



Office of the Information Commissioner
Queensland

Compliance Review – Queensland Universities:

**Griffith University; Queensland University of Technology;
University of Queensland and University of Southern
Queensland.**

Review of universities' compliance with the *Right to Information Act 2009* (Qld) and the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld).

The Office of the Information Commissioner thanks the universities for their cooperation throughout the review process and for the courtesy displayed towards the officers undertaking the assessment. In undertaking this review, the Office of the Information Commissioner recognises the commitment of the business units handling right to information and information privacy matters and their desire for continuous improvement.



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November 2014

Mr Ian Berry MP
Chair
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Mr Berry

I am pleased to present 'Compliance Review – Queensland Universities: Griffith University; Queensland University of Technology; University of Queensland and University of Southern Queensland. Review of universities' compliance with the *Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)* and the *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)*'. This report is prepared under section 131 of the *Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)*.

The report reviews compliance with the legislation and guidelines that give effect to right to information and information privacy. The report identifies areas of good practice and makes recommendations for improving compliance.

In accordance with subsection 184(5) of the *Right to Information Act 2009 (Qld)* and subsection 193(5) of the *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)*, I request that you arrange for the report to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachael Rangihaeata'.

Rachael Rangihaeata
Information Commissioner

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1 Executive Summary

This report details the findings of reviews of Griffith University, the Queensland University of Technology, the University of Queensland and the University of Southern Queensland and their progress in implementing right to information (RTI) and information privacy (IP). Overall, the four universities' performance was strong and the review found they were progressing well in meeting their legislative obligations.

Consistent with the push model, the universities proactively publish a wealth of significant information, including research, as a matter of course and each has in place strategies for the proactive release of information, including for example, Open Access repositories for research publications, publication schemes and disclosure logs. Where applications for information were made under the RTI and IP Acts, the handling of those applications was of a good overall standard across all four universities.

It was also apparent that each university presented particular strengths in different areas. For example, the Queensland University of Technology has led the way in Open Access (a policy which facilitates publication of research information for re-use by the community), by having the world's first university-wide policy establishing Open Access as usual practice.¹ Griffith University had the strongest recognition of right to information and privacy in its governance structures, plans and work programs. The University of Southern Queensland is to be commended for its comprehensive RTI and IP training framework. The University of Queensland was at the forefront in providing training in IP and in its application handling practices. Through knowledge sharing between universities, this diversity of good practice provides a potential resource for each of the four universities to further consolidate good practices.

Continuous improvement is central to fully implementing the RTI and IP Acts and ensuring the objects of the Acts are realised for the benefit of stakeholders and the broader community. Key areas for improvement for the four universities reviewed include the need to build on current strategies for ongoing active monitoring and oversight of the pro-active release of information. Recommendations have been made to assist the four Queensland universities in meeting their obligations and also to identify good practices the universities could adopt to move towards greater right to information and information privacy maturity.

¹ Viewed at <http://www.oar2013.qut.edu.au/> on 14 February 2014.

2 Recommendations

Summary of the Next Steps – Griffith University

Culture of Openness	Leadership & Accountability	Maximum Disclosure	Compliance
<p>Develop and publish a statement of commitment to community engagement about their information needs <i>(Rec 1)</i></p>	<p>Drive proactive release of information through bodies governing information management <i>(Rec 3)</i></p>	<p>Promote administrative access arrangements <i>(Rec 7)</i></p>	<p>Update publication scheme <i>(Rec 10)</i></p>
	<p>Clarify status of right to information policy and procedures <i>(Rec 4)</i></p>	<p>For good practice, adopt an administrative access arrangement for reference checking on promotion to maximise disclosure and streamline processes <i>(Rec 8)</i></p>	<p>Where relevant documents have not been published to the disclosure log, ensure reasons for non-publication are recorded <i>(Rec 11)</i></p>
	<p>Expand scope and coverage of general awareness training about right to information and information privacy to all staff <i>(Rec 5)</i></p>	<p>Develop and publish an Information Asset Register <i>(Rec 9)</i></p>	<p>For good practice, contact applicants if information is to be provided in an access type other than as requested. <i>(Rec 12)</i></p>
	<p>Improve performance measurement <i>(Rec 6)</i></p>		

Summary of the Next Steps – Queensland University of Technology

Culture of Openness	Leadership & Accountability	Maximum Disclosure	Compliance
Develop and publish a statement of commitment to community engagement about their information needs <i>(Rec 1)</i>	Drive proactive release of information through bodies governing information management <i>(Rec 3)</i>	Promote administrative access arrangements <i>(Rec 7)</i>	Update publication scheme <i>(Rec 10)</i>
Develop and publish a statement of commitment to right to information <i>(Rec 2)</i>	Include information management activities in plans and work programs <i>(Rec 3)</i>	For good practice, adopt an administrative access arrangement for reference checking on promotion to maximise disclosure and streamline processes <i>(Rec 8)</i>	Where relevant documents have not been published to the disclosure log, ensure reasons for non-publication are recorded <i>(Rec 11)</i>
Promote the use of administrative access arrangements to staff through training and communication <i>(Rec 2)</i>	Update training modules on right to information and privacy <i>(Rec 5)</i>	Develop and publish an Information Asset Register <i>(Rec 9)</i>	For good practice, contact applicants if information is to be provided in an access type other than as requested. <i>(Rec 12)</i>
	Implement plan to deliver updated privacy module to all staff <i>(Rec 5)</i>		
	Improve performance measurement <i>(Rec 6)</i>		

Summary of the Next Steps – University of Queensland

Culture of Openness	Leadership & Accountability	Maximum Disclosure	Compliance
<p>Develop and publish a statement of commitment to community engagement about their information needs <i>(Rec 1)</i></p>	<p>Drive proactive release of information through bodies governing information management <i>(Rec 3)</i></p>	<p>Promote administrative access arrangements <i>(Rec 7)</i></p>	<p>Update publication scheme <i>(Rec 10)</i></p>
	<p>Review general awareness training and incorporate greater right to information content <i>(Rec 5)</i></p>	<p>For good practice, adopt an administrative access arrangement for reference checking on promotion to maximise disclosure and streamline processes <i>(Rec 8)</i></p>	<p>Where relevant documents have not been published to the disclosure log, ensure reasons for non-publication are recorded <i>(Rec 11)</i></p>
	<p>Improve performance measurement <i>(Rec 6)</i></p>	<p>Develop and publish an Information Asset Register <i>(Rec 9)</i></p>	<p>For good practice, contact applicants if information is to be provided in an access type other than as requested. <i>(Rec 12)</i></p>

Summary of the Next Steps – University of Southern Queensland

Culture of Openness	Leadership & Accountability	Maximum Disclosure	Compliance
<p>Develop and publish a statement of commitment to community engagement about their information needs <i>(Rec 1)</i></p>	<p>Drive proactive release of information through bodies governing information management <i>(Rec 3)</i></p>	<p>Promote administrative access arrangements <i>(Rec 7)</i></p>	<p>Update publication scheme <i>(Rec 10)</i></p>
	<p>Include information management activities in plans and work programs <i>(Rec 3)</i></p>	<p>For good practice, adopt an administrative access arrangement for reference checking on promotion to maximise disclosure and streamline processes <i>(Rec 8)</i></p>	<p>Where relevant documents have not been published to the disclosure log, ensure reasons for non-publication are recorded <i>(Rec 11)</i></p>
	<p>Include right to information and privacy in induction <i>(Rec 5)</i></p>	<p>Develop and publish an Information Asset Register <i>(Rec 9)</i></p>	<p>For good practice, contact applicants if information is to be provided in an access type other than as requested. <i>(Rec 12)</i></p>
	<p>Update training modules <i>(Rec 5)</i></p>		<p>For good practice, reduce time to process applications <i>(Rec 13)</i></p>
	<p>Improve performance measurement <i>(Rec 6)</i></p>		

It is recommended that:

Recommendation One

All universities develop a broad strategic policy statement promoting community engagement about access to university-held information, and publish the policy statement within twelve months.

Recommendation Two

QUT issue agency wide communications to all business units within the next three months to reinforce QUT's commitment to the right to information, and through training and communication activities by management, ensure QUT staff are aware of and operate in accordance with QUT's procedures for administrative access and respond appropriately to requests for information by Governance and Legal Services, within the next twelve months.

Recommendation Three

All universities ensure that the responsible bodies governing information management implement ongoing active monitoring and oversight of the pro-active release of information in accordance with the RTI and IP Acts, within the next twelve months.

QUT and USQ include information management activities in future strategic information management plans and operational work programs, within the next twelve months.

Recommendation Four

Griffith clarifies the status of policy information provided on its website about right to information policy and procedures, within twelve months.

Recommendation Five

Griffith expands the scope and coverage of general awareness training about right to information and information privacy and delivers the updated training to all university staff within twelve months.

QUT updates their training modules regarding right to information and information privacy and in particular administrative release within twelve months.

It is recommended that:

QUT implements a plan to deliver their updated training module on information privacy to all existing university staff within twelve months.

UQ reviews its general awareness training programs and incorporates greater content relating to right to information within twelve months.

USQ updates training modules regarding right to information and information privacy within twelve months.

USQ includes information about right to information and information privacy in its induction process for new staff within twelve months.

Recommendation Six

All universities, within fifteen months, develop and incorporate performance measures and targets at the strategic and operational level to measure effectiveness and efficiency in implementing right to information and information privacy processes.

Recommendation Seven

All universities ensure that administrative access arrangements are made more prominent on the universities' websites within twelve months.

Recommendation Eight

All universities, as a matter of good practice, consider developing an administrative access arrangement for making referee reports available to applicants for promotion, and adopt procedures that maximise disclosure and streamline handling of any requests by applicants to obtain referee reports, within twelve months.

Recommendation Nine

All universities develop an Information Asset Register within twelve months, along with procedures to ensure the Information Asset Register is maintained.

All universities publish their Information Asset Register on the website to create greater transparency as to the information resources available, within twelve months.

It is recommended that:

Recommendation Ten

All universities review and update their publication schemes to meet compliance requirements within twelve months.

Recommendation Eleven

All universities document any decision not to publish information released under the RTI Act to the agency's disclosure log, and retain the reasons for the decisions in internal records in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines, commencing immediately.

Recommendation Twelve

All universities, as a matter of good practice, ensure that if it is necessary to provide information in an alternative access type (for example, provide information by compact disc rather than a hard copy) the applicant is first contacted to negotiate how access will be provided, commencing immediately.

Recommendation Thirteen

USQ, as a matter of good practice, takes action to reduce the time taken to process applications within twelve months.

3 Introduction

3.1 Background

Queensland universities are responsible for providing tertiary education and research. Universities are agencies for the purposes of the RTI and IP Acts.² OIC acknowledges that the university environment involves competition for funding and for students, and that this creates a different operating context for the university sector compared to other public sector agencies. Issues raised by some universities during the course of this review regarding deregulation of universities are a matter of policy for Government consideration and therefore not within the scope of the review.

In this review, the Office of the Information Commissioner assessed whether universities are complying with current obligations they are required to meet under the RTI and IP Acts and related obligations under legislation including the *Financial Accountability Act 2009*. However, it is noted that sensitivities regarding disclosure of information related to an agency's particular operating environment are considered within the decision-making framework under the RTI and IP Acts, which similarly guide decisions about proactive disclosure of information under the push model.

In Griffith University (Griffith),³ the Queensland University of Technology (QUT), the University of Queensland (UQ) and the University of Southern Queensland's (USQ) 2013 annual reports, the universities reported that they provided a combined tertiary education to approximately 165,000 students⁴ and performed high quality research across areas including medicine, science, humanities, agriculture, environment, digital literacies and enabling technologies.

These services are delivered to the community through university campuses including in Brisbane, Caboolture, Gatton, Gold Coast, Hervey Bay, Ipswich and Toowoomba, and external study options.

² See section 14(1)(c) of the RTI Act.

³ A full list of acronyms is included in Appendix 1.

⁴ 43,181 students in 2013 from Griffith in their 2013 Annual Report, page 14.
45,570 students in 2013 from QUT in their 2013 Annual Report, page 15.
48,804 students in 2013 from UQ in their 2013 Annual Report, page 4.
27,337 students in 2013 from USQ in their 2013 Annual Report, page 147.

In delivering these services, the four Queensland universities employed approximately 17,552 staff, and operated with budgets amounting to \$3.6bn in total.⁵

As part of providing these services, these Queensland universities handled millions of information processes each year, involving both personal and non-personal information. Universities are required to report to the federal and state governments on operational and compliance issues, and information which is then published by government, such as statistics.⁶

The four universities were found to be assisting people to obtain information through a range of administrative access arrangements. For example, all four universities had a method by which students could obtain additional copies of the academic transcript of their results. Other administrative access arrangements applied for certain types of records, for example, for university staff to obtain their own human resources files or students seeking a copy of their student records.

Based on the most recent data available to the Office of the Information Commissioner (OIC), the universities received 81 applications for information in 2012-13 under the *Right to Information Act 2009* (Qld) (RTI Act) and *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) (IP Act).⁷ UQ received 54 of the 81 applications (67%).

In selecting the four universities, OIC conducted a risk analysis across all universities. Risk factors considered were the volume and sensitivity of personal information held and requested from the university, the volume of RTI and IP applications received and processed, the proportion of applications relating to personal information, the number of applications for external review and the number of applications carried forward from the previous reporting year. The universities' size and geographical location also informed the selection process.

⁵ Griffith 2013 Annual Report lists 4,515 full time equivalent (FTE) staff (on page 23) and a total income of 804m in 2013 (page 28).

QUT 2013 Annual Report lists 4,477 FTE staff (on page 24) and budget of 872m (on page 35).

UQ 2013 Annual Report lists 6,892 FTE staff in 2013 and an operating budget of 1,671m (on page 4).

USQ 2013 Annual Report lists 1,668 FTE staff in 2013 (on page 146) and a total income of 276.7m (on page 64).

⁶ See for example the Australian Government website uCube at <http://highereducationstatistics.education.gov.au/Default.aspx>.

⁷ 2011-12 is the most recent year for whole of government reporting. OIC obtained more recent statistical data regarding the universities in the course of this review.

Griffith received 5 applications.

QUT received 11 applications.

UQ received 54 applications.

USQ received 11 applications.

3.2 Reporting Framework

The review has been conducted under section 131 of the RTI Act, which gives the Information Commissioner the functions of monitoring, auditing and reporting on agencies' compliance in relation to the operation of the RTI Act and chapter 3 of the IP Act, and section 135 of the IP Act, which gives the Information Commissioner the function of reviewing personal information handling practices.

Under section 131 of the RTI Act, the Information Commissioner is to give a report to the parliamentary committee about the outcome of each review.

3.3 Scope and objectives

The objective of the review has been to establish the extent to which Griffith University, the Queensland University of Technology, the University of Queensland and the University of Southern Queensland have complied with the prescribed requirements of the RTI and IP Acts. In particular, the review focused on:

- governance (leadership, governance mechanisms, information management including proactive identification and release of information holdings, policies, procedures, delegations and roles and responsibilities of key personnel and training)
- accountability and performance monitoring systems
- whether or not the universities are maximising disclosure, by:
 - consultation with communities and industry stakeholders as to their information needs and information management issues, and the extent to which those needs are addressed by the universities; and
 - review of administrative access schemes.
- compliance with legislatively based requirements under the RTI Act and IP Act for:
 - an agency publication scheme (section 21 of the RTI Act)
 - an agency disclosure log (section 78 of the RTI Act)
 - giving access to information administratively (section 19 of the RTI Act)
 - access and amendment applications (chapter 3, parts 2-7 of the RTI and IP Acts); and

- review processes, including internal review of decisions under the legislation (chapter 3, part 8 of the RTI and IP Acts).
- the universities' personal information handling practices including technologies, programs, policies and procedures to review privacy related issues of a systemic nature generally, and agency compliance with the privacy principles.

3.4 Assessment process

On 8 November 2013 OIC wrote to each university outlining the scope and objectives of the review, and the Terms of Reference, as provided in Appendix 2.

OIC contacted each university in December 2013 to confirm the terms of reference and scope of the review. Each university nominated a contact officer for the OIC review and confirmed agreement with the Terms of Reference by March 2014.

In performing the review, OIC applied a standardised test program to assess each of the relevant areas of practice. The universities cooperated fully and openly with the process and provided access to requested materials, including a sample of application files, and the opportunity to meet with relevant personnel.

Meetings and discussions were held with the universities' contact officers, and other line management as necessary. These meetings and other contact with the universities gave OIC the opportunity to provide feedback to the universities on the key findings of the assessments progressively and provide general updates on the progress of the review.

As part of the review process, OIC wrote to key stakeholders external to the universities to discuss their interests in information held by the universities. OIC also conducted public consultation to gauge community sentiment regarding access to information held by the universities, by advertising for comment through OIC's website and through the opportunity for face to face discussion with identified stakeholders.

Once the sample of application files had been examined, OIC made a list of the issues and the files to which each issue related, and provided this list to each university. The comments of each university resulted in an OIC decision as to whether or not each issue had been resolved by the explanations provided, and in addition, whether or not each issue was reportable.

Minor issues were reported where OIC considered the issue could create a barrier to access if unresolved, or where the minor issue was observed multiple times across universities. Major or significant non-compliances with specific legislative requirements did not arise in this review.

A copy of a draft of this report was provided to the universities' contact officers for comment on accuracy, context and choice of language in October 2014. All universities provided comments.

