

Information Policy

Introduction

It is the policy of the organisation to ensure that information held by the Consortium and made available externally, conforms to the following minimum standards:

- accuracy assured (or statements made if this is not the case)
- current
- relevant
- fit for purpose
- accessible in a variety of formats
- reader friendly
- complies with current legislation

Scope

The scope of this policy covers information provided to both Service End Users and users of the information the Consortium holds as a Managing Agent as well as other external stakeholders.

The Consortium provides its Information Advice & Guidance (IAG) Service to its member organisations including its subcontractors. These are externally promoted using a minimum set of standards which are reviewed by the SLLC Senior Management Team and agreed by the SLLC Board. The IAG Service level agreement and Information, Advice and Guidance policy outlines the minimum performance levels/quality and scope of information expected to members, sub contractors and end users and what the Consortium is expected to deliver as part of this service.

Collecting Information

Information is captured in a variety of formats and includes paper based and electronic formats. The list below is not exhaustive but information held by the Consortium includes:

- material from funding bodies and partners i.e. Learning & Skills Council, London Development Agency, colleges and other consortia
- quality and curriculum documentation
- contract management and finance documents
- funding and tendering documents
- policies and procedures
- learner and staff records
- members and provider records
- external/internal written communication i.e. emails/letters

The Consortium has an environmental policy, part of which contributes towards developing sustainable environments by only printing electronic formats as and when it is necessary to do so, using the most economical means.

Storing and Maintaining Information

Personal and confidential information are stored in lockable cabinets or password protected pcs. This type of information is only accessible by designated personnel who will also have responsibility of ensuring that the information held is up to date.

The Consortium has a legal duty to protect personal data under the Data Protection Act. The Consortium will carefully consider its responsibilities under the Act before releasing personal information about individuals, including current and former staff, learners or members. Requests for any confidential information held by the Consortium will only be released when requests are made in writing and authorized by a member of the Senior Management Team.

The organisation is committed to complying with both the law and good practice, respecting individuals' rights, being open and honest with individuals whose data is held, provide training and support for staff who handle personal data, so that they can act confidently and consistently.

Information held by the Consortium will be regularly reviewed with a view to archiving or destruction, where appropriate.

Disseminating Information

Information is disseminated in a variety of formats including the Consortium website, meetings, telephone, newsletters, written correspondence (i.e. email, letters, memorandums, and reports). In all instances the Consortium aims to operate within the minimum standards.

Information produced by the Consortium can (upon request), be reproduced in a variety of formats, including translated and Braille formats.

Information held by Subcontractors

Sub contractors are contractually obliged to fully comply with the Data Protection Act and their Service Level Agreements. They are required to keep relevant information up to date (including information used to provide contracted initial advice and guidance) and learner records confidential and secure. Adherence to the Act and SLA are monitored by the Consortium Contracts Manager and Quality & Curriculum Manager during monitoring visits.

Equality of access to information

The Consortium's equal opportunities policy aims to ensure that no one receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of sex, race, marital status, creed social class, colour, or ethnic origins or disadvantaged by any conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be relevant or appropriate. The Consortium aims to ensure that a statement to this effect is made known to users accessing the website, Consortium publications and IAG services (the Consortium website and email addresses are clearly displayed on Consortium stationery).

Sub contractors are also required to demonstrate equality of opportunity in their practice, policies and procedures.

Policy Awareness

South London Learning Consortium

Voluntary & Community Learning Providers Working Together

A copy of this Policy will be made available to all staff currently employed, or when they join the organization and they are expected to be familiar with, and to comply with the Policy at all times. Individual sections of the Policy will be updated as required and will be available on the Consortium's website.