

Public Information Policy

SCOPE

1. This policy covers information published in electronic or printed form which refers to information about New College of the Humanities ('NCH' or 'the College'), academic programmes, services, corporate strategy and policies.
2. This policy does not cover letters, verbal communication, presentations, financial statements, audit documentation, teaching and learning materials, staff recruitment advertisements, the outputs of research and scholarly activity or the content of creative work.

AIMS AND CONTEXT

3. The College publishes information that is accurate, fair, reasonable and timely.
4. We aim to enable external audiences to form an accurate impression of the institution and to make informed decisions.
5. Public information is communicated in the context of policy and legislation, including Data Protection, Freedom of Information and the QAA UK Quality Code, **Part C** expectation:

"UK higher education providers produce information for their intended audiences about the higher education they offer that is fit for purpose, accessible and trustworthy."

PROCEDURE

6. In general, communication of public information as defined below is authorised within departments or faculties by line managers, with local procedures and record-keeping commensurate with the importance of the communication.
7. In practice, staff has authority to communicate autonomously in a range of media according to the nature and level of their role.
8. Some specific types of public information have centralised controls:
 - Marketing communication (including prospectuses)
 - Website and online media
 - Communication with the press/media

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS - SCOPE

9. This section applies to all publications and advertisements (printed and electronic) which are explicitly designed to promote academic programmes to potential students and which are published via the Marketing and Communications, and Admissions departments.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

10. 'Prospectuses' – substantive printed documents cataloguing programmes and related information, currently a 'Full-time Undergraduate Prospectus' – other programmes being covered by brochures and leaflets.
11. 'Publications' – documents and other items published by New College of the Humanities itself, including prospectuses, brochures, leaflets, display stands and web pages.
12. 'Advertisements' – text/image which appears in an external publication, where the appearance is paid for by New College of the Humanities.
13. 'Directory entries' – information published externally under the instructions of the College, whether or not a charge is made to the College.

PRINCIPLES

14. Marketing and Communications, and Admissions teams seek to make all reasonable efforts to ensure accuracy of information, based on information provided by defined individuals, departments, and committees within the College.
15. The seven indicators of sound practice which demonstrate how to meet the QAA UK Quality Code **Part C** expectation are implemented.
16. In accordance with indicator 18 of Chapter B10 of the QAA UK Quality Code, the College's awarding bodies are required to have effective control over the accuracy of public information disclosed in respect to programmes they validate for delivery at the College. Accordingly, the College shall comply with its awarding bodies' reasonable directions as they may issue from time to time in respect of such public information.
17. The College logo can only be used with adherence to the College Brand Guidelines.

PROSPECTUSES

18. As prospectuses are substantial reference documents, a series of sequential checks are undertaken to ensure the accuracy of published information.
19. To ensure that prospectuses are published in a timely manner, it is understood that the process of production will include occasions where information is included with the sequence of checking. In these cases the best judgment of the Marketing Director and the Executive Dean is used to decide on the final text.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROSPECTUS INFORMATION AND CHECKING/APPROVAL PROCEDURE

20. All approvers are accepting responsibility for statements being factually accurate, reasonable, verifiable, and compliant with relevant legislation.
21. College staff identified below therefore have joint and collective responsibility for the prospectus.

STAGE 1

a)	Description of University of London International Programmes and courses designed by the College which are not validated by an awarding body, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate description of the programme, courses, facilities, staff expertise • Accurate use of terminology including award titles • Reasonable information about learning that can be supported by evidence • Correct contact details 	Head of Faculty
bi)	Description of specific elements of programmes which are validated by an awarding body to be delivered at the College, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses studied and any optionality • Learning outcomes • Credits • Methods of summative assessment and weighting • Regulations 	Head of Quality Assurance or Registrar
bii)	The definitive programme specifications that are linked to the online prospectus for programmes that are validated by an awarding body to be delivered at the College	Head of Quality Assurance or Registrar
c)	Accurate descriptions of services, facilities, and associated procedures, including pricing and availability	Directors of relevant services
d)	Information for international students (including EU, EEA)	Executive Dean
e)	References to fees and awards	Executive Dean
f)	Entry requirements and admissions procedures	Executive Dean
g)	Advertisements, directory enquiries, publications	Director of Marketing

STAGE 2

Overall quality of publication	Director of Marketing
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STAGE 3

Final overview approval based on confirmation of previous stages	Master – academic information Executive Dean - other statements and information, including advertisements, directory enquiries and publications
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N.B. Approved information (e.g. from the prospectus) can be republished without further checks when the Director of Marketing/Communications has not received updated information.

WEBSITE AND ONLINE MEDIA

22. The online prospectus is generated using the process described above. Ongoing updates may be made, and substantial changes, such as the addition of new courses, will also be subject to the procedure above.
23. The individuals identified above are responsible for the accuracy of information in the online presence of the College in their area, including online content, e.g. filmed lectures, podcasts.
24. These individuals must ensure, through a locally-arranged process of regular review, that information is accurate and appropriate, and that:
 - Any images, video or other content must be the copyright of the College, or where this is not the case be used with permission;
 - Links to external material are current;
 - Any potentially offensive material is justified (on the basis of creative and/or academic merit);
 - Social media sites badged as belonging to the College, with functions managed appropriately, and with processes in place to deal with user-created content and behaviours of participants who may not be formally part of the College
 - All communications produced by the College will be grammatically and orthographically correct, and of an appropriate register.

MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

25. Individual staff may contact the media and respond to any requests from the media without reference to the College, whenever the College itself is not directly concerned. General support and advice is, however, available from the College.
26. Press releases can only be issued by the College Press Office, or any agency authorised by the Press Office on an individual basis (per press release).
27. Approval level will depend on the nature of the story but will usually include the Chief Operating Officer, Executive Dean, and, predominantly, the Director of Marketing.

Title	Public Information Policy	Author	Director of Marketing
Location	NCH Academic Handbook	Approved by	Senior Management Team (23.01.17)
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Related policies	None		
Quality Code	Quality code – UK Quality Code Chapter C		