At the conclusion of the review, the final report was provided to, and an exit meeting held with, each university in November 2014 to discuss the findings and recommendations of the review. The universities provided a response to each recommendation. The universities' responses are provided in Appendices 3 to 6.

4 Culture of openness

Background

The object of the *Right to Information Act 2009* (Qld) is to provide more information to the public by giving a right of access to government-held information, unless, on balance, releasing the information would be contrary to the public interest.

In order for the objects of the RTI Act to be achieved, agency culture must embrace openness and transparency, which are fundamental to good government.⁸

OIC, in undertaking this review, considered whether or not the principles of openness and transparency were reflected in the culture of each reviewed university.

Key findings

- Each university had a public statement of commitment to RTI and IP.
- The four universities under review had not developed a strategic community engagement policy statement to underpin community engagement regarding the release of information.
- Government and community stakeholders reported that university practice for engaging with community about the release of information was effective.
- Griffith, UQ and USQ showed a high level of general staff support and understanding for the RTI and IP application process within the universities.
- In three instances, issues were identified at QUT which showed that further work might be useful to build general staff awareness and support for administrative access and the RTI and IP application processes within the university.

⁸ *The right to information – A response to the review of Queensland's Freedom of Information Act*, viewed at http://www.thepremier.qld.gov.au/library/pdf/initiatives/foi_review/Right_to_Information.pdf on 20 April 2011.

4.1 Stated Commitment to Openness

A key general finding in OIC's self-assessed electronic audit conducted in 2013 was that agencies reporting having an explicit statement of commitment to RTI and IP readily available within the agency, for example, in a policy document or as a policy statement on the agency's website, also reported higher performance across the board.⁹

This review looked for a visible and explicit statement of each university's commitment to RTI and IP as an indicator of organisational cultural support for openness and transparency in government.

Each university has published a statement on their website supporting right to information. A typical statement was:

*Right to Information is the Queensland Government's approach to giving the community greater access to information. This approach applies to the University.*¹⁰

The review found that the universities already proactively publish significant amounts of information, and that university culture is outward focussed and inclusive of the general public. This is consistent with the general role of universities as described by one university:

*The mission of universities for centuries has been the extension and transmission of knowledge.*¹¹

Universities proactively publish some information as a matter of course, including information as required by the Australian and Queensland Government regulatory requirements. Universities also release information administratively, and alternatively, in some cases require a formal request before releasing information. Universities are transitioning to the 'push model' approach for research publications under Open Access policies for research.

⁹ The 2013 *Right to Information and Information Privacy Electronic Audit* reviews the self reported progress of agencies in complying with RTI and IP legislation and guidelines. The report can be viewed at http://www.oic.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/22311/report-2013-electronic-audit.pdf.

¹⁰ Viewed at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/right-to-information> on 10 September 2014.

¹¹ Response to draft report received from Griffith University on 3 November 2014.

The *Queensland Universities' Open Data Strategy 2014-2017* is published through the Queensland Government data website,¹² and affirms principles consistent with RTI Act requirements, for example, openness and transparency of Queensland universities and their processes, providing data that may be repurposed by users of the data in new circumstances and informing public debate.¹³ In 2014-15, the first year of operation, the universities aim to raise awareness of existing data sets in the public domain.

OIC encourages universities to continue to pursue their aim of identifying opportunities to release new datasets under the Open Data initiative, and also to adopt the wider perspective of the RTI Act and explore ways to proactively release additional university-held information as a matter of course.

4.2 Community Engagement – Policy

The RTI Act recognises that openness enhances accountability, and that information in the possession or under the control of an agency under the Act, such as a university, is a public resource. In part this is in recognition that such agencies receive public funds and are accordingly subject to appropriate accountability requirements. Under the RTI Act, universities are required to increase the flow of information to the community, including through their publication schemes. To be effective in implementing its right to information obligations, it is important that an agency understands what information its stakeholders have a particular interest in, and what needs they may have in relation to accessing that information.

Community engagement and information flow are fundamentally interconnected. OIC looks for evidence that community engagement is explicitly recognised agency-wide with respect to the release of information. In particular, OIC seeks evidence that an agency's community engagement is two-way, that is, that an agency is listening to the community about their information needs and responding by providing information to the community that the community wants. A public statement of commitment to engaging in two-way dialogue with the community about information needs is important in clearly communicating expectations across large organisations such as universities, reinforcing a culture of openness.

¹² Viewed at <https://data.qld.gov.au/department-strategies> on 4 November 2014.

¹³ Viewed at <https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/open-data-strategy-queensland-universities/resource/be95c003-d024-46a4-8100-77fcbcada204> on 4 November 2014.

The importance of community engagement is generally recognised within the university sector. There is an alliance of Australian universities, Engagement Australia, which aims 'to lead and facilitate the development of best practice university-community engagement in Australia'. This alliance includes 70% of Australia's universities, and Engagement Australia's website identified QUT and Griffith as members. With respect to the value of a community engagement framework, Engagement Australia states in the position paper in its current Engagement Toolkit that it:

*... encourages universities to define and enact engagement in a manner that is reflective of their particular mission and academic strengths to ensure responsiveness to community conditions and to enhance diversity in the university sector.*¹⁴

Some individual universities within the Australian university sector have published community engagement strategies. For example, OIC identified that Monash University, the University of South Australia, the University of Newcastle and the Australian Catholic University had community engagement strategies.¹⁵ In Queensland, CQUniversity had an *Engagement Strategy 2011-2014*,¹⁶ supported by a section on its website devoted to strategic engagement.¹⁷ These strategies provide a platform for two-way community engagement on a range of issues.

OIC requested that the universities provide any community engagement policies or statements, particularly with respect to information release, as part of the information requested at the commencement of the review. None of the four universities provided a community engagement strategy, framework or policy statement covering community engagement about general information release in response to this request.

Nevertheless, OIC identified that the universities had each addressed community engagement, to differing degrees and in different ways.

¹⁴ Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance Position Paper 2008-2010: *Universities and Community Engagement*, March 2008, page 4, viewed at http://www.engagementaustralia.org.au/uploads/universities_CE_2008_2010.pdf on 10 September 2014.

¹⁵ Viewed at http://www.odvce.monash.edu.au/assets/documents/communityengagementframework_final_november_2010.pdf, <http://www.unisa.edu.au/business-community/community-engagement/>, <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/community-and-alumni/community-engagement>, and http://www.acu.edu.au/about_acu/our_university/community_engagement/mission_values_and_principles on 8 September 2014.

¹⁶ Viewed at <http://www.cqu.edu.au/engage/the-community-and-engagement-hub/strategic-engagement> on 8 September 2014.

¹⁷ Viewed at <http://www.cqu.edu.au/engage/the-community-and-engagement-hub> on 8 September 2014.

Of all the universities reviewed, USQ had the clearest broad policy agenda for community engagement. USQ had a section within its website titled 'Engage with us', which listed a number of ways in which members of the community could engage with USQ, including student employment, partnering in education, presentations to the community, working in community, working with schools and industry partnerships.¹⁸ However, none of these links were supported by a strategic policy statement within the document describing the university's approach to providing information to the community.

Griffith similarly had a section on its website about 'Sustainability', with a sub-section on 'Community engagement'.¹⁹ This listed five specific initiatives involving community engagement, and did not include an overall policy statement about community engagement for Griffith or a link to community engagement about information release.

UQ provided OIC with its strategic plan, which contained a section on engagement.²⁰ Schools within UQ conducted community engagement and commented on strategies for community engagement within their own disciplines. For example, UQ had a 'Global Engagement' section on its website addressing specific international interests.²¹ Another example is that UQ operated a Community Engagement Centre, called 'UQ Boilerhouse', located in UQ's Ipswich campus.²² This was focussed on relationships between the Ipswich Campus and the community, and on specific research projects within the community targeting social issues, for example, ageing or after school care. The documentation provided by UQ, or located by OIC on the UQ website, did not include an overall policy statement committing to two-way engagement between UQ and the community about information needs.

QUT had an office called 'QUT Engagement', which advised that their operations were informed by an 'Engagement Strategy', which 'ensures that engagement continues to be embedded within the wider plans of the University'.²³ A copy of the Engagement Strategy was not accessible online to the general public. QUT advised that it is accessible to staff and students through the policy on QUT's Engagement Framework.²⁴

¹⁸ Viewed at <http://www.usq.edu.au/about-usq/engage> on 8 September 2014.

¹⁹ Viewed at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/sustainability/community-engagement> on 8 September 2014.

²⁰ Contained in *The University of Queensland Strategic Plan 2014-2017*, pages 14-17.

²¹ Viewed at <http://www.uq.edu.au/international/global-engagement> on 8 September 2014.

²² Viewed at <http://www.uq.edu.au/boilerhouse/> on 8 September 2014.

²³ Viewed at http://www.id.qut.edu.au/offices/dev_office/Engagement.jsp on 8 September 2014.

²⁴ Available at http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/II_01_02.jsp.

In summary, OIC found that for specific university projects and initiatives, the universities had devoted considerable resources towards embedding community engagement within individual projects and initiatives. The universities under review did not operate under an explicit, published university-wide policy statement for two-way community engagement that would cover general release of information.

Community engagement about information needs addresses the RTI Act's explicit requirement to promote the flow of information in the agency's possession or under the agency's control to the community.

OIC has noted during performance monitoring review processes generally that agencies readily recognise the value of collaboration with the community to support their operations, but are less likely to consider asking community groups about their information needs. It is OIC's view that it is important that agencies draw explicit attention to the value of asking the community about their information needs to ensure each university can effectively perform their right to information obligations. For example, such engagement will assist universities to identify additional information to prioritise for proactive release and how to improve accessibility for stakeholders.

OIC does not consider that a detailed community engagement policy statement about identifying information needs is required for every university activity. A policy statement supporting engagement with the community to listen to the community, and identify and respond to the community's information needs would be appropriate, and this might be incorporated into existing policies or strategies, included as a statement on an existing webpage, or could be developed separately. The exact format and location of a policy statement would be a matter for each university to determine. The key requirement is the publication of a clear and visible statement, as described above, to inform university staff, stakeholders and the broader community.

OIC considers this would assist universities to reinforce a culture of openness, address the requirements of the RTI Act, drive administrative release of information in general, and provide a starting point from which specific information management community engagement and proactive release activities could be managed.

Recommendation One

It is recommended that:

All universities develop a broad strategic policy statement promoting community engagement about access to university-held information, and publish the policy statement within twelve months.

4.3 Community Engagement – Practice

Although strategic university policy was not provided to OIC for review, OIC was able to review university practice with regard to community engagement about information needs. OIC contacted government and community stakeholders to assess the extent to which universities engaged effectively with the community about information needs. Appendix 7 provides the questions asked and information requested by the stakeholders.²⁵

The rate of response to OIC's survey was lower than for previous reviews. 12 stakeholders responded, representing 18% of the 65 stakeholders contacted. Of the 12 stakeholders responding, 5 stakeholders provided detailed responses.

These responses were uniformly positive, and included complimentary general remarks, for example:

The Universities in the sample have been in general a pleasure to deal with

... a strong and close association ...

A very good working relationship exists between Council and GU which results in each organisation having a mutual respect for each other's requirements in relation to information sharing.

Stakeholders described a range of information which was readily made available by universities, for example, research or administrative information, and a range of mechanisms for engagement about information needs, including formal Memoranda of Understanding and informal contacts at all levels of the agency and university.

²⁵ OIC called for public comment on its website from 12 August 2014 to 26 August 2014 and received no comments.

This is an area of practice in which all four universities are reported as consistently performing to a high standard.

4.4 Internal Challenges

Griffith, UQ and USQ staff demonstrated a high level of support and cooperation for RTI and IP decision-makers in their handling of applications for information made under the RTI and IP Acts. Support identified included:

- promptly responding to tracers²⁶ with full documentation
- referring the RTI or IP staff to other staff or areas that might hold responsive documents
- staff providing documents around the subject of the application, not just within the application's scope, or providing additional documents or information
- providing background information regarding the matter to assist the decision maker
- following up to determine if further assistance was required
- transcribing hand written documents to de-identify them at the request of the decision maker
- requesting clarifications of the application's scope to ensure all responsive documents were identified; and
- fully completing tracer response information, including the time taken to respond to the tracer.

Further evidence of internal cooperation was provided by UQ and USQ. UQ advised that they worked with staff to explain what was required, answer any questions and discuss the process. From the documentation reviewed by OIC this work by staff in UQ's RTIP unit²⁷ with UQ staff in other business units resulted in a high level of staff support and cooperation for the RTI and IP application process.

Unlike the other universities, for QUT, this review identified a concern regarding the responsiveness of internal staff to processing of applications in some cases.

²⁶ A 'tracer' is a request sent from an agency's business unit handling applications for information made under the RTI Act or IP Act to other business units within an agency to locate responsive documents.

²⁷ An 'RTIP unit' is an agency's business unit handling Right to Information and Information Privacy requests for information made under the RTI Act or IP Act.

The review identified that at QUT, there were still varying levels of awareness and support across business units for administrative access arrangements and the RTI and IP application process. Positive interactions were noted on six of the nine files reviewed, with internal business units responding appropriately to tracer requests and on occasion showing a high level of support for release of information. However, on three files, examples of a lack of support and understanding were identified. In one instance in particular, this resulted in substantial and unnecessary delay for the applicant due to repeated challenges by an internal business unit that the request should not be dealt with administratively using the established access arrangement.

The issues were discussed with management in the area at the time, and addressed proactively. It would also be useful to take steps to prevent future recurrences and to continue to build a pro-disclosure culture.

Staff who receive requests for information should be seeking ways to make information available administratively, unless there is a good reason not to, and in response to an application made under the RTI or IP Act for information, must diligently search for and provide all the documents to the RTI and IP decision-makers for consideration by the decision-maker.

During the course of this review, QUT has updated their website to include links to administrative access schemes from the RTI webpage, including guidance to business units on processing of administrative access requests. This report also discusses general staff awareness training at QUT. Communication from the highest levels of QUT management would assist in establishing a pro-disclosure culture across all business units in response to administrative or legislative requests for information, with applications under the RTI and IP Acts being necessary only as a last resort.

Recommendation Two

It is recommended that:

QUT issue agency wide communications to all business units within the next three months to reinforce QUT's commitment to the right to information, and through training and communication activities by management, ensure QUT staff are aware of and operate in accordance with QUT's procedures for administrative access and respond appropriately to requests for information by Governance and Legal Services, within the next twelve months.

5 Leadership

Background

It is critical that agency leaders, such as Vice-Chancellors, foster agency cultures consistent with the objects of the legislation and ensure that staff training and awareness programs and other appropriate agency-wide staff opportunities include right to information and information privacy and commitment to such principles.²⁸

This review examined each university's leadership and governance framework, including strategies for good governance, active management of information, organisational structure, resourcing and training.

Key Findings

- Appropriate leadership structures were in place, with each of the four universities having a committee that was broadly responsible for strategic information management or information and communications technology.
- Griffith recognised right to information strongly, and had some recognition of privacy in their information management plans and work programs. All other universities had some recognition of right to information and privacy in their information management plans and work programs.
- Each university had an appropriately independent RTIP unit.
- Each university provided training and awareness to staff regarding right to information and information privacy, generally to all staff and specifically to dedicated RTIP unit staff. The extent to which training was provided and the quality of the training varied.

5.1 Leadership

The importance of leadership within government agencies in order to achieve open government has been a consistent finding in OIC reviews and the self-assessed electronic audit.

²⁸ Recommendation 127 Solomon report.

Leaders within agencies are expected to promote active management of information and to work with the community to identify information and methods of publishing information that might be useful to the community. Agency leaders are expected to make sure their agencies are equipped with systems, delegations of authority, staffing resources and training in order to implement the objects of the Acts.

This review has looked for evidence within each university of the required leadership. This has included:

- checking that individuals and committees in leadership roles have been commissioned to take up an active role in the management of information and promotion of the push model, and that they have done so
- identifying and assessing plans of action
- examining the structure of agency resources to ensure they support RTI and IP; and
- examining training resources, to check that they are appropriate and available to RTI and IP specialists and to all staff, and that they advance understanding of the objects of the Acts.

5.2 Information management governance framework

5.2.1 Overview

In order for agencies to achieve the objects of the RTI and IP Acts, each agency needs a structured and planned approach to information governance. This includes ensuring information management is managed at a strategic level so that achievement of strategic information management objectives is built into the everyday operations of the agency.

Each of the four universities had a committee that was broadly responsible for strategic information management or information and communications technology (ICT). This review examined the policy and governance framework described in the Terms of Reference for each committee, the committee minutes and the inclusion of information management projects in the strategic plan for each university.

The review also looked for evidence of active leadership of right to information and information privacy, for example, by examining committee plans and work programs aimed at practical outcomes:

- to check whether or not they incorporated activities specifically aimed at steadily improving the availability and accessibility of information to the community
- to establish whether or not the plans or work programs identified and included right to information and information privacy initiatives; and
- to assess whether or not the plans or work programs identified key initiatives that would make a significant difference to the objective of an informed community, with progressive changes made until all data that could be published had been published.

The review considered whether or not strategic committees analysed and anticipated demand for information, and made broad categories of information available, preferably as soon as practicable, in accessible, reusable and machine readable formats or through administrative access schemes.

5.2.2 Findings

The review found that the level of maturity in strategic information management varied significantly across the four universities. All of the four universities had appropriate governance structures in place, using committees to address the issues. However, the level of active management of information as a resource varied significantly between universities.

