assurance processes. Information must be approved by the College Information Administrator, on behalf of the Principal.

5.4.3 Information available about the courses and programmes offered will be available through the College website, social media platforms, published brochures and advertisements. Public information should be sufficient for prospective students to make an informed decision and may be available through websites, social media, brochures, adverts, etc. 5.4.4 All advertised courses must have an accurate fact sheet, which must be published on the website. Fact sheets must be updated as required to accurately reflect current provision.

5.4.5 All course and College marketing materials must as a minimum meet the published current guidelines of the Malta NCFHE and also reflect developing good practice arising in other jurisdictions, e.g. United Kingdom or Italy.