Freedom of Information (FOI) Policy

1. Policy Statement

Alpha Training is committed to openness, transparency, and accountability. In accordance with the **Freedom of Information Act 2000**, we recognise the public's right to access information held by us. This policy outlines how Alpha Training complies with the Act and how individuals can request information.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To ensure compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- To provide clear procedures for handling requests for information.
- To promote openness, accountability, and good information governance.
- To balance the public's right to know with the need to protect confidential and sensitive information.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all recorded information held by Alpha Training, regardless of format, including:

- Emails and documents (paper and electronic)
- Photographs and videos
- Databases and spreadsheets
- Audio recordings

It covers all staff, learners, contractors, and volunteers.

4. Publication Scheme

Alpha Training has adopted the **Model Publication Scheme** approved by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). Under this scheme, we routinely publish the following categories of information:

- Who we are and what we do
- What we spend and how we spend it
- What our priorities are and how we are doing
- How we make decisions
- Our policies and procedures
- Lists and registers
- The services we offer

This information can be accessed via our website or requested in writing.

5. Making a Request

Anyone can make a Freedom of Information request. To do so:

- The request must be made in **writing** (email or letter).
- It must include the **requestor's name**, **contact details**, and a **clear description** of the information requested.
- Requests should be sent to:
  FOI Lead
  Alpha Training
  [Insert postal address]
  Email: [Insert email address]

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6. Responding to Requests

- We will acknowledge FOI requests within **5 working days**.
- A full response will be provided within **20 working days**, unless an exemption applies or clarification is required.
- If the request is unclear, we may contact the requester to seek clarification.
- If a request is refused, a clear explanation and details of the appeals process will be provided.

7. Exemptions

Some information may be exempt from disclosure under the Act, including:

- Personal data (covered under the Data Protection Act 2018/GDPR)
- Information that would endanger the health or safety of an individual
- Commercially sensitive information
- Information intended for future publication

Each request is assessed individually in line with legal guidance.

8. Fees and Charges

In most cases, information will be provided free of charge. However, we may charge:

- **Disbursement costs** (e.g. photocopying, postage)
- Fees for excessive or complex requests as allowed under FOI legislation

If charges apply, the requester will be notified in advance.

9. Appeals and Complaints

If a requester is unhappy with the handling of their request, they may:

1. Request an internal review by writing to the FOI Lead.
2. If still dissatisfied, contact the **Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)**:
   Website: https://ico.org.uk
   Telephone: 0303 123 1113

10. Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this policy is overseen by Alpha Training's Senior Leadership Team. The FOI Lead maintains a log of all requests and responses.
This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if legislation changes.

Approved by: Michelle Howdle