Griffith University had strong strategic information management. It had a dedicated information management body with high level active strategic information management supported by a range of information management projects scheduled over a four year period.

There were opportunities to further develop the management of information such as:

- adding as a principle, 'making information open to the public and external stakeholders where appropriate'; and
- encouraging project managers to assess university information holdings to determine their suitability for publication.

UQ also had a dedicated information management body, and evidence of strategic information management activity, but specific projects were not readily identifiable. UQ provided OIC with a list of IT projects that contained elements of information management in response to queries raised for clarification during the review process.

QUT had an information and communication technology committee which addressed information management, and some information management projects, although there was a clear ICT focus for the projects.

USQ had the greatest scope for development in this area, with an information and communication technology committee which addressed information management and projects focused primarily on ICT hardware and software with little evidence of active consideration of information management as a strategic resource.

One common issue for all universities was the need for ongoing active monitoring and oversight of the pro-active release of information, for example, regular reports to the committees on new information holdings, including datasets, made publicly available. OIC acknowledges that the universities provide reports externally on information for publication, for example to Commonwealth government agencies and through the Queensland State Government's Open Data initiative. However, these externally driven activities target specific, isolated issues, and do not inform the internal governance committees or relevant executives of the progress made in addressing the requirements of the RTI Act to proactively release information. Adoption of internal reporting on proactive release of information would facilitate the progression of specific projects, for example, the release of datasets in accordance with the Open Data Strategy for all universities, which is discussed later in this report. Table 1 provides an outline of the information management governance framework and maturity by university.

**Table 1
Information Management Framework by University**

Function	Griffith	QUT	UQ	USQ
Committee responsible for information management	Information Management Program Board	Information Technology Governance Committee	Strategic Information Management Committee	ICT Strategy Board and Information Standards Committee
Information management in committee terms of reference	Explicit and well defined	ICT focus	Explicit – managed through a dedicated subcommittee	ICT focus, compliance and control based
Senior management involvement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Evidence of strategic information management	Extensive – four year plan targeting information management projects across practice, policy and governance and infrastructure	Primarily ICT based but information management included in ICT projects	Yes – established Enterprise Data Governance Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Architecture • Data Integration • Data Quality • Data management policies and procedures 	Primarily ICT based with little evidence of strategic information management
Information management projects	University-wide audit of current recordkeeping content, Research Hub project, staff data integrity program, employing an archivist to manage historical collections and transition to digital recordkeeping	Warehouse Project, Review of data classification policy, Web Services – Service Statement review	Security of information, upgrading databases, networks, internet and systems managing information	Accessibility audit of the USQ website

5.2.3 Good Practice – Example One

Griffith University evidenced good practice with a high level strategic and active approach to information management.

Example One of good practice – Strategic approach to information management at Griffith University

Griffith University has a dedicated Information Management Program Board (IMPB), which is a visible sign of support and integration of information management at the executive level.

The IMPB works within a strategic direction set by the highest level of management in the university – the University Executive Group and Electronic Infrastructure Capital Plan Portfolio Board. The IMPB is supported by data custodians, project boards and operational support managers and teams.²⁹

Griffith University has a *Corporate Information Management Roadmap* providing a strategic information management project overview for the period 2012 to 2015.³⁰ Major projects include a university-wide audit of current recordkeeping content scheduled for 2013, the second stage of their Research Hub project, a staff data integrity program, employing an archivist to manage historical collections and transition to digital recordkeeping.³¹

Monthly IMPB meeting minutes contained project updates for these significant information management projects, evidence of active monitoring of progress by the IMPB.

Information management initiatives are critically important to increasing accessibility to information. For example, digitising records increases their accessibility to the public and continual monitoring of data integrity ensures accuracy of the information.

Griffith University's Information Management Framework overview is attached in Appendix 8.

²⁹ <http://www.griffith.edu.au/information-management-framework/governance> viewed on 11 April 2014.

³⁰ <http://www.griffith.edu.au/information-management-framework/resources/?a=516855> viewed on 11 April 2014.

³¹ <http://www.griffith.edu.au/information-management-framework/activities> viewed on 11 April 2014.

Recommendation Three

It is recommended that:

All universities ensure that the responsible bodies governing information management implement ongoing active monitoring and oversight of the pro-active release of information in accordance with the RTI and IP Acts, within the next twelve months.

QUT and USQ include information management activities in future strategic information management plans and operational work programs, within the next twelve months.

5.3 Organisational structure

From the perspective of organisational structure, the RTIP units of each university are considered to be appropriately independent of business units related to media and publicity functions.

Griffith's decision making function is at the Vice President (Corporate Services) level which directly reports to the University Vice-Chancellor. Internal review decision making is undertaken by the University Vice-Chancellor. The Vice President (Corporate Services) is responsible for planning and directing the University's central administrative services including: academic administration, planning and financial services, human resource management, legal services, internal audit, organisational reviews and risk and business continuity unit.

QUT's RTI and IP office functions are located within the QUT Governance and Legal Services Department.

UQ's RTI and IP functions are performed by the Right to Information and Privacy Coordinator in the Right to Information and Privacy Office. This office reports to the Chief Operating Officer. The Chief Operating Officer also has responsibility for media relations. However, these functions are handled by separate areas.

USQ's RTI functions are performed by Corporate Records and the IP application and Privacy Officer functions are currently performed by the Director, Integrity & Professional Conduct (DIPC). Prior to January 2014 the IP application and Privacy Officer functions were performed by USQ Legal Services.

5.4 Accessibility of RTI information resources

Each university structures their web presence to have both public and protected resources. The websites provide a wealth of resources for both internal and external users. OIC found that each university's internet site is well structured. The information provided is both comprehensive and relevant. The Griffith, UQ and USQ internet sites provide useful links to other external websites in which users can obtain more information in relation to RTI and IP. The QUT website provides a link to the university's online privacy training module and links to information on its administrative access schemes.

New employees have online access to policies and procedures at all universities. Three of four universities have a right to information and an information privacy policy in their manuals or libraries of policies and procedures.

UQ maintains a Policy and Procedures Library,³² QUT has a Manual of Policies and Procedures³³ and USQ maintains a Policy and Procedure Library,³⁴ all of which contain right to information and information privacy policies and procedures.

Griffith maintains the Griffith Policy Library. A search for 'Right to Information' did not locate a right to information policy. The Policy Library is described in these terms:

*The Policy Library contains the officially approved policies, procedures, forms, role statements, strategic plans and legislation of the University.*³⁵

There is information about right to information elsewhere on Griffith's website, but the status of this information would be unclear given that it was not part of the 'officially approved policies'. The Griffith Policy Library contained a Privacy Plan in the section on Risk and Strategic Management.³⁶ OIC considers that Griffith should clarify the status of any existing policy or procedural information on Griffith's right to information page, to ensure that people using the website have confidence that the information provided represents the official policy of the university.

³² Viewed at <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.60.01-right-information> and <https://ppl.app.uq.edu.au/content/1.60.02-privacy-management> on 12 September 2014.

³³ Viewed at http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/F/F_06_03.jsp and http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/F/F_06_02.jsp on 12 September 2014.

³⁴ Viewed at <http://policy.usq.edu.au/documents.php?id=14477PL> and <http://policy.usq.edu.au/documents.php?id=13404PL> on 12 September 2014.

³⁵ Viewed at <http://policies.griffith.edu.au/> on 12 September 2014.

³⁶ Viewed at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan> on 12 September 2014.

Recommendation Four

It is recommended that:

Griffith clarifies the status of policy information provided on its website about right to information policy and procedures, within twelve months.

5.5 Training and awareness

This review found that the type, content and staff covered by training varied between universities. All four universities provided specialist training to staff with responsibility for processing RTI and IP applications. QUT, UQ and USQ demonstrated understanding of the need for the continual development of all staff with respect to general awareness of RTI and IP, although standards for general training provided differed. Griffith mentioned RTI and IP in their general record keeping training for all staff.

UQ and USQ both had strong training programs for staff, taking different approaches to the delivery. Both had a good broad base of general training and also offered targeted face-to-face training courses.

USQ encouraged staff to access the freely available OIC online training and supported this with targeted face-to-face training in both right to information and information privacy. In this way, USQ provided a thorough and robust training framework for all staff. USQ has recommended to all staff that they complete the OIC privacy training module. USQ also included RTI and privacy material in separate dedicated training modules for general staff. To complete its training USQ could consider the addition of induction training to this training program to ensure that new staff are made aware of RTI and privacy when they commence with USQ.

UQ similarly was found to have strong internal training both through a tailored online module and targeted face-to-face training in privacy. UQ had privacy information in both dedicated training modules for general staff and as a component in other relevant training courses. RTI information was mentioned in record-keeping training and in the Organisational Ethics Course. Training on privacy obligations was provided to all UQ staff. Overall, UQ's training provided staff with a broad understanding of their obligations under the IP Act and was suitably targeted. To complete the suite of training on offer, UQ could provide further training covering RTI policy and practice.

QUT provided both general staff training in privacy and specialised training for decision makers. QUT's Information Privacy Awareness module referenced the IP Act but the content was aligned with the Commonwealth's privacy principles instead of the applicable privacy principles in the IP Act. QUT is currently reviewing the Information Privacy Awareness module content. The University stated its commitment to educating staff on the importance of privacy. The University provided all staff with information privacy awareness and training through an online ELMO Learning module.³⁷ QUT kept records of information privacy training in the ELMO system. The QUT Privacy Officer attended each 'Welcome to QUT' staff orientation event for new staff to provide staff with privacy information and answer questions relating to privacy. General awareness training on RTI and administrative release was not identified. This could present QUT with an opportunity for improvement. In particular, further training for staff on what material can be released administratively and the process to do so may be of benefit, as discussed previously in this report in the section 'Internal Challenges'.

Griffith had two staff who attended OIC's *Access Decision Maker Training* in 2011. These staff were the primary staff involved with processing RTI and IP applications. At the time of the audit Griffith advised RTI and IP forms part of their Introduction to Record Keeping training for all staff. Student Administration division also offered training to their staff that included RTI and IP components. Griffith could consider expanding the general training in RTI and privacy provided to staff to foster agency cultures consistent with the objects of the legislation.

Training is important to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in their respective roles. For example, each staff member must be aware of their responsibilities in relation to collection, storage, disclosure and use of personal information as any staff member can make an error that results in a breach of the privacy principles. Similarly, staff members must also be aware of their agency's responsibilities to proactively and administratively release information so that they are conscious of identifying opportunities for the agency to consider in relation to including information in their publication scheme, and assisting a student or member of the community to request information administratively instead of the last resort of making a formal access application under the legislation.

³⁷ 'ELMO' is the company which provides proprietary Learning Management Systems, Performance Management Systems and Pre-Built eLearning.

OIC reviewed materials for all the identified university training programs and provided feedback to universities which had standalone RTI or IP training modules. These universities have either updated their material or undertaken to update their material in accordance with OIC's feedback.

Recommendation Five

It is recommended that:

Griffith expands the scope and coverage of general awareness training about right to information and information privacy and delivers the updated training to all university staff within twelve months.

QUT updates their training modules regarding right to information and information privacy and in particular administrative release within twelve months.

QUT implements a plan to deliver their updated training module on information privacy to all existing university staff within twelve months.

UQ reviews its general awareness training programs and incorporates greater content relating to right to information within twelve months.

USQ includes information about right to information and information privacy in its induction process for new staff within twelve months.

USQ updates training modules regarding right to information and information privacy within twelve months.

6 Accountability requirements

Background

As the level of agency maturity with implementation of RTI and IP obligations increases, OIC expects that agencies will increasingly be monitoring their openness and responsiveness to the community. This will be evidenced by a proactive use of complaints systems and performance measurement mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of RTI and IP operations.

This review focused on the extent to which each university had established systems identifying improvement opportunities within RTI and IP operations.

Key Findings

- Universities have the required complaints handling procedures when information contained in the publication scheme is not available.
- Universities monitored the performance of RTI and IP application handling processes.
- Further work is required to develop appropriate strategic performance monitoring measures to track the progress of full implementation of RTI and IP across each university.

6.1 *Making a complaint*

The statutory instrument 'Ministerial Guidelines - Operation of Publication Schemes and Disclosure Logs - February 2013' (Ministerial Guidelines) provide that each agency is to implement a complaints procedure, which sets out how to make a complaint when information included in the publication scheme is not available. OIC examined each university's website, and found on the publication scheme webpages that each provided a clear phone and email contact for people to contact if they are having difficulties accessing any of the documents.

6.2 Performance measures

In these reviews, OIC examines whether or not agencies are reviewing their own progress in implementing the RTI and IP reforms. Evidence of this would be in the establishment of a review program, or the inclusion of performance measures at a strategic and operational level.

In response to OIC's request for any documentation of systems for monitoring or reporting on the performance of the RTI/IP functions, the universities generally responded with information about the number of applications received.

OIC also notes the inclusion of performance indicators in the *Queensland Universities' Open Data Strategy 2014-2017*. When there are new releases of datasets in future years, the performance indicators will measure the timeliness of publication and number of datasets published relative to scheduled releases. These performance indicators are not active in the first year of the *Queensland Universities' Open Data Strategy 2014-2017*, as the first year does not include publication of new datasets.

All universities also undertook some regular review of performance, within a limited context.

Griffith and UQ were the most active in this regard. For example, Griffith and UQ actively monitored the outcomes of OIC performance monitoring and reporting reviews and identified and updated their policies and practices accordingly to improve their compliance with the RTI and IP Acts.

Griffith University monitored the RTI/IP function through an annual review of the privacy plan, associated documents and website materials and provision of annual statistics to the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney-General. In addition, Griffith evidenced responsiveness to external information about opportunities for continuous improvement. For example, Griffith amended its *Closed Circuit Television and Surveillance policy* (2013/0002804) to ensure the University was compliant with the report recommendations of the OIC performance review of camera surveillance by Queensland Government agencies and their compliance with the privacy principles in the IP Act.³⁸

³⁸ Griffith Council News – University Council Meeting 8 October 2013 available at <http://public-sharepoint.griffith.edu.au/sites/committee-app/meetingdocuments/Council/October%202013%20Council%20News.pdf> viewed on 20 August 2014.

The performance monitoring function of UQ was reviewed annually by the Chief Operating Officer, including year on year comparisons and background as part of the annual reporting process to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. Reviews were also carried out on an ad hoc basis as a result of the Information Commissioner audits and reports. These activities included the review of the findings of the 2011-12 OIC Desktop Audit report, an internal desktop audit, update of the website privacy statement and review of the university's *RTI and Information Management Policy* to expand existing student and staff administrative access schemes to allow for third parties acting as agents. In addition, regular meetings were held with the Chief Operating Officer concerning the general management of the RTI and Privacy Office, which included a discussion of the performance of RTI/IP functions, including current applications and projects.

QUT's RTI and IP office is a relatively small part of the Governance and Legal Services Department and the number of RTI/IP applications QUT has received each year has been low. OIC did not observe any specific performance monitoring of QUT's RTI and IP office, but its work was planned and reviewed annually in line with the University's planning framework and included within the department's operational plan.

USQ actively monitored performance of the RTI, IP and legal discovery processes through regular reporting on current applications to the university's Audit and Risk Committee.

QUT and USQ provided little other information about performance indicators for monitoring the implementation of RTI and IP apart from the application processing context. Other performance measures that they could consider adopting might be:

- reports to the executive on the progress of the implementation of the RTI and IP projects; and
- the progress of projects designed to improve systems fundamental to the right to access information, such as new administrative access schemes to divert applicants from formal application processes or records management, where these projects impact on right to information and/or privacy.

Additional performance measures that could be considered by all universities might be review of:

- the effectiveness and use of administrative access schemes

- current university datasets to determine whether or not the datasets can be released proactively
- the performance of systems to ensure that the publication scheme is kept up-to-date and that information is identified for publication as it is created
- the progress of projects designed to push information out into the community and the extent of publication of information in general; and
- procedures for regular review and updating of forms for compliance with the information privacy principles.

In summary, OIC found evidence of performance measurement at the operational level across all four universities and project based performance measurement at the strategic level by Griffith and UQ. A holistic suite of performance indicators would ensure ongoing monitoring of right to information and privacy, and would assist universities to identify and implement improvements that could be made to increase the proactive release of information and protection of personal information.

OIC appreciates that this is an area of development for many public sector agencies and has also been identified as an opportunity for improvement in a number of previous compliance reviews. As a result, OIC notes that a need has been identified for guidance to support public sector agencies in developing performance targets and measures for right to information and information privacy. OIC will develop this guidance for agencies in 2014-15, to assist agencies in developing performance targets and measures.

Recommendation Six

It is recommended that:

All universities, within fifteen months, develop and incorporate performance measures and targets at the strategic and operational level to measure effectiveness and efficiency in implementing right to information and information privacy processes.

7 Maximum Disclosure

Background

Agencies hold a wealth of information – a key commodity in the digital economy. As a commodity, information needs to be managed in the same way other assets are managed. Agencies should be aware of the information they hold, ensuring that the information is put to good use and looking for ways to increase the information's value. Information must be routinely and proactively disclosed and information collected at public expense must be made available publicly wherever practicable.³⁹

OIC focusses on two strategies that agencies can adopt to routinely and proactively disclose information to the public: fast-tracking the provision of information by providing it administratively; and leveraging internet functionality.

The RTI Act requires agencies to provide information administratively so that people only apply for information under the legislation as a last resort. Administrative access arrangements are one strategy for ensuring information is readily available. For these arrangements to be successful, they must be visible to the community.

