



## **PUBLIC INFORMATION POLICY, v1.7**

### **Policy Statement**

BITE's public information must be reliable, clear and accessible. While it is targeted primarily at students and prospective students it may also be of interest to professionals and members of the general public with regard to BITE's activities and role within HE.

### **General Principles**

Public information should:

- enable prospective students to make informed decisions about studying at BITE.
- enable current students to make the most of their higher education learning experience.
- show BITE's structure and regulations.
- show the process for maintaining academic standards and quality.

### **Outlets**

While BITE continues to publish key documents in printed form (available through the Marketing and Admissions Department) its widest means of global dissemination of information is its web site. General information about BITE in the public domain is shown on the pages of its web site with more detailed documents, available for download in the Academic Registry section of the site.

The Academic Registry includes not only the prospectus, handbooks and programme descriptors (also available as hard copies) to aid students in course choices but also internal planning documents such as the Strategic Plan (edited). These show BITE's structure and operational procedures.

Web pages must be clear and concise with layouts and links making it possible to make informed choices about courses. Language used in web and printed information must be accessible to a wide, educated audience, for whom English may not be a first language with a minimum use of acronyms and absence of jargon.

### **Version Control**

In accordance with the Version Control Policy documents should carry a version number and where possible a history of version changes.

## **KEY INFORMATION**

### **Organisational:**

The Strategic Plan on the web site shows BITE's mission, values and overall strategy to enable audiences to develop an understanding of the activities of BITE and its role and position within the context of UK higher education. The annual report provides an up to date academic review of the year and summary of BITE's operating structure.

### **Operational Information**

The Academic Registry has detailed, operational information for students such as the Course Handbooks and forms and guidelines in areas such as Complaints, Appeals Against Assessment and Requests for submission extensions due to extenuating circumstances.

### **Application and admission to study**

On the web site, entry requirements for individual programmes are specified along with details of any prior experience needed. Information for international students, when recruited, including any additional documentation or other requirements, where appropriate, is provided. Details are given of fees payable for programme of study, accommodation assistance, visa requirements and student support.

### **Study**

The printed and web student handbooks provide information for students about programmes of study, awards and modes of study. They also provide details of the academic environment in which they will be studying, the support that will be made available to them and opportunities to provide student feedback to BITE.

At Induction Week students are provided with written and verbal information about the resources and facilities available to support and enhance learning, such as teaching staff availability; learning support staff; advisory services; classrooms; libraries; specialist learning environments such as laboratories and studios; and communication and information technologies, including virtual learning environments. Students are also made aware of the need to appoint student reps to attend Programme Meetings to represent students views.

### **Teaching and Support**

BITE's Learning and Teaching Strategy document is on the web and further details of strategies for teaching, learning and assessment are contained in the student and module handbooks.

BITE will develop further information about student support services and student engagement, arrangements for pastoral care, careers advice, work experience, social and leisure facilities.

### **Completion of Studies**

A transcript of all marks (from BITE courses and through collaborative provision) for course and exam work is given to students on completion of their studies. This can be given to prospective employers etc as evidence of students' achievement. BITE has rigorous administrative security methods audited by BSI to safeguard the integrity of student information and results.

### **Quality Control**

The Quality Assurance process is outlined in the Academic Registry and in the Staff Quality Assurance handbook. These set out in detail arrangements for the maintenance of academic standards and for the assurance and enhancement of the quality of the student learning opportunities, including policies and procedures.

### **Security of Information**

BITE has the British Standard Institute ISO 27001 Information Security Management System (ISMS) which covers the security of its physical and virtual information. This is audited externally every six months by the BSI with a full report highlighting compliance and any areas which require improvement. Administrative Quality controls are maintained and audited according to the BSI 9001 standard.

### **Validating Bodies**

An up to date record of all awarding bodies and a listing of collaborative programmes operated through those partnerships is on the web site.

## **MONITORING OF PUBLISHED INFORMATION**

### **Course Programmes**

With regard to course content, the Associate Deans manage the material for their Schools according to the validation requirements of the relevant University or awarding body. The Academic Registrar works with the Associate Dean of each of the Programmes on final drafts of proposed copy. New copy and fundamental changes to copy needs to be referred to the validating university and/or awarding body. The programmes also have regular Board meetings which can consider all issues regarding the programme, including public information.

The Associate Dean for each School is in constant contact with the Link Tutor or equivalent in the running of the programmes and the public information related to them. The contents of the handbook and programme specification are agreed with the university or awarding body,

but changes which are not deemed substantive can be made by the Associate Dean with reference to the Link Tutor.

BITE monitors and manages the final publishing of information in the public domain through the Academic Registrar. The AR checks information to make sure it complies with BITE's policy and style. Issues regarding public information can be discussed through the AR's position as chair of the Learning & Quality Committee and at the Academic Board (which has student representation). There are also monthly staff meetings which can address issues of public information on the web, NetEd and printed material. The L&Q Committee and Programme Committees (which have student representation) have Public Information as a part of their agendas.

### **Accuracy and the completeness of information**

Completeness of information is monitored by the AR with reference to the QAA's Code on public information. The decision regarding which information to publish and placement of information eg web, NetEd and/or printed is decided by consultation between the AR and the Principal.

Accuracy and the completeness of information is ensured and managed by being filtered through the Academic Registry. As mentioned above, public information is now an item on the agenda of the Programme Committees (which has student representatives) and the Learning and Quality Committee so that it is consistently being assessed and key issues addressed and actioned.

Grammatical accuracy is ensured by a team of proof readers headed by the Academic Registrar who see drafts of copy for BITE. Validating universities and professional awarding bodies also check copy for new courses relating to their validation.

### **Procedure for new or revised public information**

To sum up, any new or revised information is prepared in draft form by senior management in consultation with involved parties, assigned a draft version number, then circulated in soft copy to other interested parties and allocated to proof readers for independent scrutiny to ensure that it is accurate and written in a clear understandable style and is inclusive.

The marketing and admissions department creates promotional material and full details of programmes in consultation with the Schools and the AR. It revises course information on the web site each semester.

### **Monitoring and feedback**

Students provide anonymous feedback each semester which is assessed and actioned by Programme Leaders. Students also convey their views through Programme Meetings on which they are represented on each module. The elected Student President sits on the Academic Board and Council to represent student views and is consulted regarding the efficacy of information in the public domain

### **Style**

The Academic Registrar consults with the Associate Deans and Programme Leaders regarding reports they are involved in compiling which are published in the public domain. This helps to ensure a uniformity of approach and style without cramping individual initiative and creativity.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION**

BITE has moved beyond its primary goal of providing information about its structure, procedures and courses. It now endeavours to provide more secondary level information with human interest about its students and its lecturers and their interests and achievements. There needs to be continuing background information on student profiles on the web site, their testimonies, experience alumni achievements and employment experience.

Through its multimedia team, BITE continues to explore the use of other media channels so that its public information becomes less centred on the written word. It now has an introductory film on its Home page. On the website BITE will increasingly use films and radio excerpts of its seminars and events and is expanding its use of social media.

<b>Version Number</b>	<b>Purpose/Change</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>
1.5	First published version	P. Robinson, AR.	08/01/2013
1.6	Update	P. Robinson	10/02/2015
1.7	Update	..	Dec 2016