

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 (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. The College aims to enable external audiences to form an accurate impression of the institution and make informed decisions.
5. Public information is communicated in the context of policy and legislation, including Data Protection, GDPR, Freedom of Information and the QAA UK Quality Code Theme: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access.

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.
11. 'Publications' – documents and other items published by the College, 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 the College.
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 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 College logo can only be used with adherence to the College Brand Guidelines.

PROSPECTUSES

16. As prospectuses are substantial reference documents, a series of sequential checks are undertaken to ensure the accuracy of published information.
17. 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 during the sequence of checking. In these cases the best judgment of the Director of Marketing (DoM) and the Executive Dean (ED) is used to decide on the final text.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROSPECTUS INFORMATION AND CHECKING/APPROVAL PROCEDURE

18. All approvers accept responsibility for statements being factually accurate, reasonable, verifiable, and compliant with relevant legislation.
19. College staff identified below therefore have joint and collective responsibility for the prospectus.

STAGE 1

a)	Description of programmes designed by the College which are not credit bearing, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate description of the programme, courses, facilities, staff expertise • Accurate use of terminology including award titles • Correct contact details 	NCH Diploma Coordinator and Dean for Education in Business and Economics
b)	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"> • Definitive programme specification • Courses studied and any optionality • Credits 	Quality Team
c)	Accurate descriptions of services, facilities, and associated procedures, including pricing and availability	Executive Dean
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 has not received updated information.

WEBSITE AND ONLINE MEDIA

20. 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.

21. 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.
22. These individuals must ensure, through a locally-arranged process of regular review, that information is accurate and appropriate, and that:
 - 22.1. Any images, video or other content must be the copyright of the College, or where this is not the case be used with permission.
 - 22.2. Links to external material are current.
 - 22.3. Any potentially offensive material is justified (on the basis of creative and/or academic merit).
 - 22.4. Social media sites badged as belonging to the College have functions managed appropriately, and processes in place to deal with user-created content and behaviours of participants who may not be formally part of the College.
 - 22.5. All communications produced by the College will be grammatically and orthographically correct, and of an appropriate register.

MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS

23. 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.
24. Press releases can only be issued by the DoM, or any agency authorised by the DoM on an individual basis (per press release).
25. Approval level will depend on the nature of the story but will usually include the Chief Executive Officer, ED, and, predominantly, the DoM.

Title: Public Information Policy					
Approved by: Executive Committee					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Location	Proposed next review date
3.0	January 2021	January 2021	Director of Marketing	Academic Handbook; Policies and Procedures; General; Operations	July 2023
2.5	November 2018	November 2018	Director of Marketing	Academic Handbook; Policies and Procedures; General; Operations	July 2020
2.4	November 2018	November 2018	Director of Marketing	Academic Handbook; Policies and Procedures; General; Operations	July 2020
2.3	January 2017	January 2017	Director of Marketing	Academic Handbook; Policies and Procedures; General	November 2017
Referenced documents	None				
External Reference Point(s)	UK Quality Code: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access: Competition and Markets Authority: Higher Education: consumer law advice for providers				