Australians are increasingly using the internet to obtain information and services. Online service provision is convenient, effective and can reduce transaction time and cost. OIC reviews Queensland government agencies' online information and service delivery in order to identify and recognise agencies which use the internet effectively to provide information, and to encourage other agencies to do the same.

Agencies which position relevant information prominently on their websites, for example, which have highly visible administrative access arrangements, will achieve a number of benefits. These agencies will be demonstrably open in their provision of information, will address RTI and IP Act requirements efficiently, and will be more likely to meet the expectations of citizens regarding the ability to access online information and services.

³⁹ Described in Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture Foundation Principles, Section 2.2, page 2, viewed at <http://www.ggcio.qld.gov.au/products/qgea-documents/547-business/2500-foundation-principles> on 4 June 2014.

Key Findings

The review found that:

- The four universities are making a wide range of information available through administrative access arrangements.
- Administrative access arrangements could be made more visible online, and staff awareness of the arrangements increased.
- The Open Access Policy, which provides access to publicly-funded university research, has been featured as an example of administrative release.
- Information asset registers are not generally well-developed or publicly available to assist people in understanding the universities' information holdings.

7.1 Administrative access

The RTI Act allows for information to be made available informally and administratively, and encourages agencies to release as much information as possible through the simplest and most accessible means available. This is an area in which the universities are generally performing well.

The four universities are currently using a range of active publication, administrative release and application driven processes for pushing information into the public domain. A wide range of information has been made available by all four universities through their publication schemes, disclosure logs, research publication repositories and agency websites.

The four universities were found to be assisting people to obtain information through a range of administrative access arrangements. For example, all four universities had a method by which students could obtain additional copies of the academic transcript of their results.

Other administrative access arrangements applied for certain types of records, for example, for university staff to obtain their own human resources files.

One issue that OIC found when considering university administrative access arrangements was an opportunity to improve internal and external awareness of administrative access arrangements. For example:

- on one file reviewed, internal staff in a business unit were not aware that information could be made available administratively and were reluctant to release the information administratively even after being made aware of the university's policy. This was discussed in more detail in this report's chapter on 'Internal Challenges'; and
- for Griffith, QUT and USQ, the administrative access arrangements to obtain an academic transcript were difficult to find, except by a specific search for the term 'academic records'. This access arrangement could be more prominent on the website, with links to the arrangement from other relevant webpages, including the RTI webpage and the webpage for alumni.

Recommendation Seven

It is recommended that:

All universities ensure that administrative access arrangements are made more prominent on the universities' websites within twelve months.

Two particular instances have been selected to feature the ways in which universities could continue to make more information available administratively.

7.2 Referee reports for applications for promotion

In application files at Griffith, UQ and USQ, one common application type identified was an application for referee reports when an academic applied for promotion.

All universities have an annual round of promotions, where staff can apply for promotion if they meet eligibility criteria and have management support. This application is considered by a committee, which either seeks referee reports or automatically receives referee reports with the application. There were differences in the particular policies and procedures for each university, but the general approaches were similar, and the applicants' interest in the referee reports was a common factor across all universities.

Universities reported regularly receiving RTI applications for referee reports considered as part of an application for promotion. In OIC's review, there were 11 applications identified where the applicant was seeking information on an academic promotion process out of the 46 files reviewed (24% of formal applications).

Universities adopted different strategies to streamline application handling for these types of applications. For example, UQ had a form that was completed at the time a reference was sought from an external referee to enable them to elect whether they consented for their reference to be provided to the applicant. This could significantly reduce the time required to process requests as third party consultation was not required if the referees had already consented to the release. Griffith advised that they had adopted a similar practice as part of an administrative access arrangement.

OIC considers there is an opportunity for universities to further improve by sharing information about their strategies to manage this process and to consider adopting good practices. Improvements could reduce the need for staff to make formal applications under the RTI and IP Acts, consistent with the clear intention stated in the RTI Act that formal applications are to be used as a last resort. Such improvements would also streamline the formal application handling process when an application is made and maximise disclosure of information to applicants where appropriate.

Recommendation Eight

It is recommended that:

All universities, as a matter of good practice, consider developing an administrative access arrangement for making referee reports available to applicants for promotion, and adopt procedures that maximise disclosure and streamline handling of any requests by applicants to obtain referee reports, within twelve months.

7.3 Open Access Policy for Research

The universities undertake publicly-funded research across a wide range of disciplines. The sooner research findings are available publicly, the greater the opportunity for the benefits of the research to have an impact on the wider community. Within the university

sector, a policy to make research findings freely and publicly available is known as an 'Open Access policy'.

7.3.1 Background

The Open Access movement for research data is a movement that is consistent with the RTI Act and the Queensland Government's policy of publishing data openly to enable the re-use of government information.

There is a requirement under the RTI Act for each university to maintain a publication scheme. In accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines, universities are required to include in the publication scheme all significant, appropriate and accurate information. OIC considers that university research outputs are significant products of university activity and that information on published research, and where possible the research literature itself should be published digitally, online, free of charge, and under an appropriate copyright licence such as Creative Commons, for example, through the university website.⁴⁰

In addition the Queensland Government 'Open Data' initiative aims to make government data available for open use.⁴¹ In this regard, universities are linking the release of research data with the release of university website datasets through the Open Data initiative.

This is consistent with the world-wide movement towards unrestricted, free access to scholarly research – particularly where the research is publicly funded.⁴² OIC recognises that some university research output will be subject to commercial considerations particularly if private funding has contributed to the research. 'Open Access', and 'Open Access publications' have been defined as publications that have 'free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to

⁴⁰ Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities of 22 October 2003 states:

The author(s) and right holder(s) of such contributions grant(s) to all users a free, irrevocable, worldwide, right of access to, and a license to copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work publicly and to make and distribute derivative works, in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship (community standards, will continue to provide the mechanism for enforcement of proper attribution and responsible use of the published work, as they do now), as well as the right to make small numbers of printed copies for their personal use.

Viewed at <http://openaccess.mpg.de/286432/Berlin-Declaration> on 29 August 2014.

⁴¹ <https://data.qld.gov.au/department-strategies/about> viewed on 10 July 2014.

⁴² Including the Budapest Open Access Initiative at <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/index.shtml> viewed on 12 February 2014. The Budapest Open Access Initiative is a worldwide initiative which was convened in Budapest in 2001.

software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself'.⁴³

The time frame for making research available publicly is linked to the extent to which public funds are involved in the production of the research – that is – the extent to which the general public can be seen as having some claim to the research outputs. Research output can be funded entirely publicly, through public-private partnerships or a mixture of multiple funding methods. Where public funds are involved, a commonly adopted standard is that the public has a reasonable expectation of obtaining access to the outcomes of the research as soon as possible or within twelve (12) months of publication to obtain the maximum benefit from the research.⁴⁴

The Open Access movement describes benefits from Open Access including those set out in Figure 1 below.

Australia is a world leader in many aspects of Open Access. Australia has:

- institutional repositories in all universities. An institutional repository is an online archive for collecting, preserving, and disseminating digital copies of the intellectual output of an institution, particularly a research institution
- funding mandates with the two main funding bodies which require adoption of Open Access policy (the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)⁴⁵ and the Australian Research Council (ARC))⁴⁶
- statements on or mandates for Open Access at a large number of institutions which establish a policy favouring open publication of research findings; and
- a large research output available in many Open Access avenues.⁴⁷

⁴³ <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/index.shtml> viewed on 12 February 2014.

⁴⁴ Based on the *Australian Research Council Open Access Policy (2013.1)* viewable at http://www.arc.gov.au/applicants/open_access.htm and the *National Health and Medical Research Council Dissemination of Research Findings* viewable at <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants/policy/nhmrc-open-access-policy> both viewed on 14 February 2014.

⁴⁵ <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/grants/policy/nhmrc-open-access-policy> viewed on 12/6/2014.

⁴⁶ http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/ARC%20Open%20Access%20Policy_print_version.pdf viewed on 12/6/2014.

⁴⁷ Australian Open Access Support Group: <http://aoasg.org.au/2013/08/15/four-issues-restricting-widespread-green-oa-in-australia/> viewed on 14 February 2014.



Figure 1 Benefits of Open Access⁴⁸

In accordance with this drive towards openness in information management, this review examined whether or not the four universities under review visibly adopted open access policies and practices.

7.3.2 Findings

All of the universities embraced Open Access in principle and provided open access to research publications. All four universities maintained extensive university repositories which included both Open Access and restricted publications. The four repositories provided access to over 40,000 open access publications.⁴⁹ The review found that all universities had policies or statements on their website supporting Open Access or were in

⁴⁸ From resource produced by interest group 'Australian Open Access Support Group', comprised of nine universities including the Australian National University, Griffith and QUT, viewed at <http://aoasg.org.au/> on 14 February 2014.

⁴⁹ <http://research-hub.griffith.edu.au/publications> and <http://eprints.qut.edu.au/statistics/> and <http://eprints.usq.edu.au/cgi/stats/report> all viewed on 12 June 2014. No figures were publically identified for UQ.

the process of developing such a policy. Each university provided advanced search capabilities to enable access to their repository.

The usability of the databases varied between universities. The Australian Open Access Support Group recommended that universities report the percentage of publications which are Open Access.⁵⁰ There was variability in the extent to which universities implemented this recommendation.

QUT demonstrated advanced implementation of Open Access publication. QUT launched its digital repository service (QUT ePrints) in 2003, backed by the world's first university-wide deposit policy which established Open Access as usual practice.⁵¹ QUT had a policy on the website supporting Open Access.⁵² QUT provided statistics on the total publications on their portal and the percentage which were Open Access, reporting 48% of their repository publications were available through Open Access. QUT provided the ability to select a search option specifically identifying 'Open Access' publications. QUT provided a range of statistics about the usage of their repositories, including downloads by month and year, total works, % full text, % open access, total downloads, % external, downloads and deposits last day/month and most popular authors and works. QUT provided advice and resources to staff on copyright and licencing to assist staff in making their research articles available through open access. QUT actively managed and tracked embargo periods and undertook to release currently restricted material should the publisher adopt a more supportive stance on open access in the future.⁵³ QUT evidenced good practice with its open access framework including research data. An overview of QUT's policy in regards to research data is provided below as an example of good practice.

⁵⁰ Australian Open Access Support Group: <http://aoasg.org.au/2013/08/15/four-issues-restricting-widespread-green-oa-in-australia/> viewed on 14 February 2014.

⁵¹ Viewed at <http://www.oar2013.qut.edu.au/> on 14 February 2014. Also recognised by the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) as the only Queensland university with an institution-wide mandate, viewed at <http://www.caul.edu.au/caul-programs/open-scholarship/open-scholarship-resources/open-access-policies> on 29 September 2014.

⁵² *QUT ePrints repository for research output* policy available at http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/F/F_01_03.jsp viewed on 14 February 2014. QUT also had researched management of legal rights (particularly copyright) to facilitate access to research through its Open Access to Knowledge (OAK) Law Project, viewed at <http://www.oaklaw.qut.edu.au/> on 29 September 2014.

⁵³ *FAQs – About the deposit process and copyright* under “Do I need to check the journal's policy on open access before depositing my paper?” viewed at <http://www.library.qut.edu.au/services/quteprints/faqs/deposit.jsp> on 10 July 2014.

7.3.3 Good Practice – Example Two

Example Two of good practice – Comprehensive Open Access policy for research data at QUT

QUT's D/2.8 *Management of research data policy* recognises research data as a valuable product of research activity which can assist in promoting open enquiry and debate, fostering collaborations, complementing research outputs and publications, providing research transparency, and justifying research outcomes. The policy applies to the management of research data created by all QUT researchers, including academic staff, professional staff and postgraduate students engaged in research activities associated or affiliated with QUT. It specifies that research data should normally be made available under Open Access licence (such as a Creative Commons licence) or by negotiated or controlled access through a system of permissions and authentication. Research data from publicly funded research projects (such as by the ARC or the NHMRC) must be placed into an institutional repository, usually within six months of publication. Research datasets should generally be made available via Open Access or controlled access with research partners, collaborators or requestors, for re-use by other researchers, unless a case based on specific and valid reasons is made for not doing so.⁵⁴

7.3.4 Conclusion

OIC found that the reviewed universities were committed to implementing Open Access policies. The universities all had active processes where staff could publish their research articles on the university repository in an Open Access format. It is also encouraging that universities actively monitored and increased the percentage of all research outputs which were available through Open Access.

7.4 Information Asset Registers

Queensland universities are subject to the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* (Qld). This means the four universities are required to adhere to Information Standard 44,⁵⁵ which

⁵⁴ http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/D/D_02_08.jsp viewed on 12 June 2014.

⁵⁵ Viewed at <http://www.qgcio.qld.gov.au/category/548-qgea/products/qgea-documents/information/2632-information-standard-44-information-asset-custodianship> on 25 August 2014.

requires universities to 'establish and maintain an information asset register'. An information asset register is a list of information holdings, with security classifications assigned to each information holding.

In these compliance reviews, OIC assesses whether or not agencies have developed an information asset register, and identifies whether or not agencies have published the information asset register. This aspect of the review is to ensure the community can discover what information is held by an agency so they can better direct their searches for information.

An online search for the four universities did not locate any published information asset registers.

QUT provided a sample of its information asset register, which was maintained by Information Technology Services. For each information asset it provided a range of detail including, a description of the function, the area to which the records related, the system custodian, the type of information asset (hard copy, electronic file, removable media/device, online or cloud-based), whether the asset included personal data (including sensitive data) and the information security classification.

Griffith University did not maintain a central information asset register. It did maintain a range of other repositories and registers that it used to manage its different types of information assets depending on the nature of those assets and the way they were used. This included research publication and data repositories for academic research, catalogues of scholarly resources, HR, finance and student systems, and the records management system which managed corporate records.

UQ did not maintain an Information Asset Register. UQ maintained an Application Portfolio of software used or maintained by the university which might have stored or managed a set of data entities. This register was maintained to comply with Information Standard 18,⁵⁶ as an information security measure, rather than an information management strategy.

⁵⁶ Viewed at <http://www.ggcio.qld.gov.au/products/ggea-documents/549-information-security/2704-information-security-is18> on 25 September 2014.

USQ did not maintain an Information Asset Register. It reported that it plans to commence development of a register by December 2014. USQ published a policy to establish a process for classifying and handling university information assets.⁵⁷

Recommendation Nine

It is recommended that:

All universities develop an Information Asset Register within twelve months, along with procedures to ensure the Information Asset Register is maintained.

All universities publish their Information Asset Register on the website to create greater transparency as to the information resources available, within twelve months.

7.5 Open Data

An Open Data Strategy for all universities is published on the Queensland Government's open data portal.⁵⁸ The universities state that they will follow a four year approach in support of the Open Data Initiative. The initial focus will be raising awareness about existing national datasets in the public domain. Over four years, additional datasets will be identified and released. Relevant aspects of the Open Data Strategy are discussed throughout this report.

⁵⁷ *Information Asset and Security Classification Procedure* available at <http://policy.usq.edu.au/documents.php?id=13931PL> viewed on 17 September 2014.

⁵⁸ Viewed at <https://publications.qld.gov.au/dataset/open-data-strategy-queensland-universities> on 16 October 2014.

8 Compliance

Background

The RTI and IP Acts set out detailed requirements for making information available to people, using push model strategies such as publication schemes and disclosure logs, and in response to applications for information under the legislative processes.

Key Findings

- Overall, the level of compliance with the requirements of the RTI and IP Acts was encouraging.
- Some opportunities for improvement to publication schemes and disclosure logs were noted, which if addressed in accordance with undertakings by the universities, will ensure the publication schemes and disclosure logs comply with legislative requirements.
- All four universities had sound structures and processes in place for processing applications under the legislative process and for dealing with requests under each universities' administrative access schemes.
- Communication with applicants was profiled for each university. The review found universities were in regular contact with applicants every 4 to 6 business days and used informal methods of email and phone in preference to mail for the majority of contact while processing the application.
- Some technical issues were identified in application handling. Each university has undertaken to address these issues.
- The delegation authorities for internal reviews at each university established a clear distinction of role responsibilities in deciding internal review outcomes. Reviews were conducted by an officer independent of and no less senior than the original decision-maker, in accordance with legislative requirements.
- The universities had addressed privacy obligations contained in Information Privacy Principles 2 and 5 (IPP2 and IPP5).

8.1 Overall Compliance

OIC reviewed university compliance with regards to the RTI and IP Acts, and Ministerial Guidelines. Compliance was assessed for university RTI web content, publication schemes, disclosure logs, application handling and compliance with IPP2 and IPP5. The review found that universities were generally compliant with regards to the requirements of the RTI and IP Acts and Ministerial Guidelines. Some areas for improvement were identified. OIC did not identify any significant or major instances of non-compliance. Minor matters were reported where the matter could become significant if not addressed, for example, if failure to rigorously apply a procedural step could have resulted in an obstacle to accessing information, or if the minor issue was part of a broader pattern which could have created an access issue for a number of people.

The findings of the review are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2
Summary of Review Findings for Compliance Areas

Report Card	Griffith	QUT	UQ	USQ
Clear pathways to access information	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
Maturity of schemes for providing information				
Publication Scheme	In progress to compliance	In progress to compliance	In progress to compliance	In progress to compliance
Disclosure Log	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
Application handling	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	In progress to compliance
Collection and handling of personal information				
Information Privacy Principle 2 – Personal Information collection notices	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
Information Privacy Principle 5 – Discovery of the personal information held by an agency, and the use and disclosure of the information	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

More information is provided in the following sections of the report. The ratings are explained in more detail in the Maturity Model provided in Appendix 9.

