



UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

Freedom of Information Policy (Version 9.0)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) provides a right of public access to information held by public authorities which includes the University of Plymouth (the University).
- 1.2 The University is committed to its obligations under the Act which require it to do the following:
- Publish certain information about its activities
 - Respond to requests for information

2. Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to all recorded information held by the University and includes both paper and electronic records.
- 2.2 The University of Plymouth Students' Union (UPSU) is a separate legal entity and is not considered a public authority for the purposes of the Act. Therefore records held by UPSU are not covered by this policy.
- 2.3 The Act also applies to the University's wholly owned subsidiaries which are listed in the [Financial Statements](#).

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The University Executive Group and Vice-Chancellor have overall responsibility for the University's compliance with the Act.
- 3.2 Day to day operations are the responsibility of the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Specialist who can be contacted as per 5.2 below

4. Publication Scheme

- 4.1 The University maintains a [Publication Scheme](#) which provides information about its following activities.
- 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

4.2 The Publication Scheme is reviewed regularly by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Specialist.

5. Requests for Information

5.1 Under the terms of the Act individuals may submit written requests for information to the University.

5.2 The contact details for submitting a request are as follows:

Freedom of Information and Data Protection Specialist
Legal & Compliance Team
Academic Registry
15 Kirkby Terrace
University of Plymouth
Drake Circus
Plymouth PL4 4AA
Email: foi@plymouth.ac.uk

5.3 Requestors have a right to be informed within 20 working days whether the University holds the requested information and if so, subject to paragraph 5.4 to receive a copy of the information.

5.4 There are [23 exemptions](#) under the Act which entitle the University to withhold information if it considers it is appropriate to do so. If the decision is made to withhold the information it will provide the requestor with the following:

- Confirmation, if appropriate, whether the requested information is held
- Details of the appropriate exemption under the Act
- Reasons why it considers the exemption applies
- Details of the review procedure.

6. Fees

6.1 Information made available through the Publication Scheme will be provided free of charge unless otherwise stated.

6.2 The University complies with the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations (2004). All requests that take less than 18 hours or £450 (being the “appropriate limit”) to process will be free of charge. If the estimated time for compliance is in excess of 18 hours then the University may refuse the request or alternatively may issue an invoice for the estimated cost, such invoice to be paid before the University undertakes its retrieval of the requested information.

7. Internal Review and Complaints

7.1 Requestors have the right to ask for an internal review of how their request has been handled. This includes where the requested information has been withheld.

7.2 Such requests should be submitted in writing to foi@plymouth.ac.uk within 40 working days of the original response.

7.3 The internal review will generally be carried out by the responsible officer within 20 working days of receipt. In exceptional circumstances where further time is required the University will inform the requestor and provide a reasonable target date by which it will be able to respond to the internal review

7.4 If the requestor is dissatisfied with the outcome of the internal review then they can appeal the decision to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) which oversees compliance with the Act. The ICO can be contacted at the following address:

Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF.
Telephone 0303 1231113. <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

8. Related Documents

- 8.1 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the University's UK [GDPR Policies](#).

9. Monitoring and Review of the Policy

- 9.1 This policy is subject to review every two years by the Information Governance Group.

TITLE	Freedom of Information
DOCUMENT REF NUMBER	UOP/AR/Version 9.0
DOCUMENT PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION	Policy document outlining the University obligations, and a process for individuals to use when making a request.
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AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS	foi@plymouth.ac.uk

VERSION NO.	DATE OF CHANGE	ORIGINATOR OF CHANGE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE
1.0	23/12/2015	EW	First Draft
2.0	08/01/2016	EMA/PF	Minor Amendments
3.0	18/02/2016	JG	Inclusion of links to published policies
4.0	15/03/2016	MJ/JW	Minor Amendments
5.0	05/04/2016	DQC	Inclusion of subsidiary information, link to exemptions
6.0	27/04/2016		UEG Approval & Published Version.

7.0	23/06/2020	EW	Minor amendments to internal review
8.0	14/06/2022	EW	Minor Amendments. Approved by IGG
9.0	09/05/2024	EW	Minor Amendments. Approved by IGG.