Transparency Policy

Owned by: Head of Governance
Approved by: Board of Trustees
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Transparency Policy

1.   Guiding Principles

The aim of the policy is to detail the University's intention to be transparent and open in our activities with stakeholders, and how this is put into practice.We have identified three categories of information as follows:

- Public: Information made available to all stakeholders via forums such as the University website, public documents and advertising materials.
- Internal: Information made available to stakeholders within the University via forums such as the intranet, the virtual learning platform and internal newsletters.
- Confidential: Information that may be deemed sensitive, and therefore is only made available to particular groups of stakeholders. This information may also be made available in the wider domain, with some information redacted as appropriate.

2.   Implementation of the policy

This policy will be made available on the University website and the intranet. It is the responsibility of all staff, to refer to and take the lead from this policy, to ensure that University practice is open and transparent.

3.   Openness in Practice

The University acts in a way that is open and honest about what we do, how we work and how decisions are made. We do this through the publication of an overarching publication scheme, which details all the information that we regularly make available, and the following information on our website:

- The Regent's University London Strategic Plan
- The minutes from the Board of Trustees
- The University's financial statements, including Senior Staff remuneration
- The Regent's Annual Report and Performance Review
- Policies and Procedures

The University Governance Structure is also made available on the University website, including the Board and Senate committee membership and terms of reference. These committees also include the following

processes to ensure open and honest practice:

➢ Declaration of Interests: At the beginning of each academic year, each member of the Board of Trustees and Directorate provides a declaration of interests, to avoid a position of potential conflict, and to ensure that members are acting in the best interest of the University. Declaration of interests are also sought at the beginning of each meeting. A list of Trustees' outside interests is published on the website.

➢ Gifts and Hospitality: All gifts and hospitality, both given and received, have a genuine and legitimate purpose, such as promoting the University and establishing good relationships with those with whom the University works. Only small gifts can be accepted, and all gifts and hospitality will be transparently documented in the University's accounting records and other written records.

➢ Board Effectiveness Review: Each trustee committee, including the Board of Trustees, is reviewed annually to ensure it is effective in meeting its terms of reference. A similar exercise occurs for the Senate commmittees, where an annual summary report, confirming that the terms of reference have been met, is submitted to the parent committee for scrutiny and approval.

4.   Open with Students

The University provides full and clear information to prospective students, current students, and alumni. This includes information about the programmes on offer, the policies and procedures, and the academic regulations that affect them and their studies. We will also provide information on how we spend our income and provide value for money to students. This information is made available via the following:

Public forums

- Regent's University London web site
- Marketing materials such as the prospectus
- Programme Specification
- Open days

Internal forums

- Regent's University London intranet
- Programme Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Virtual Learning Environment (currently Blackboard)
- The Regent's App

- Student Union Representatives on committees (and the minutes / updates)

The University also offers an Alumni service, whereby alumni who have left the University can stay in touch with the University and participate in events. Alumni students will receive the free, bi-annual alumni publication, the 'Inner circle', as well as a monthly electronic newsletter.

The University also operates a clear complaints procedure, both at applicant stage, and once the student has enrolled. These procedures are both made available publically on the website, and internally on the intranet and via the Student Handbook.

5. Open with Staff

The University provides full and clear information to staff on University activites, and the policies and procedures that affect their work. These are made available via the following:

- Regent's University intranet: this provides a central point of information for staff, such as a staff directory, IT guides, HR policies and access to strategic documents. There is also a separate 'Learning & Teaching' section providing all relevant information for academic teaching staff.
- Committee minutes and updates: committee minutes and papers are made available on the University intranet, once approved by the Chair, and subject to committee approval. Staff groups are widely represented on committees, for raising issues through the governance structure, and disseminating important news to constituents.
- HR provide a number of policies, procedures and guidance for staff on the intranet, and are available for further consultation as necessary.
- Virtual Learning Environment: primarily for teaching staff, information such as programme handbooks and programme specifications are available here. This platform also provides an interactive forum between staff and students.
- Internal Newsletters and Blogs: Important news and updates are circulated to all staff bi-weekly via a regular Univeresity newsletter. Major news is often provided to staff via our Vice-Chancellors blog.
- Town Hall: This meeting is open to all University staff and takes places approximately once per term. The Vice Chancellor holds the meetings, and provides colleagues with updates and the latest news.

- Joint Consultative Committee: Any University activity with a major impact on staff will go through consultation with the JCC, a committee representing each group of employees across the University.

6. Open with Regulators

The University will act openly with its regulators and relevant external bodies, providing information as required, and alerting contacts of any issues if necessary. These include, for example:

- Office for Students
- Charity Commission
- Quality Assurance Agency
- External Validating Partners
- UK Visas and Immigrations
- Officer of the Information Commissioner

7. Open with Stakeholders

The University will act openly with all its stakeholders to ensure information is available when required. Key contacts will be arranged for each of these to facilitate communication, such as:

- Suppliers
- Agents
- Neighbours
- Internal and External Auditors
- External examiners

8. Access to Information
- Information routinely published will be included in a Publication Scheme and made available via the University website and/or intranet as appropriate (see section 3, 4 and 5 above). This will follow appropriate committee approval, through the University Governance structure.
- Subject Access Requests
  - These type of requests can be made via the following email address: Privacy@regents.ac.uk
- Routine enquiries from Students: students are able to make enquiries through the following forums:
  - The student hub – a physical location on campus accessible in person or via phone / email: hub@regents.ac.uk
  - Regent's app – accessible via a student's smart phone

- o Teaching staff on their programme
- o The University intranet
- o Virtual Learning Environment (Blackboard)
- Replacement documents can be requested from the Student Registry and / or the student hub. There may be a small charge for reprinting, such as degree certificates. Staff can contact HR for documentation requirements.
- Other requests for information, including from prosepective students and prospective suppliers, can be made to Enquiries@regents.ac.uk.

Although the University is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act, where information is easily accessible and does not incur an unreasonable cost or strain on resources, we will endeavor to provide the information required. The decision to provide the information requested will be at the discretion of the University.

9.   Sharing Anonymised Data with others

The University makes available anonymised data in a number of ways, such as through:

- Gender pay gap
- Research data
- Benchmarking data
  - o Staff Salaries
  - o Staff Turnover
  - o Estates efficiency and creditor payment information
- Statistical student data for regulatory bodies, such as Unistats / HESA

10.   Information we do not disclose and reasons for non disclosure

- Commercially sensitive and confidential information.
- Information about individuals, subject to the Data Protection Act, except Declaration of Interests from the Board of Trustees and the Directorate.
- Legal advice.
- Proposals and options that have not been agreed, unless approved for consultation with staff and / or other stakeholders.
- Where provising the information requested, would incur an additional, unreasonable cost to the University.

11.   Measuring the policy's success

The measurement of the policy's success will be the number of requests dealt with and the lack of complaints received.

12. Monitoring of policy

The Head of Governance will monitor the use and effectiveness of the policy, and report any concerns or risks to the Board of Trustees.

13. Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis by the Board of Trustees.