8.2 Publication Scheme

The publication scheme forms an integral part of the 'push model' where information is released proactively. A publication scheme is a structured list of an agency's information that is readily available to the public, free of charge wherever possible. Section 21 of the RTI Act requires that all agencies,⁵⁹ must publish a publication scheme, and must include the classes of information available in the publication scheme and the terms and charges by which it will make that information available.

Section 21(3) of the RTI Act provides that an agency must ensure that its publication scheme complies with guidelines as published by the Minister. Under these Ministerial Guidelines, the publication scheme is required to set out the information that the agency has available under seven standard classes of information,⁶⁰ preferably on the agency's website, so that people looking at the publication scheme can readily access and use the published information.

Online publication schemes are audited by OIC using a desktop audit process, which examines the publication scheme on an agency's website from the perspective of a member of the public. The desktop audit checks that the publicly visible aspects of the publication scheme comply with the legislation and Ministerial Guidelines. All four universities had online publication schemes.

In March 2014, OIC conducted desktop audits of the universities' publication schemes. At the conclusion of the desktop audits, a detailed list of findings was issued to each university making recommendations aimed at improving the administration of the universities' publication scheme. Results for universities in terms of how well the publication schemes were populated with information in the seven standard classes of information are summarised in Table 3.

⁵⁹ Other than entities specifically excluded by the legislation, or who have made other legislatively compliant arrangements.

⁶⁰ About Us, Our Services, Our Finances, Our Priorities, Our Decisions, Our Policies, Our Lists. OIC splits the assessment of 'Our Finances' into two subcategories to better reflect common findings regarding different levels of agency compliance across the subcategories.

Table 3
Population of classes in university publication schemes

Report Card	Griffith University	Queensland University of Technology	University of Queensland	University of Southern Queensland
About Us	In progress to compliance	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
Our Services	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
Our Finances – Budget ⁶¹	In progress to compliance	In progress to compliance	In progress to compliance	In progress to compliance
Our Finances – Procurement	Compliant	In progress to compliance	Compliant	In progress to compliance
Our Priorities	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	In progress to compliance
Our Decisions	Compliant	Compliant	In progress to compliance	In progress to compliance
Our Policies	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
Our Lists	Negligible	Compliant	Compliant	In progress to compliance

Universities were provided with a detailed list of findings from individual desktop audits of each university website. Universities accepted the feedback and gave a written undertaking to make the relevant changes.

Overall, OIC is satisfied that each university has addressed or undertaken to address the publication scheme issues as identified by the desktop audit conducted in March 2014. Once all desktop audit report recommendations have been implemented, the universities will meet compliance requirements for publication schemes under the RTI Act and Ministerial Guidelines.

⁶¹ OIC has a longstanding practice of splitting the assessment of the 'Our Finances' class in two. This is for practical reasons. Most agencies are compliant with the requirement in the Ministerial Guidelines to publish projected and actual income and expenditure. Many agencies are non-compliant with the requirement to publish information relating to tendering, procurement and contracts. In order to recognise the compliant practices and to avoid masking non-compliance, OIC has split the assessment of the 'Our Finances' class to make this pattern of compliance and non-compliance clear and explicit (where it exists).

Recommendation Ten

It is recommended that:

All universities review and update their publication schemes to meet compliance requirements within twelve months.

8.3 Disclosure Log

A disclosure log is a web page or a part of a website which publishes a list of documents that a university has already released under the RTI Act. The rationale for disclosure logs is that if one person has expressed an interest in documents containing information other than their own personal information, then these same documents might be of interest to others.

Section 78A of the RTI Act provides the legislative requirements with which universities must comply when maintaining a disclosure log. Under section 78A(1) of the RTI Act, universities may include a copy of a document in a disclosure log, but only if it does not contain the personal information of the applicant to which access was originally granted. Universities must ensure that the disclosure log complies with the guidelines published by the Minister on the Minister's website (section 78B(1) of the RTI Act). When a decision is made to include a document in the disclosure log but the agency does not provide a direct link from the disclosure log to the document, details identifying the document and information about how it may be accessed must be included in the disclosure log.⁶² If a document is released under the RTI Act and not published in a disclosure log, the Ministerial Guidelines provide that the agency should document the decision not to publish, and the reasons for that decision, as part of the agency's internal records.

OIC audits disclosure logs by a desktop audit process, as well as in the course of reviews such as this one. The desktop audit examines the disclosure log from the perspective of a member of the public, and checks that the publicly visible aspects of the disclosure log comply with the legislation and Ministerial Guidelines.

A desktop audit of each university's disclosure log was conducted in March 2014. OIC noted that each university's disclosure log was readily identifiable and accessible from their RTI web page. OIC considered the disclosure logs to be well structured and supported by informative commentary that introduced and explained the purposes of the disclosure log. Items posted to each disclosure log were supported by a brief summary of the published information.

⁶² Section 78A(1)(b) states that where an agency has not directly published the document in their disclosure log, details identifying the document and how it may be accessed may be included in a disclosure log. The Ministerial Guidelines with which agencies maintaining a disclosure log must comply impose the condition that where it is not reasonably practicable to publish the document, the disclosure log must provide details identifying the document and how it may be accessed.

Universities were provided with a detailed list of findings from individual desktop audits of each university website. Universities accepted the feedback and gave a written undertaking to make the relevant changes.

Overall, OIC is satisfied that each university has addressed or undertaken to address the disclosure log issues as identified by the desktop audit.

This review specifically selected all RTI applications where documents were released by a decision at each university in 2012-13, in order to review each university's decision-making about publishing to the disclosure log. In total 16 files were reviewed. The 16 files were comprised of 3 files at QUT, 7 files at UQ and 6 files at USQ. There were no relevant files at Griffith. OIC examined the files to identify whether or not each university considered publishing the information to the disclosure log, and if not, whether reasons for non-publication were documented by the university as part of its internal records, as required by the Ministerial Guidelines made under the RTI Act.

Of the 16 files reviewed, information from 11 (69%) of those files was published in full in the university's disclosure log.⁶³ Of the remaining 5 files where the released non-personal information was not published in the disclosure log, there were four UQ files and one USQ file. The reasons for non-publication were not recorded on the USQ file as required by the Ministerial Guidelines. Briefing notes were included on file at UQ, but these were not always signed with the final outcome regarding publication noted on file. QUT informed OIC that all RTI applications where material non-personal to the applicant has been released have been included on their disclosure log since 2009.

Recommendation Eleven

It is recommended that:

All universities document any decision not to publish information released under the RTI Act to the agency's disclosure log, and retain the reasons for the decisions in internal records in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines, commencing immediately.

⁶³ 3 of 3 files published to the disclosure log at QUT, 3 of 7 files published to the disclosure log at UQ, 5 of 6 files published to the disclosure log at USQ.

8.4 Active management of agency responsibilities

A focus of this review was on the general practices and systems adopted by universities to process applications for information. The detailed results of the review are discussed below. This section discusses the active management of universities' responsibilities, including:

- communication with the applicant; and
- communication with other business units within each university.

The file review found that the universities were actively managing communication with applicants and internal business units.

8.4.1 Active Management – Contacting the Applicant

Regular contact with the applicant during the application handling process can promote the objectives of the RTI and IP Acts. Although not a specific requirement of the legislation, regular contact with the applicant during the application process maintains agency/client relationships and provides good outcomes for both the applicant and agency. For example, if an applicant is unsure how to frame their request, they might couch it in unnecessarily broad terms. If the agency contacts the applicant to discuss the request on receipt, it might be possible to redefine the request so that the applicant is more certain to obtain the information they seek, and so that the agency can run a targeted search to find the information more quickly and easily than would have been the case for the original request.

Each of the files was analysed to identify the frequency with which the RTIP unit contacted the applicant during the application process. This is depicted in Table 4.

On average the officers at each university responsible for processing the application contacted the applicant between 3.5 and 7 times per application. The officers were in regular contact with the applicant during the application process, contacting them on average every 4.3 to 6.1 business days.

**Table 4
Comparison of University Communication Profiles**

Quick Facts				
	Griffith	QUT	UQ	USQ
Average number of times the RTIP unit contacted the applicant (times per application)	3.5	6.4	4.4	7.0
Average time between contacts with the applicant (business days)	6.1	5.2	4.3	5.2
Average total duration of applications, from receipt of application to decision (including time taken for third party consultations and extensions) (business days)	26.8	30.0	22.3	46.4
Number of applications where decision was deemed to be a refusal (because a decision on access was not made within the statutory time period) (deemed decisions)	0	0	0	0
Percentage of contact with applicant made by email or phone for application processing activities (excluding application receipt acknowledgment notification and formal decision notification) (percentage of all contacts made by email and phone)	85%	97%	83%	89%
Percentage of communication activities which involved the RTIP unit following up business units for information (excluding communication with the applicant) (percentage of communication activities involved following up business units)	2%	0%	1%	3%

Overall, over 85% of all contact with the applicant relating to core application processing activities was made by direct methods such as phone and email. These activities included requests for further time to process the application, clarification of scope and charges estimates and specifically excluded application receipt acknowledgment notification and formal decision notification.

Universities contacted applicants regularly, and used informal and two-way communication methods.

8.4.2 Giving Access

Right to information recognises that the community has a fair and equitable right of access to information held by Queensland government agencies. Providing access to an individual other than in the access type requested may restrict the applicant's ability to access the information. For example, providing access in compact disc (CD) format when hard copy was requested might disadvantage individuals without access to a computer or appropriate software to view the requested documents. If it is not possible to give access to an applicant as originally requested, for example if a document is too large to be sent by email as requested, then it is good practice to contact the applicant to ensure that the proposed access type is appropriate.

From the files reviewed, eight instances were noted at three separate universities⁶⁴ where access was not provided in the access type requested by the applicant, and there was no evidence on file of a discussion with the applicant as to whether or not the alternative access type was suitable.

A good practice noted was that where there was a significant volume of material released, QUT provided applicants with multiple access methods, including supplying the material through a log-on to a QUT secure server to download the material. As long as this access method is negotiated with the applicant or is in addition to the requested access method, then OIC notes that this could assist applicants in accessing the material faster than by more traditional means.

Recommendation Twelve

It is recommended that:

All universities, as a matter of good practice, ensure that if it is necessary to provide information in an alternative access type (for example, provide information by compact disc rather than a hard copy) the applicant is first contacted to negotiate how access will be provided, commencing immediately.

⁶⁴ Two files at QUT, three at UQ and three at USQ.

8.4.3 Active Management – Time taken to process applications

The time taken to process files varied significantly between universities. UQ had speedy processing of files with files taking on average 22.3 business days (quicker than the standard statutory requirement of 25 business days) and 5 files being finalised within a week of receipt.

USQ processed all applications within statutory processing periods. However, USQ had much longer processing times across their files compared to the other universities, with the average time taken being 46.4 business days. The quickest file reviewed at USQ took 20 business days. USQ took steps to ensure it met legislative timeframes, for example, sought extensions of time prior to the expiration of the processing period and kept in contact with applicants throughout the process. USQ advised that they had never received a complaint regarding processing times. Whilst acknowledging that there was not a compliance issue, due to the difference in the length of processing time for applications, OIC contacted USQ to discuss this issue.

USQ advised that as a regional university, it did not have the resources of the metropolitan universities to direct their efforts to speedy application handling. USQ stated that staff responsible for processing RTI and IP applications had this as only one of many responsibilities, and thus had many competing priorities and deadlines.

OIC acknowledges the operational considerations raised by USQ and experienced by many agencies, however timeliness is an important issue for applicants. Extensions of time are generally expected to be sought in exceptional circumstances. OIC recommends that USQ take action to reduce the time taken to process applications and monitor and report on timeliness.

Recommendation Thirteen

It is recommended that:

USQ, as a matter of good practice, takes action to reduce the time taken to process applications within twelve months.

8.5 Application handling

As a last resort, if people cannot obtain government held information from openly published information sources or administrative access schemes, they have a right to be given access to the information using a formal application process under the RTI Act or the IP Act, unless it would be contrary to the public interest to give the access.

Weighing up an individual's right to information against the public interest in non-disclosure requires careful consideration. Agency decision-makers are required to balance the competing public interest factors in the light of both the legislation and the business of the agency. These decision-makers have a key role in ensuring that the decision is made in accordance with both the intentions and the requirements of the legislation.

The business units handling the applications need to make sure that the processes for locating and considering the information run smoothly, and in accordance with the legislation. The application handling process also affords an opportunity for decision-makers to provide leadership and support to other business units within their agency in understanding and complying with legislative requirements.

In this context, this review considered both compliance with the legislative requirements, and the more general level of compliance with the push towards openness and release of information as it may be seen in application handling.

This review assessed all application files for 2012-13 for Griffith, QUT and USQ. 22 files for 2012-13 were selected from UQ to represent a cross section of the types of applications received. This resulted in review across all 4 universities of a sample of 46 RTI and IP access application files for compliance with the RTI Act and Chapter 3 of the IP Act. None of the 4 universities finalised an amendment application in 2012-13, so compliance in this area was unable to be assessed.

The composition of the file sample by type and university is displayed in Table 5.

Table 5
Number of access application files by university and type

Universities	RTI	IP	Total
Griffith University	2	2	4
Queensland University of Technology	5	4	9
University of Queensland	10	12	22
University of Southern Queensland	6	5	11
All universities	23	23	46

OIC considered the university's application of the legislative requirements for dealing with:

- obtaining evidence of identity and agent authorisation for applications involving the applicant's personal information under both the RTI and IP Acts
- prescribed time periods for notifying applicants about how an application does not comply with the legislation and steps taken in allowing the applicant a reasonable opportunity to make an application in a form complying with all relevant requirements of the Acts
- requests for longer processing periods (extensions), in particular whether or not an applicant has agreed to the request and the request was made prior to a deemed decision being taken to have been made
- charges estimate notices (CEN) and schedules of relevant documents and in particular, the issuing of a CEN or schedule of relevant documents prior to the end of the processing period, prescribed requirements of a CEN or schedule of relevant documents and waiving of charges under the RTI Act
- taking reasonable steps to obtain the views of third parties, informing third parties that documents released in response to an RTI Act application may also be published, for example, in a disclosure log, provision of a prescribed written notice of the decision and deferring access, as required under the Acts
- transferring applications to another agency
- decisions on outcomes of applications⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Please note that the review did not assess the quality or appropriateness of the decision itself, as this is subject to the internal and external review mechanisms.

- recalculation of processing periods for appropriate provision of considered or deemed decisions
 - delegations for decision-makers
 - decision notices, in particular: itemisation of processing charges and fees (where applicable), access periods (the period within which the applicant may access the documents), disclosure log requirements, provisions under which access is refused (where applicable), review periods and process for making application for review, reasons for decision, date the decision was made and designation of the decision-maker
- refusing to deal with an application
 - giving access to applicants; and
 - deferring access and notifying applicants when access is no longer deferred.

The file review found that Griffith, QUT and UQ were generally compliant with the requirements of the RTI and IP Acts. Some minor technical issues were noted and reported individually to each university. USQ was close to compliant, and was very responsive to OIC's suggestions for procedural improvements to achieve compliance. With implementation of the relevant suggestions, USQ is expected to be fully compliant. Each university has undertaken to adopt OIC's suggestions to address these minor technical issues.

UQ and USQ demonstrated very high quality correspondence. Both UQ and USQ used standard templates for correspondence which were well set out, included the required elements and were easy to read. Some minor improvement opportunities were noted but both universities showed a willingness to update their templates and procedures to achieve best practice. Files reviewed showed the universities adjusted the templates appropriately to suit the matter on hand. Griffith and QUT also used standard templates for correspondence which included the required components and were reasonably well set out and accessible.

The file review also found an area of practice that raised general issues that could be of interest for other agencies: processing charges.

8.5.1 Processing Charges

Under the RTI Act an agency may impose a processing charge in relation to an access application for a document.⁶⁶ Under the *Right to Information Regulation 2009* if the agency spends more than five hours processing the application, then a processing charge may be charged. It is the duty of the agency to minimise any charges payable by the applicant in relation to an access application.⁶⁷

Two issues were identified at USQ regarding the proper calculation of the final processing charge which resulted in over-charging of applicants. Firstly, where an application relates to documents, some of which contain personal information of the applicant, no processing charges are payable for the time required to process the proportion of documents that contain the applicant's personal information. Secondly, where the actual processing time was less than expected, and resulted in a lesser charge, then the lesser charge is the correct amount payable, and not the higher amount quoted in the CEN. The decision letter should provide the actual time spent processing the application, and not automatically default to the time breakdown quoted in the CEN. During the course of the review USQ agreed to rectify these practices.

8.6 Internal review

A person affected by a reviewable decision may apply to have the decision reviewed by the agency dealing with the application.⁶⁸ This is called an 'internal review'. The principal officer of the agency may delegate to another officer of the agency the power to deal with an internal review.⁶⁹ The RTI and IP Acts stipulate, among other things, that an internal review application must not be decided by the officer who made the reviewable decision or an officer who is of lesser seniority to the person who made the reviewable decision. OIC examined each university's internal review process to assess the agency's compliance with the prescribed requirements of both the RTI and IP Acts for internal reviews.

This review examined the delegations and handling practices for processing all of the internal reviews conducted by each university during the period 1 July 2012 to

⁶⁶ Under section 56 of the RTI Act, a processing charge means the charge prescribed under a regulation for searching for or retrieving the document and making, or doing things related to making a decision on an application.

