

Privacy and confidentiality statement for intercollegiate committee minutes and papers

To assist Colleges in offering efficient and effective ways of managing their business and meeting their charitable objectives, a number of intercollegiate committees have been set up: many of these are managed by the Office of Intercollegiate Services. The following statement applies to:

- Colleges' Committee (including any standing committees, sub-committees and working groups);
- Bursars Committee (including any standing committees, sub-committees and working groups);
- Intercollegiate Committee on College Accounts (including any standing committees, sub-committees and working groups);
- College Development Directors' Committee.

(The Senior Tutors' Committee and its standing committees is supported by the Academic Division of the University of Cambridge. It publishes its minutes – but not papers – internally to persons with an @cam.ac.uk email address at: www.seniortutors.admin.cam.ac.uk/senior-tutors-committee)

The minutes and papers of the listed intercollegiate committees are not published routinely. The Colleges collectively acknowledge their responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2006: they are of the view that the routine publication of the minutes may compromise the discussion of confidential matters and the exchange of free and frank opinion on current matters, and note that the importance of restriction of publication of minutes and papers on particular matters may change over time. The Colleges will respond to requests for copies of intercollegiate committee minutes and papers through the procedures outlined below.

Accordingly, intercollegiate committee members are advised that all minutes, papers and discussions at meetings are provided in confidence to its committee members, and are not shared outside of the specific membership unless it is agreed between the participants to make those outputs more generally available through other means (e.g. publication on the public OIS website), or with the permission of the officers of the relevant committee, standing committee or sub-committee.

Principles for the withholding of materials on request

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 allows for the exemption of the provision of information under a number of categories. The most common ones that apply to information relating to intercollegiate committees are:

- Section 40 information which is the personal data of others (and especially Fellows, staff or students of the University or one or more Colleges), and where providing the information would breach current data protection legislation;
- Section 36 where knowledge of the potential for the information to be public would hinder (now or in the future) the free and frank advice or discussion between the committee members, or otherwise compromise the ability of the Colleges to conduct their public affairs;

- Section 43 where the provision of the information would breach the confidentiality principles of the intercollegiate committee and particularly where it would be deemed at the time to compromise the commercial interests of one or more of the Colleges (e.g. at a time when negotiations between the Colleges, or negotiations of the Colleges with the University or a third party are current or recent);
- Section 21 where the information is already readily accessible to the requester (which may include circumstances where the information is available by collating information from a number of other sources);
- Section 12 the cost of providing the information exceeds the statutory limit (which corresponds to 18 hours of work): this may relate to the aggregation of costs of related requests received within 60 working days from the same person or from people who seem to working together.

Given that the members of intercollegiate committees are normally senior posts within the College, the membership of an intercollegiate committee will not be considered personal data.

Recent intercollegiate committee minutes and papers are highly likely to be exempt under the first two points above: when a request for information is received, an assessment at that time is conducted to determine whether the exemptions would still apply.

Procedure for requesting intercollegiate committee minutes and papers

1. Any request should be made to the Secretary of the relevant committee. (Where requests are received within an individual College – by a committee member or a College Freedom of Information Officer – the requester should be directed to the Secretary of the relevant committee, citing Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 if necessary.)
2. The College of which the Secretary is a member will be responsible for managing any formal request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, on behalf of all of the Colleges, and will confirm to the requester in writing that this is the case.¹
3. The Secretary (or Chair of the Colleges' Committee) will, where relevant, consult with the persons who support him or her in servicing the committee. He or she will consider the appropriate redaction of material(s) on behalf of the committee and, where appropriate:
 - a. consult the committee members on any arising concerns relating to confidentiality; and/or
 - b. in circumstances where a Section 36 exemption is applied, consult his or her Head of House as the qualified person to make an appropriate opinion on the reasonableness of applying the exemption.
4. A record of the information issued (and any exemptions applied) shall be kept by Office of Intercollegiate Services (OIS), so that the material could be reviewed, re-issued or re-used for any subsequent requests.

¹ For Colleges' Committee, the Chair shall instead be responsible for managing any formal requests for information.

Privacy and confidentiality statement for intercollegiate surveys

The Colleges' participation in intercollegiate surveys is voluntary. The College is entitled to ask at any time that part or all of the data and information provided as part of an intercollegiate survey may be deleted or destroyed. If you have any questions about a survey, please email oisadmin@hermes.ac.uk

Management of personal data

The Office of Intercollegiate Services (OIS) is committed to protecting the personal data and privacy of members of the Colleges. When compiling and issuing the outputs from intercollegiate surveys, our policy is to take all necessary steps to ensure that personal data provided by a College is processed fairly and lawfully, and that the outputs contains as little identifiable personal data as possible.

OIS does not sell, rent or exchange any personal data supplied by a College to any third party (including other Colleges), unless consent has been given at the time of data collection or otherwise with the permission of the College.

All of the information that you provide will be treated as confidential and will only be used for the purposes of conducting the survey and producing the outputs. OIS does not use any of the information you provide for direct marketing or other activities.

Confidentiality

The information the College provides in this survey is treated by OIS as confidential, unless the information is or becomes generally available to a wider audience by the College through other means.

Equally, the intercollegiate outputs are to be considered as confidential information by the College, unless it is agreed between the participants to make those outputs more generally available through other means (e.g. publication on the public OIS website). In addition, the College should refrain from making any public announcements concerning the intercollegiate survey and its outputs.

Otherwise, the College and OIS agree to restrict the information relating to this survey to members of the College and its agents, and only where they have a genuine need to know the information, except where the information is required to be disclosed as required by law or regulation. For the avoidance of doubt, a request to the College for the intercollegiate survey outputs under the Freedom of Information Act shall require the agreement of the commissioning body (most usually a sub-committee of the Bursars' Committee).

The outputs of the intercollegiate survey should not be retained or copied by the College unless it is deemed strictly necessary by the College to do so: OIS retains copies of the outputs, which can be provided on request.

Dr M Russell
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