⁶⁷ Section 58 of the RTI Act.

⁶⁸ Under section 80(1) of the RTI Act and section 94(1) of the IP Act. A person can also seek an external review of the initial decision.

⁶⁹ An internal review application may be dealt with under a delegation or direction. See section 30 and 31 of the RTI Act and section 50 and 51 of the IP Act.

31 June 2013. There were no internal reviews conducted by Griffith or USQ and three internal reviews conducted by QUT and UQ.⁷⁰

Internal reviews at Griffith and USQ would be performed by the Vice-Chancellor of each university. The QUT Vice-Chancellor has delegated the power to deal with an application for internal review to the Registrar of QUT under section 30 of the RTI Act.⁷¹ The UQ Vice-Chancellor has delegated the power to deal with an application for internal review to the Chief Operating Officer of UQ under section 30 of the RTI Act.⁷²

OIC reviewed the internal review process for compliance with the prescribed requirements. In the three files reviewed by OIC, the internal review was conducted by the appropriate delegated officer. In addition, each internal review was performed by an officer independent to and of higher seniority to the officer who made the original reviewable decision in accordance with the provisions of the RTI and IP Acts. This review subsequently found that all internal reviews were finalised within the 20 business days allowed under section 83(2) of the RTI Act.⁷³ All three files showed evidence of the decision being made independently of the original decision and decision-maker. In conclusion, the four universities' internal review processes were found to be in compliance with the prescribed requirements of Chapter 3, Part 8 of the RTI and IP Acts.

8.7 Privacy Principles

The primary objectives of the IP Act are to provide a right of access to and amendment of personal information in the government's possession or under its control and to provide safeguards for the fair collection and handling of an individual's personal information within the public sector.⁷⁴ The privacy principles govern how public sector agencies collect, store, use and disclose personal information in their possession or under their control. Under section 27(1) of the IP Act, each of the reviewed universities must comply with the privacy principles which include the Information Privacy Principles (IPPs), the bound contracted service provider provisions⁷⁵ and the overseas transfer obligations.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ There were two internal reviews conducted at QUT and one at UQ in the relevant period.

⁷¹ A reference to section 30(2) (Decision-Maker for Application to Agency) in the RTI Act is also a reference to the equivalent section 50(2) (Decision-Maker for Application to Agency) under the IP Act.

⁷² A reference to section 30(2) (Decision-Maker for Application to Agency) in the RTI Act is also a reference to the equivalent section 50(2) (Decision-Maker for Application to Agency) under the IP Act.

⁷³ A reference to section 83(2) (When Internal Review Application to be Decided) in the RTI Act is also a reference to the equivalent section 97(2) (When Internal Review Application to be Decided) under the IP Act.

⁷⁴ Sections 3(1)(a) and (b) of IP Act.

⁷⁵ Chapter 2, Part 4 of the IP Act.

8.7.1 Collection of Personal Information

The collection of personal information is a significant area of privacy regulation. Whenever a university obtains personal information, for example through an email to an agency contact email address or by completion of a form, IPP1 states that it can only collect personal information that is for a lawful purpose directly related to fulfilling the function or activity of the university. If the university is collecting the personal information from the individual concerned, IPP2 states the university must take all reasonable steps to make the individual generally aware of:

- the purpose of the collection
- any law that might authorise or require the collection
- anyone to whom it would be the universities usual practice to pass the information onto; and
- anyone to whom they may in turn pass the personal information onto.

Collection notices promote transparency as they allow the individual to understand the agency's dealings with their collected personal information.⁷⁷

Electronically available online forms for each reviewed university were sampled and assessed to determine whether the university was meeting its obligations under IPP2. A total of 39 forms were assessed.⁷⁸ The review found that forms collecting personal information generally provided appropriate advice about the reasons for the collection and (as appropriate) the routine disclosure of the information. Some minor technical issues with specific forms were noted where the general global collection notice was not adequate to cover the specific circumstances, for example, information about disclosure to third parties. These were raised with the universities, who accepted the comments and agreed to make the relevant changes. Once this has occurred, collection notices on reviewed forms will be compliant with IPP2.

⁷⁶ Section 33 of the IP Act.

⁷⁷ The term 'collection notice' is not used in the IP Act. It is a term used by OIC to denote information provided to an individual by an agency in meeting their obligations under IPP2.

⁷⁸ 10 forms were reviewed at Griffith, eight at QUT, 10 at UQ and 11 forms were reviewed at USQ.

8.7.2 Publishing Types of Personal Information Held

IPP5 states that an agency having control of documents containing personal information must take all reasonable steps to ensure that an individual can find out whether the agency has control of any documents containing personal information, the types of personal information contained in those documents, the main purposes for which the information is used, and how an individual can access the document containing their personal information.

As mentioned earlier in the report, a desktop review conducted in March 2014 found that all four universities had published detailed information on their personal information holdings on their website. The information provided covered students, employees, research participants, alumni, supporters, community members (mailing lists, clinic patients, continuing professional education participants, committee members), financial management systems, information technology systems, and closed-circuit television (CCTV). Detail was provided on what types of personal information was held, the main purposes for which the information was used, who could access the information and how an individual could access documents containing their personal information. QUT, Griffith and USQ also included information on what third parties, as applicable, the information might typically be disclosed to. While this is not a requirement of the legislation, this reiterated the information contained in these universities' collection notices. The desktop audit found that the universities were compliant with IPP5.

9 Conclusion

This report details the findings of the review of four Queensland universities' progress in implementing right to information and information privacy. The reviewed universities: Griffith University, the Queensland University of Technology, the University of Queensland and the University of Southern Queensland, performed well across the board, consistent with the overall findings for the university sector reported in the *2013 Right to Information and Information Privacy Electronic Audit*.⁷⁹

All four universities had sound information management governance structures in place. This provides a solid foundation from which to undertake further work in identifying and proactively publishing additional information that is suitable for release. OIC also found that the core group of staff within each university's RTIP units were committed to their areas of responsibility and to continuous improvement. It is important that each university strengthen their training and awareness initiatives to support a culture of openness to assist the implementation of right to information and information privacy obligations across the university.

The findings of this review are encouraging and demonstrate a strong framework of proactive release, administrative access, application handling and privacy awareness, to facilitate greater access to information outside the formal access application process while protecting personal information. With an undertaking to incorporate the improvement opportunities identified in this report, the four reviewed universities will continue to improve accountability and lead in sharing research findings for the betterment of university stakeholders and the broader community.

⁷⁹ Viewable at <http://www.oic.qld.gov.au/about/our-organisation/key-functions/compliance-and-audit-reports/2013-right-to-information-and-information-privacy-electronic-audit>.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Acronyms

ARC	Australian Research Council
CD	Compact Disc
CEN	Charges Estimate Notice
FTE	Full time equivalent
Griffith	Griffith University
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IMPB	Information Management Program Board
IP	Information Privacy
IP Act	<i>Information Privacy Act 2009</i> (Qld)
IPP	Information Privacy Principle
Ministerial Guidelines	Ministerial Guidelines – Operation of Publication Schemes and Disclosure Logs – February 2013
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
OIC	Office of the Information Commissioner
QGEA	Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
RTI	Right to Information
RTI Act	<i>Right to Information Act 2009</i> (Qld)
RTIP unit	The unit in an agency handling applications for information made under the RTI or IP Act
Tracer	A request sent from an agency's business unit handling applications for information made under the RTI Act or IP Act to other business units within an agency to locate responsive documents.
UQ	University of Queensland
USQ	University of Southern Queensland

**Terms of Reference
Review of Right to Information and Information Privacy
University**

1. Objectives of the Review

- 1.1. The objective of the review is to establish whether the University is complying with the prescribed requirements of the *Right to Information Act 2009* (RTI Act) and the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (IP Act), to identify areas of good practice, and make recommendations about any improvement opportunities identified by the review.

2. Scope of the Review

- 2.1. The review will cover the University's policies and procedures for RTI and IP information handling practices, including:

2.1.1. University governance (leadership, governance mechanisms, information management including proactive identification and release of information holdings, policies, procedures, delegations and roles and responsibilities of key personnel and training).

2.1.2. Accountability and performance monitoring systems.

2.1.3. Whether or not the University is maximising disclosure. The review will include:

2.1.3.1. Consultation with communities and industry stakeholders as to their information needs and information management issues, and the extent to which those needs are addressed by the University.

2.1.3.2. Review of administrative access schemes.

2.1.4. Compliance with legislatively based requirements for:

2.1.4.1. Access and amendment applications and processing (parts 2 – 4).

2.1.4.2. Decision making (part 5).

2.1.4.3. Processing and access charges (part 6).

2.1.4.4. Giving access (part 7).

2.1.4.5. Review processes, including and internal review of decisions under the legislation, if applicable (part 8).

2.1.4.6. An agency publication scheme (s 21).

2.1.4.7. An agency disclosure log (s 78).

2.1.4.8. Giving access to information administratively (s 19) with a focus on administrative access schemes for students, staff and potential employers.

- 2.1.5. The University's personal information handling practices including technologies, programs, policies and procedures to review privacy related issues of a systemic nature generally, and agency compliance with the privacy principles.

3. Suitability Criteria for Assessing Performance

- 3.1. The review is based on an assessment of the University's performance against the requirements of the *Right to Information Act 2009* and the *Information Privacy Act 2009*, and any subordinate guidelines or instruments made pursuant to the legislation.
- 3.2. Where the legislation states that the agency must meet a particular requirement, that requirement is considered to be an auditable element of the legislation. The review tests whether or not the agency has complied with that requirement.
- 3.3. Where the legislation indicates that the agency should adopt a particular approach, the review will make a qualitative assessment of the extent to which the agency has adopted that approach.
- 3.4. These requirements are summarised in the electronic audit / self assessment tool available for preview on the Office of the Information Commissioner's (OIC) website and previously sent to you.

4. Assessment Process

- 4.1. In conducting the review, the Manager, Performance Monitoring and Reporting (Ms Karen McLeod) will work with a review team including Senior Performance, Monitoring & Reporting Officers. The review team will work through the testing program with your nominated staff to ensure that each relevant area of practice has been considered and appropriate evidence gathered to support findings. Appropriate evidence may be gathered through the following processes:
 - 4.1.1. Discussions with relevant staff and management.
 - 4.1.2. Consultation with students, community and industry stakeholders.
 - 4.1.3. Examination of agency website including publication schemes, disclosure logs and arrangements for administrative access.
 - 4.1.4. Examination of any related websites.
 - 4.1.5. Review of desktop audit recommendations and agency response.
 - 4.1.6. Examination of the University's intranet.
 - 4.1.7. Review of statistical records/reporting.
 - 4.1.8. Review of reported self assessment via the electronic audit.
 - 4.1.9. Review of University documentation.
 - 4.1.10. Substantive testing of application and internal review files for the 2012/13 financial year.

5. Reporting

- 5.1. The report will outline findings and make recommendations to improve the University's implementation of RTI and IP.

Issues identified during the review regarding the University's implementation will be raised progressively during the review. If necessary, OIC will brief University management before drafting the review report.

The draft review report will outline findings and issues identified during the review along with any recommended course of action. A copy will then be provided formally to the University management for comment.

Formal comments received will be considered for incorporation into the final report.

This final report, together with the University's formal response to recommendations, will be submitted to the Queensland Parliamentary Committee for Legal Affairs and Community Safety.

6. Administrative Matters

6.1. Timing

At this stage, it is envisaged that the on-site field work for the review will commence in January and will be finalised by February. The exit meetings and report drafting should be concluded by May 2014, assuming unforeseen circumstances do not intervene.

6.2. Request for Information

Once the University has nominated a liaison officer for this review, further information will be requested as attached.

It would be of assistance if such information could be provided to the OIC as soon as possible, and at the latest within 20 business days, for the efficiency of the on-site visit.

6.3. Facilities

It would be greatly appreciated if a work space and access to a computer and photocopying facilities could be made available to the review team for their onsite visit, as needed.

Appendix 3 – Action Plan Griffith University

Rating	Description
Immediate/Short term	OIC considers urgent (immediate) attention is required to complete the action
Medium term	OIC considers that medium term action is required (anticipated action completion within 3 to 6 months)
Long term	OIC considers that long term action is required (anticipated action completion within 12 months, for example, in time for the commencement of the national health reforms to the service delivery model)

OIC recommends:-		OIC Rating	Griffith response and any proposed management action	Griffith nominated owner	Griffith nominated completion date
1	All universities develop a broad strategic policy statement promoting community engagement about access to university-held information, and publish the policy statement within twelve months.	Long term	The University is of the view that its suite of strategic plans addresses the intent of this recommendation. Nevertheless, a statement will be added to the relevant website.	Vice President (Corporate Services)	31.03.2015
3	All universities ensure that the responsible bodies governing information management implement ongoing active monitoring and oversight of the pro-active release of information in accordance with the RTI and IP Acts, within the next twelve months.	Long term	As indicated in the report, the University evidences good practice in this area. We will continue to do so and the IMPB will take account of this recommendation in its ongoing work.	PVC (Information Services)	This is already University practice.

OIC recommends:-		OIC Rating	Griffith response and any proposed management action	Griffith nominated owner	Griffith nominated completion date
4	Griffith clarifies the status of policy information provided on its website about right to information policy and procedures, within twelve months.	Long term	The University accepts this recommendation.	Vice President (Corporate Services)	31.03.2015
5	Griffith expands the scope and coverage of general awareness training about right to information and information privacy and delivers the updated training to all university staff within twelve months.	Long term	The University accepts this recommendation.	Vice President (Corporate Services)	End 2015
6	All universities, within fifteen months, develop and incorporate performance measures and targets at the strategic and operational level to measure effectiveness and efficiency in implementing right to information and information privacy processes.	Long term	The University will consider this recommendation once OIC has published the guidance for agencies foreshadowed in the report.	Vice President (Corporate Services)	This will be subject to the timing of publication of guidance by OIC.
7	All universities ensure that administrative access arrangements are made more prominent on the universities' websites within twelve months.	Long term	The University is in the process of developing a clearer statement about administrative access arrangements and this will be published on the RTI website.	Vice President (Corporate Services)	30.06.2015

OIC recommends:-		OIC Rating	Griffith response and any proposed management action	Griffith nominated owner	Griffith nominated completion date
8	All universities, as a matter of good practice, consider developing an administrative access arrangement for making referee reports available to applicants for promotion, and adopt procedures that maximise disclosure and streamline handling of any requests by applicants to obtain referee reports, within twelve months.	Long term	The University will review its current administrative access arrangements in the light of the comments in the report.	Vice President (Corporate Services)	31.03.2015
9	All universities develop an Information Asset Register within twelve months, along with procedures to ensure the Information Asset Register is maintained. All universities publish their Information Asset Register on the website to create greater transparency as to the information resources available, within twelve months.	Long term Long term	The University is in the process of developing an Information Asset Register.	PVC (Information Services)	End 2015
10	All universities review and update their publication schemes to meet compliance requirements within twelve months.	Long term	The University is in the process of implementing this recommendation.	Vice President (Corporate Services)	End 2015

OIC recommends:-		OIC Rating	Griffith response and any proposed management action	Griffith nominated owner	Griffith nominated completion date
11	All universities document any decision not to publish information released under the RTI Act to the agency's disclosure log, and retain the reasons for the decisions in internal records in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines, commencing immediately.	Immediate/ Short term	This recommendation has been implemented.	Vice President (Corporate Services)	Immediate
12	All universities, as a matter of good practice, ensure that if it is necessary to provide information in an alternative access type (for example, provide information by compact disc rather than a hard copy) the applicant is first contacted to negotiate how access will be provided, commencing immediately.	Immediate/ Short term	This recommendation is accepted	Vice President (Corporate Services)	Immediate

Appendix 4 – Action Plan Queensland University of Technology



Queensland University of Technology

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Professor Peter Coaldrake AO, Vice-Chancellor

24 November 2014

Ms Rachael Rangihaeata
Information Commissioner
PO Box 10143
Adelaide Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
c/o Karen.McLeod@oic.qld.gov.au

Dear Ms Rangihaeata

Right to Information and Information Privacy Compliance Review Report

I refer to your letter of 11 November and to our recent meeting on 20 November 2014 regarding the above.

Whilst I acknowledge the importance of sound information management practices and the need to ensure compliance with our legislative obligations, I offer a note of caution on the application to universities of public sector approaches to information management matters. Universities are self-governing, hybrid institutions and many of their activities are undertaken on a commercial footing. All universities are therefore regarded as trading corporations under relevant laws. QUT, along with other public universities in Australia, is moving into an increasingly deregulated environment, in which universities will be subject to greater market forces - including competition with private providers not subject to similar obligations - and in which there will be greater competitive pressures on matters such as course pricing, fees and student demand. In this context, it must be acknowledged that universities are not comparable to other public sector agencies within government, and this will inevitably impact on our overall approach to proactive release of information to the wider community.

Aside from this significant observation, I acknowledge receipt of the report and the recommendations within it. I am pleased to **attach** the University's response and proposed management actions regarding the recommendations which you have made.

The attached response incorporates the advice from Ms Karen McLeod of your office on 21 November 2014 regarding a minor modification to recommendation 6. The amendment which you have proposed for Table 2 on page 50 of the report (regarding the publication scheme) is also noted.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'P. Coaldrake', written over a horizontal line.

Professor Peter Coaldrake
Vice-Chancellor

enc



Office of the Information Commissioner RTI/IP Compliance Review

Response to recommendations

Recommendation 1: *All universities develop a broad strategic policy statement promoting community engagement for access to university-held information, and publish the policy statement within twelve months.*

QUT will bring forward a review of the policy *Access to information* (http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/FF_06_03.jsp) to 2015, to ensure that it deals more specifically with community engagement as it relates to access to information matters. QUT has an Engagement Framework policy (http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/II_01_02.jsp) and consideration will be given to including appropriate references to access to information as a component of our community engagement activities.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services

QUT nominated completion date: 31 December 2015

Recommendation 2: *QUT issue agency wide communications to all business units within the next three months to reinforce QUT's commitment to the right to information, and through training and communication activities by management, ensure QUT staff are aware of and operate in accordance with QUT's procedures for administrative access and respond appropriately to requests for information by Governance and Legal Services, within the next twelve months.*

QUT circulates a monthly Registrar's broadcast email to all staff, which highlights administrative and policy matters; a reminder about right to information will be included in the first broadcast email in the early part of 2015. Noting the high volume areas for applications and administrative access, Governance and Legal Services will also arrange targeted communications/training with student administration and human resources areas. Consideration will also be given to internally focussed FAQs for staff responding to requests as a mechanism to promote greater understanding and staff will be directed to these communications when requests for documents are made.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services

QUT nominated completion date: 31 March 2015 (University-wide communication); 30 September 2015 (other actions)

Recommendation 3: *All universities ensure that the responsible bodies governing information management implement ongoing active monitoring and oversight of the pro-active release of information in accordance with the RTI and IP Acts, within the next twelve months.*

QUT [to] include information management activities in future strategic information management plans and operational work programs, within the next 12 months.

QUT regards proactive release of information as being a matter to be addressed at functional and operational levels, rather than by information management specialists. QUT is however prepared to consider an appropriate role in this for its IT Governance Committee (ITGC) within the next 12 months. Further consideration will also be given to whether the role of the Information Management Advisory Group (IMAG) (an internal advisory group reporting to the ITGC) should be enhanced to consider 'information as a resource' issues. It would be the responsibility of ITGC and IMAG to identify appropriate information management activities to be included in future strategic information management plans and work programs.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services, in conjunction with Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Technology, Information and Learning Support)

QUT nominated completion date: 31 December 2015

Recommendation 5: QUT updates their training modules regarding RTI and IP and in particular administrative release within 12 months.
QUT implements a plan to deliver their updated training module on information privacy to all existing university staff within 12 months.

QUT will update its training modules. Information privacy training has been included in a recently updated list of 'required training' for all staff.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services

QUT nominated completion date: 31 March 2015 (to update modules); 31 December 2015 (to implement plan for staff training)

Recommendation 6: All universities, within fifteen months, develop and incorporate performance measures and targets at the strategic and operational level to measure effectiveness and efficiency in implementing right to information and information privacy processes.

The University regards its current approach in this area as satisfactory and does not propose to develop performance measures and targets for incorporation into its strategic and operational plans. Privacy complaint data, use of RTI processes, and external review activities, provide good evidence of effectiveness of processes. The Director, Governance and Legal Services, will monitor this data and report to the Registrar and Vice-Chancellor annually on performance outcomes.

QUT nominated owner: Director, Governance and Legal Services

QUT nominated completion date: 31 December 2015

Recommendation 7: All universities ensure that administrative access arrangements are made prominent on the universities' websites within twelve months.

QUT notes that links for Right to Information and Privacy are already included on its home page, and considers this adequate. Consideration will be given to reviewing the landing page from that link to ensure it adequately promotes administrative access arrangements.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services

QUT nominated completion date: 31 December 2015

Recommendation 8: All universities, as a matter of good practice, consider developing an administrative access arrangement for making referee reports available to applicants for promotion, and adopt procedures that maximise disclosure and streamline handling of any requests by applicants to obtain referee reports within twelve months.

This recommendation is not agreed. There is no evidence of demand for documents of this type through RTI/IP applications over the last 10 years. In addition, administrative access is embedded in the Promotion policy framework, which routinely requires that reports from line managers are made available to the applicant, see http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/B/B_05_03.jsp#B_05_03.09.mdoc. At QUT, use of external referees occurs relatively infrequently in promotions processes.

Recommendation 9: All universities consider developing an Information Asset Register within twelve months, along with procedures to ensure the Information Asset Register is maintained.
All universities consider publishing their Information Asset Register on the website to create greater transparency as to the information resources available, within twelve months.

The University is in the process of developing an Information Asset Register and developing policy and information systems to support this.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services, in conjunction with Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Technology, Information and Learning Support)

QUT nominated completion date: 31 December 2015

Recommendation 10: *All universities review and update their publication schemes to meet compliance requirements within twelve months.*

The University agrees to this recommendation.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services

QUT nominated completion date: 30 June 2015

Recommendation 11: *All universities document any decision not to publish information released under the RTI Act to the agency's disclosure log, and retain the reasons for the decisions in internal records in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines, commencing immediately.*

The University agrees to this recommendation.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services

QUT nominated completion date: 30 June 2015

Recommendation 12: *All universities, as a matter of good practice, ensure that if it is necessary to provide information in an alternative access type (for example, provide information by compact disc rather than a hard copy) the applicant is first contacted to negotiate how access will be provided, commencing immediately.*

The University agrees to this recommendation.

QUT nominated owner: Policy and Compliance Manager, Governance and Legal Services

QUT nominated completion date: 31 March 2015

Appendix 5 – Action Plan University of Queensland



Vice-Chancellor and President
Professor Peter Høj
MSc PhD DUniv FTSE

22 November 2014

Ms Rachael Rangihaeata
Information Commissioner
Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland
PO Box 10143
Adelaide Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Ms Rangihaeata

COMPLIANCE REVIEW - QUEENSLAND UNIVERSITIES

I refer to your letter of 11 November, 2014 notifying that the review of The University of Queensland's compliance with the *Right to Information Act 2009* and the *Information Privacy Act 2009* had been finalised.

I was heartened by your findings that the University performed strongly and was progressing well in meeting its legislative obligations. The University is committed to the principles of the RTI and IP Acts and will continue to improve its practices in this area. However, I have reservations concerning the level of resources required to implement the recommendations, which should be proportionate in meeting the objects of the RTI and IP Acts in an environment of increasing regulatory oversight and take into account that the myriads of requirements imposed on universities effectively divest resources away from our primary academic activities. This is troublesome at a time where students are likely to have to pay even more to attend university.

Enclosed is the University's formal response to the report in the form of the completed UQ Action Plan.

I would like to acknowledge the collaborative approach in which the review was undertaken and the assistance of your office during the process.

Please refer any inquiries you have in relation to the review to the Chief Operating Officer, Mr Maurie McNarn on 3365 1311.

Yours sincerely

Professor Peter Høj
Vice-Chancellor and President

D14/24864-3

Appendix 5 – Action Plan The University of Queensland (UQ)

Rating	Description
Immediate/Short term	OIC considers urgent (immediate) attention is required to complete the action
Medium term	OIC considers that medium term action is required (anticipated action completion within 3 to 6 months)
Long term	OIC considers that long term action is required (anticipated action completion within 12 months, for example, in time for the commencement of the national health reforms to the service delivery model)

OIC recommends:-		OIC Rating	UQ response and any proposed management action	UQ nominated owner	UQ nominated completion date
1	All universities develop a broad strategic policy statement promoting community engagement about access to university-held information, and publish the policy statement within twelve months.	Long term	UQ does not accept the finding of the report and considers UQ's Strategic Plan adequately promotes community engagement. Despite this, the University will review its engagement strategies within the timeframe.	Chief Operating Officer	12/11/2015
3	All universities ensure that the responsible bodies governing information management implement ongoing active monitoring and oversight of the pro-active release of information in accordance with the RTI and IP Acts, within the next twelve months.	Long term	UQ considers the Open Data Strategy for Queensland Universities is the primary driver for the pro-active release of University information over the next 4 years and this was not appropriately recognised in the report. Despite this, the University will consider incorporating the monitoring and oversight of the proactive release of information into the terms of reference for the Strategic Information Management Committee.	Chief Operating Officer	12/11/2015

OIC recommends:-		OIC Rating	UQ response and any proposed management action	UQ nominated owner	UQ nominated completion date
5	UQ reviews its general awareness training programs and incorporates greater content relating to right to information within twelve months.	Long term	UQ accepts the recommendation and will review its general awareness training programs to include more content on right to information.	Right to Information and Privacy Coordinator	12/5/2015
6	All universities, within fifteen months, develop and incorporate performance measures and targets at the strategic and operational level to measure effectiveness and efficiency in implementing right to information and information privacy processes.	Long term	UQ is concerned that this recommendation was made before the OIC had developed guidelines on performance targets and measures. However, UQ will action this recommendation after the OIC publish the guideline.	Chief Operating Officer	
7	All universities ensure that administrative access arrangements are made more prominent on the universities' websites within twelve months.	Long term	UQ accepts the recommendation and will review content on the website to make its administrative access schemes more prominent.	Right to Information and Privacy Coordinator	12/5/2015
8	All universities, as a matter of good practice, consider developing an administrative access arrangement for making referee reports available to applicants for promotion, and adopt procedures that maximise disclosure and streamline handling of any requests by applicants to obtain referee reports, within twelve months.	Long term	UQ will consider implementing an administrative access scheme for making specific types of referee reports available to applicants for promotion.	Chief Operating Officer	12/11/2015
9	All universities develop an Information Asset Register within twelve months, along with procedures to ensure the Information Asset Register is maintained.	Long term	UQ accepts the recommendations and will develop and publish an information asset register within the timeframe.	Chief Operating Officer	12/11/2015

	OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	UQ response and any proposed management action	UQ nominated owner	UQ nominated completion date
	All universities publish their Information Asset Register on the website to create greater transparency as to the information resources available, within twelve months.	Long term			
10	All universities review and update their publication schemes to meet compliance requirements within twelve months.	Long term	UQ accepts the recommendation and will review the publication scheme within the timeframe.	Chief Operating Officer	12/11/2015
11	All universities document any decision not to publish information released under the RTI Act to the agency's disclosure log, and retain the reasons for the decisions in internal records in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines, commencing immediately.	Immediate / Short term	UQ accepts the recommendation and has reviewed its internal procedures to ensure the reasons for the decision not to publish information released under the RTI Act to the disclosure log are clearly recorded on the application file.	Right to Information and Privacy Coordinator	Completed
12	All universities, as a matter of good practice, ensure that if it is necessary to provide information in an alternative access type (for example, provide information by compact disc rather than a hard copy) the applicant is first contacted to negotiate how access will be provided, commencing immediately.	Immediate / Short term	UQ accepts the recommendation and has amended its procedures so that the applicant is first contacted to negotiate how access to documents will be provided if it is not possible to provide the documents in the manner requested by the applicant.	Right to Information and Privacy Coordinator	Completed

Appendix 6 – Action Plan University of Southern Queensland

Rating	Description
Immediate / Short term	OIC considers urgent (immediate) attention is required to complete the action
Medium term	OIC considers that medium term action is required (anticipated action completion within 3 to 6 months)
Long term	OIC considers that long term action is required (anticipated action completion within 12 months, for example, in time for the commencement of the national health reforms to the service delivery model)

OIC recommends:-		OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date
1	All universities develop a broad strategic policy statement promoting community engagement about access to university-held information, and publish the policy statement within twelve months.	Long term	USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to develop and publish a new policy statement via the publicly accessible USQ Policy Library covering community engagement about general information release.	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO and Executive Director (SBMI) in consultation with Mgr (Corporate Records) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)	Dec 2015

OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date	
3	All universities ensure that the responsible bodies governing information management implement ongoing active monitoring and oversight of the pro-active release of information in accordance with the RTI and IP Acts, within the next twelve months.	Long term	<p>USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> re-examine practices and include activities in the ICT Strategy Board and Information Standards Committee plans that directly relate to the proactive release of information in accordance with the RTI and IP Acts. re-examine practices for internal reporting on the release of datasets in accordance with the Open Data Strategy. develop appropriate reports (2 x per annum) for submission to Audit & Risk Committee (cc to Vice-Chancellors Committee) 	<p>DVC (Academic Services) & CIO and Executive Director (ICT Services)</p> <p>Executive Director (SBMI)</p> <p>Manager (Corporate Records) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)</p>	Dec 2015

OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date
<p>QUT and USQ include information management activities in future strategic information management plans and operational work programs, within the next twelve months.</p>	<p>Long term</p>	<p>USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include information management activities in future strategic information management plans, operational work programs such as the ICT Strategic Plan; and • the University's Operational Resource Management Plan (ORMP). <p>Staged implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial progress made with ICT Strategic Plan by Jun 2015; and • finalisation by Dec 2015. 	<p>DVC (Academic Services) & CIO and Executive Director (ICT Services)</p> <p>Executive Director (SBMI)</p> <p>in consultation with Manager (Corporate Records) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)</p>	<p>Dec 2015</p>

	OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date
5	USQ updates training modules regarding right to information and information privacy within twelve months.	Long term	<p>USQ accepts the recommendation</p> <p>Right to Information training modules have been updated to reflect suggested improvements, per report issued 3 April 2014.</p> <p>Information Privacy training modules will be updated.</p>	<p>Manager (Corporate Records)</p> <p>Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)</p>	Dec 2015

OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date
USQ includes information about right to information and information privacy in its induction process for new staff within twelve months.	Long term	USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to incorporate information about right to information and privacy in the Employee Induction and Onboarding Program for new staff.	Executive Director (Finance and People Capability) and Director (Human Resources) in consultation with Manager (Corporate Records) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)	Dec 2015

OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date	
6	All universities, within fifteen months, develop and incorporate performance measures and targets at the strategic and operational level to measure effectiveness and efficiency in implementing right to information and information privacy processes.	Long term	<p>USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish a small number of performance measures at the strategic and operational level • endeavour to coordinate suitable performance indicators with other universities • seek advice from OIC re appropriate benchmarking <p>Staged implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress made by Jun 2015; and • finalisation by Mar 2016 	Executive Director (SBMI) in consultation with Manager (Corporate Records) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)	Mar 2016

OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date	
7	All universities ensure that administrative access arrangements are made more prominent on the universities' websites within twelve months.	Long term	<p>USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review direct links to both administrative access policies, procedures and forms. • and will undertake to enhance awareness through more prominent links to specific arrangements e.g. arrangements to obtain academic transcripts from other webpages, including the RTI webpage and the webpage for Alumni. 	Manager (Corporate Records) and Associate Director (Marketing Services)	Dec 2015

	OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date
8	All universities, as a matter of good practice, consider developing an administrative access arrangement for making referee reports available to applicants for promotion, and adopt procedures that maximise disclosure and streamline handling of any requests by applicants to obtain referee reports, within twelve months.]	Long term	<p>USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-examine current practice concerning access to applicant 'personal' referee reports with the intention of looking at HR establishing an administrative access scheme for this type (and possibly other types) of application request; and • implement the solution within the nominated timeline. <p>Note: Promotion process no longer seeks 'disciplinary' referee reports.</p>	Senior DVC in consultation with Executive Director (Finance and People Capability) and Director (Human Resources)	Dec 2015

OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date	
9	All universities develop an Information Asset Register within twelve months, along with procedures to ensure the Information Asset Register is maintained.	Long term	<p>USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to develop the USQ Information Asset Register and associated procedures for maintaining the Register.</p> <p>Staged implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> substantial progress made with Register and procedures by Jun 2015; and finalisation by Dec 2015. 	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO in consultation with the Executive Director (ICT Services) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)	Dec 2015

OIC recommends:-	OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date
All universities publish their Information Asset Register on the website to create greater transparency as to the information resources available, within twelve months.	Long term	<p>USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to publish the Information Asset Register on the USQ website.</p> <p>Staged implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first version of Register published by Jun 2015; and • continual update and finalisation of complete version by Dec 2015. 	DVC (Academic Services) & CIO in consultation with the Executive Director (ICT Services) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)	Dec 2015
10 All universities review and update their publication schemes to meet compliance requirements within twelve months.	Long term	USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to finalise work in progress.	Manager (Corporate Records)	Dec 2015
11 All universities document any decision not to publish information released under the RTI Act to the agency's disclosure log, and retain the reasons for the decisions in internal records in accordance with the Ministerial Guidelines, commencing immediately.	Immediate/ Short term	USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to implement the recommendation immediately.	Manager (Corporate Records)	Immediate

OIC recommends:-		OIC Rating	USQ response and any proposed management action	USQ nominated owner	USQ nominated completion date
12	All universities, as a matter of good practice, ensure that if it is necessary to provide information in an alternative access type (for example, provide information by compact disc rather than a hard copy) the applicant is first contacted to negotiate how access will be provided, commencing immediately.	Immediate/ Short term	USQ accepts the recommendation and will undertake to implement the recommendation immediately.	Manager (Corporate Records) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)	Immediate
13	USQ, as a matter of good practice, takes action to reduce the time taken to process applications within twelve months.	Long term	USQ has provided relevant comment under section 8.4.3 Active Management – Time taken to process applications. USQ will endeavour to reduce the time taken to process applications. USQ will undertake to monitor and report on timeliness to Audit & Risk Committee.	Manager (Corporate Records) and Director (Integrity & Professional Conduct)	Dec 2015

Appendix 7 – Details of Stakeholder Consultation

OIC asked community groups and other stakeholders about the information and data they would like the universities to make available to the community.

65 groups were selected as a sample of the stakeholders that might be interested in university information and data across all four universities. Stakeholders were selected in consultation with each university. OIC asked each university to nominate stakeholders who represented social and community interests, environmental and research interests, and economic and industry interests.

OIC worked with representatives from within each university to ensure there was equal representation of stakeholders across areas of interest and across universities. Of the 65 stakeholders invited to undertake the consultation process, there were 12 respondents. Six advised that they had no comment, and six provided comments:

- City of Gold Coast
- Commonwealth Department of Education, HEIMS
- Commonwealth Department of Education, Quality and Student Support
- The Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads
- Lockyer Valley Regional Council; and
- Logan City Council.

A letter of invitation was sent to stakeholder groups on 4 August 2014, attaching questions so that stakeholders could consider their responses and reply (the list of questions is provided at the end of this appendix).

Overall

Stakeholders expressed were highly positive about the existing relationships with the universities, universally praising the universities for establishing formal and informal channels of communication to provide information.

The majority of stakeholders advised that they did not see any risk with universities publishing information.

Listed below are the specific comments or information requirements mentioned by stakeholders.

Current information provided by universities that stakeholders regarded highly and that would assist the stakeholder organisation

- research information
 - in the university's areas of interest
 - research strategy and areas of excellence
 - transport planning, economic development (including workforce/skills development) and cultural development
 - environmental health, economic development, urban development and planning, engineering, sporting, leisure and human services studies
- information relevant to joint projects, for example transport information, possible changes in the local area, and city planning
- information about plans for the impact of the university's presence in the area, for example, plans for campus development, student and staff numbers, and general engagement with the community and business; and
- administrative information about the university, for example, audited financial statements and annual reports.

Stakeholders view of risks in publishing this information

The majority of stakeholders advised that they did not see any risk with the universities publishing information. Stakeholders considered that systems were in place to manage risks, for example checks were conducted as to whether or not any information was commercial-in-confidence prior to publication. Stakeholders considered that the benefits of publishing information, particularly research information, far outweighed any risks.

Information that stakeholders believe might be held by universities, and if so, could be usefully published

Stakeholders believed that universities held a wealth of information that might be of interest, and considered that current communication processes, including formal Memoranda of Understanding, regular meetings and informal networking, all meant that stakeholders were confident that any such information would be identified and provided as needed.

Comments on current processes for obtaining information

Stakeholders commented on the current system for obtaining university information:

- Stakeholders indicated that they had a close working relationship with the universities and a contact within a particular business unit or senior management level through which they could request access to information.
- Stakeholders advised that the information was provided:
 - in a timely way
 - in accessible formats; and
 - in consultation with the universities so that all relevant information was provided.
- A couple of stakeholders commented that the universities had developed innovative ways of providing information that they found useful, for example, collaboration on projects and hosting special presentations.

Questions sent to Stakeholders for Community Consultation

Note: The questions were tailored for each stakeholder with the name of the relevant university substituted for <UNIVERSITY>.

1 With respect to information that you know is held by <UNIVERSITY>:

- a** What information held by <UNIVERSITY> is/might be of assistance to your organisation (*please provide details*)?
- b** Would this information be primarily of use for your organisation or for your clients? If it is for your clients then please identify the type of client who would benefit from this information.
- c** What could you or your clients do with the information?
- d** Do you think there are risks in <UNIVERSITY> publishing this information (*for example, information being misunderstood*)? If so, do you have any comments about managing those risks?

2 There might be situations where you are undertaking a project or activity, and you do not know whether or not <UNIVERSITY> holds information that might be of assistance or relevant to your project or activity.

- a** Can you identify projects or community wide activities relating to <UNIVERSITY>'s functions, where <UNIVERSITY> may hold relevant information? Please also describe the nature of the information.

3 We are also interested in your general views and experiences with accessing information held by <UNIVERSITY>. When seeking to access information from <UNIVERSITY>:

- a** Do you know who to contact?
- b** Has your request been dealt with in a professional manner?
- c** Did you receive the information that you requested?
- d** If you did not receive the requested information, was the reason provided to you?
- e** Was the information provided in a timely manner?
If not, how often do you consider this information should be released (*for example:- weekly / fortnightly / monthly / quarterly / half yearly / yearly*) and why?
- f** Is there anything <UNIVERSITY> currently does which assists you in making use of the information that is released? (*For example, does <UNIVERSITY> have a facility to provide alerts when information is released, is information released in multiple formats, is information released specific to an area or is there an <UNIVERSITY> contact available to discuss information released.*)
- g** Was the information provided in an appropriate format? If not, what format would improve its usability? (*for example, report / machine readable / raw data.*)

- h** Are there any other impediments to making use of information that is released? If so, what would assist to reduce or remove these impediments?
- i** Are there any other comments you would like to provide about your experience with <UNIVERSITY> in accessing information?

Appendix 8 – Griffith University Information Management Framework

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY - INFORMATION MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

OBJECTIVE

To foster a “whole of University” approach to data and information management which enables Griffith University to meet its strategic objectives and ensures our valuable information and data assets are appropriately managed.

University data and information can be viewed as being created and managed in one of three high level information domains. These are: Scholarly Information (our research outputs and the teaching materials we create); Managing Scholarship (our research and learning & teaching management information); and Supporting University Business (information and data that supports our business functions).

The benefits of appropriately managing data and information at Griffith University include:

Increased impact of Griffith’s research and scholarship	Appropriately managing the scholarly outputs from our ground-breaking research and outstanding scholarship to increase its impact.
Improved discovery and access	Providing people with easy and transparent access to accurate and timely data and information (in chiefly digital format). Data and information that is easily discoverable can be shared and utilised for a variety of purposes.
Improved integration and accuracy	Collecting data once, ensuring its integrity and quality.
Improved decision-making	Understanding the business of the University and providing better information to support analysis, decision-making, and risk identification.
Improved compliance and decreased costs	Through more efficient processes and systems, achieving recordkeeping and regulatory compliance and reducing costs.

The following principles guide Griffith’s approach to data and information management:

Information is an Asset	Information is an asset that has value to the University and is managed accordingly.
Information is Shared	Information is by default open and shared across the University business and community and derived from the relevant single authoritative source.
Information is Accessible	Information is accessible for people to perform their duties.
Information is Managed	Information has a custodian accountable for its quality and records are managed as required.
Data and Information is commonly described	Data and information is defined consistently throughout the University, and the definitions are understandable and available to all information users.
Data and Information is Secure	We secure what needs to be secured and protect it from unauthorised access, use and disclosure.

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⁸⁰ The Griffith University Information Management Framework in a page is available at http://www.griffith.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0009/485883/IM-Framework-in-a-page.pdf viewed on 5 March 2014.

Appendix 9 – Maturity Model

Model of Agency Maturity in Right to Information and Information Privacy

Maturity of Right to Information and Information Privacy	Corporate Governance and Culture of Openness <i>Right to Information Act 2009</i>	Push Model Strategies – Administrative Access Arrangements, Publication Schemes and Disclosure Logs	Corporate Governance <i>Information Privacy Act 2009</i>	Applications under the Act – procedures, forms, timeframes and fees and charges
<p>Well-managed (Practices managed effectively and being optimised)</p>	<p>Agency is engaged, active and innovative in managing their responsibilities to achieve the legislation's aims</p> <p>There is strong, active leadership towards right to information at the senior management level, demonstrated in plans and work programs, and in training for staff</p> <p>Agency RTI units are appropriately resourced and structured, with proper reporting relationships and delegations to promote independence of decision making</p> <p>The agency monitors its own performance in right to information through complaints management systems, and uses performance data to continually improve right to information activities, policies and procedures</p>	<p>Schemes conform to Ministerial and QGEA⁸¹ guidelines</p> <p>Schemes are readily accessible (e.g. button on home page)</p> <p>Multiple avenues of access are available (e.g. not just the internet, with innovative use of technology or other procedures to 'push' information to community)</p> <p>Website design is user friendly (e.g., well organised, reviewed regularly and up to date, information rich and has accessibility options for multiple languages and visual disabilities)</p> <p>Schemes are well-populated with information that is significant, accurate and appropriate</p>	<p>Agency is engaged, active and innovative in managing their responsibilities to achieve the legislation's aims</p> <p>There is strong, active leadership towards information privacy at the senior management level, demonstrated in plans and work programs, and in training for staff</p> <p>Privacy principles are embedded in every facet of organisational operations</p> <p>Agency IP units are appropriately resourced and structured, with proper reporting relationships and delegations to promote independence of decision making</p>	<p>Procedural steps are in place and are followed</p> <p>Forms as prescribed are easily available and in use</p> <p>Applications are processed on time, including completion time for new requests, carryover of requests and time extensions with few or no deemed decisions</p> <p>Fees and charges are levied and refunded appropriately</p> <p>Decisions are fair, reasonable and documented, with valid reasons for the decisions</p> <p>Communication with applicants is early, frequent and thorough, and regularly results in information being released administratively or the scope of the application being appropriately narrowed</p>

⁸¹ Queensland Government Enterprise Architecture 2.0 (QGEA), applying to departments and some statutory authorities.

Maturity of Right to Information and Information Privacy	Corporate Governance and Culture of Openness <i>Right to Information Act 2009</i>	Push Model Strategies – Administrative Access Arrangements, Publication Schemes and Disclosure Logs	Corporate Governance <i>Information Privacy Act 2009</i>	Applications under the Act – procedures, forms, timeframes and fees and charges
Well-managed (Practices managed effectively and being optimised)		<p>Schemes are high quality (e.g. publication scheme acts as index, providing links directly to documents)</p> <p>Active stakeholder engagement to identify and evaluate information holdings for publication</p> <p>Timely, accurate and useful information held by the government is delivered to the community in a useful form</p>	<p>The agency monitors its own performance in privacy through complaints management systems, and uses performance data to continually privacy activities, policies and procedures</p>	<p>Internal reviews are performed independently and by a more senior staff member than the original decision maker</p> <p>There is a clear distinction between decision-making and briefing senior managers, so that decisions are clearly made independently and corporate governance and accountability is strong</p>
Compliant (Practices managed and appropriate)	<p>Agency is actively managing their responsibilities to achieve the legislation's aims</p> <p>There is identifiable leadership of right to information at the senior management level, and training for staff</p> <p>Agency units are appropriately resourced and structured, with proper reporting relationships and delegations to promote independence of decision making</p>	<p>Schemes conform to Ministerial and QGEA guidelines</p> <p>Schemes are accessible</p> <p>Website design is reasonably user friendly (e.g. has some positive features - well organised, up to date or information rich)</p> <p>Schemes are of moderate quality (e.g. publication scheme links to a reasonable number of significant documents)</p>	<p>Agency is actively managing their responsibilities to achieve the legislation's aims</p> <p>There is identifiable leadership of right to information at the senior management level and training for staff</p> <p>Privacy principles are included or inform policy development generally</p>	<p>Procedural steps are in place and are known by staff</p> <p>Forms as prescribed are easily available and in use</p> <p>Applications are processed on time, including completion time for new requests, carryover of requests and time extensions with few deemed decisions</p>

Maturity of Right to Information and Information Privacy	Corporate Governance and Culture of Openness <i>Right to Information Act 2009</i>	Push Model Strategies – Administrative Access Arrangements, Publication Schemes and Disclosure Logs	Corporate Governance <i>Information Privacy Act 2009</i>	Applications under the Act – procedures, forms, timeframes and fees and charges
Compliant (Practices managed and appropriate)	The agency monitors its own performance in right to information and through complaints management systems, and has some reference to performance data for operational improvement	Some stakeholder engagement to identify and evaluate information holdings for publication A range of useful information held by the government is delivered to the community	Agency units are appropriately resourced and structured, with proper reporting relationships and delegations to promote independence of decision making The agency monitors its own performance in privacy and through complaints management systems, and has some reference to performance data for operational improvement	Fees and charges levied appropriately Decisions are fair, reasonable and documented, and generally provide reasons for the decisions Communication with applicants occurs at the outset of the application process, is regular, and assists in streamlining the process Internal reviews are performed independently and by a more senior staff member than the original decision maker There is a balance between decision-making and briefing senior managers, so that decisions are made independently
In progress to compliance (Practices well-defined, activity evident)	Agency is responding to the legislation, but has work to do Leadership of right to information is unclear, for example, formal leadership roles have been assigned on paper but not translated into actual leadership of activities, policy or procedures	Schemes are in place, and are partly compliant with Ministerial and QGEA guidelines Schemes are not all readily accessible, e.g. hard to locate Web site design is not user friendly in all respects	Agency is responding to the legislation Leadership of privacy is unclear, for example, formal leadership roles have been assigned on paper but not translated into actual leadership of activities, policy or procedures	Procedural steps are largely but not fully in place and some training has been provided or is to be provided Some forms are available and in use

Maturity of Right to Information and Information Privacy	Corporate Governance and Culture of Openness <i>Right to Information Act 2009</i>	Push Model Strategies – Administrative Access Arrangements, Publication Schemes and Disclosure Logs	Corporate Governance <i>Information Privacy Act 2009</i>	Applications under the Act – procedures, forms, timeframes and fees and charges
In progress to compliance (Practices well-defined, activity evident)	<p>The agency has provided some resourcing and delegations towards decision making</p> <p>There is some staff training, but there are significant gaps in general awareness training or in technical training which should be addressed</p>	<p>Schemes exist but are low quality (e.g. publication scheme is not populated with information as required by the Ministerial Guidelines)</p> <p>A process exists to identify and evaluate information holdings for publication)</p> <p>Some information held by the government is delivered to the community</p>	<p>The agency has provided some resourcing and delegations towards decision making</p> <p>Privacy principles are adopted in part</p> <p>There is some staff training, but there are significant gaps in general awareness training or in technical training which should be addressed</p>	<p>Applications are generally processed on time, with room for improvement in completion time for new requests, carryover of requests, time extensions with a number of deemed decisions occurring</p> <p>Fees and charges are generally levied appropriately</p> <p>Decisions are reviewable</p> <p>There is some communication with the applicant, but it could be improved with more frequency, earlier contact and more two-way dialogue on an informal level or using a participative approach</p> <p>Internal reviews are performed semi-independently usually by a more senior staff member than the original decision maker</p> <p>There is a some ambiguity about independent decision-making and briefing senior managers for corporate accountability, which could be clarified</p>

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Limited progress to compliance (Need for more definition of practices, ad hoc activity evident)	<p>Leadership functions have been identified but there is no evidence of active leadership attention to legislative requirements. There is little or no staff training.</p> <p>The agency may have provided some resourcing and delegations towards decision making</p> <p>No performance measures or only very general performance measures,(for example, addressing administrative efficiency of a parent business unit) are in place</p>	<p>The shell of a publication scheme, disclosure log or administrative access scheme is in place, with minimum compliance with Ministerial and QGEA guidelines, and almost no information published</p> <p>Schemes are not readily accessible, e.g. hard to locate</p> <p>Web site design is not user friendly</p> <p>Schemes exist but are low quality (e.g. publication scheme is a shell with a couple of documents listed in each category)</p> <p>There is little to no attention paid to identification or evaluation of information holdings for publication</p> <p>Some information held by the government is delivered to the community</p>	<p>Leadership functions have been identified but there is no evidence of active leadership attention to legislative requirements There is little or no staff training.</p> <p>The agency may have provided some resourcing and delegations towards decision making</p> <p>Almost no performance measures or only very general performance measures,(for example, addressing administrative efficiency of a parent business unit) are in place</p> <p>Privacy principles are mentioned and there is no evidence of required activity, for example, limited or no collection notices</p>	<p>Procedural steps are in place, with evidence that templates are not in use and procedural steps are not aligned with legislative requirements</p> <p>Staff training is sporadic, out-dated or has not occurred</p> <p>Forms are not available or not in use</p> <p>Applications are commonly not processed on time, with frequent delays in completion time for new requests, a large carryover of requests, frequent time extensions with a number of deemed decisions occurring</p> <p>There are concerning examples of fees and charges being levied inappropriately</p> <p>Decisions are not always reviewable</p> <p>There is communication with the applicant only as necessary, and evidence that the lack of communication has escalated emotionality, created inefficiencies and negatively impacted the client's experience</p>

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Limited progress to compliance (Need for more definition of practices, ad hoc activity evident)				There are concerns about the independence of decision-making and Internal reviews, with evidence of ambiguity about the involvement of senior managers in decision-making and internal review, and the selection of internal reviewers
Non-compliant (Legislative requirements not identified or actioned)	<p>There is evidence that the agency is avoiding their responsibilities under the legislation</p> <p>The agency has not resourced the legislative functions</p> <p>No performance measures are in place</p>	<p>The required schemes are not in place, or there are serious gaps in the schemes that are in place</p> <p>Schemes are not accessible</p> <p>Web site design is disorganised, out of date, information poor</p> <p>No process to identify and evaluate information holdings</p> <p>Little or no information held by the government is delivered to the community</p>	<p>There is evidence that the agency is avoiding their responsibilities under the legislation</p> <p>There is non-compliance with the privacy principles</p>	<p>Procedural steps are not in place</p> <p>Forms as prescribed are not available or in use</p> <p>Applications are not processed on time</p> <p>Communication with the applicant does not occur, or when it does occur, it is inappropriate and works against the proper release or protection of information</p> <p>Fees and charges are not levied appropriately</p> <p>Decision-making is not reviewable</p>

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Non-compliant (Legislative requirements not identified or actioned)				Decision-making and internal review is not conducted independently or by a person of sufficient authority, and there is evidence of inappropriate involvement of other people in the decision-making process

