Access to and Amendment of UQ Documents Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

(1) This Procedure sets out the process for accessing documents and for the amendment of documents containing personal information held by The University of Queensland (UQ or the University).

(2) Under the Right to Information Act 2009 (the RTI Act), the community has a right to have access to information held by State Government departments and local and public authorities (including UQ), subject to limited exceptions, with a view to achieving more open, accountable and responsible government.

(3) This Procedure applies to all UQ staff, and to applicants seeking to access University-held documents.

(4) This Procedure does not apply to:

a. independent organisations that are not legally regarded as part of the University; and
b. UQ Controlled Entities.

Section 2 - Process and Key Controls

(5) As a Queensland public university, UQ is required to comply with legislative obligations under the RTI Act.

(6) In accordance with its legislative obligations, UQ makes information available proactively, through:

a. its Publication Scheme;
b. administrative access schemes; and
c. its Disclosure Log.

(7) Applicants seeking access to University-held information not publicly available must apply through an access application under the RTI Act.

(8) Individuals who wish to:

a. access personal information in respect of themselves;
b. amend personal information in respect of themselves that they believe is inaccurate, incomplete, out-of-date or misleading, and who have not been able to effect such an amendment through relevant administrative channels,

can apply for access or amendment under the RTI Act.

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Section 3 - Key Requirements

Administrative Access Schemes

(9) UQ operates a number of administrative access schemes to facilitate access by UQ students and staff to their own personal information.

(10) These schemes allow UQ students and staff to access a copy of their student or staff file, or their referee reports, except where the University considers the information to be confidential or otherwise exempt under the RTI Act.

(11) These administrative access schemes apply only to current students and staff, and their third-party representatives. Former students or staff seeking access to their personal information, or current students and staff seeking access to personal information not covered by the University's administrative access schemes, must make an access application (refer to the 'Access Applications' provisions of this Procedure).

(12) Patients of University clinics who are seeking access to their clinical files should contact the relevant clinic directly.

(13) The UQ Right to Information Officer is responsible for processing applications made under the University's administrative access schemes, and applications will normally be processed within 20 business days. Applicants dissatisfied with the information provided to them under any of these schemes may make an access application (refer to 'Access Applications' provisions of this Procedure).

Access to Student and Staff Files

(14) Current students and staff can access a copy of their student or staff file. To apply for access to their file, students and staff must:

a. lodge a written request to the UQ Right to Information Office at rti@uq.edu.au;
b. include a copy of their current student or staff ID card; and
c. provide sufficient information regarding the documents required.

(15) What can be applied for under this scheme:

a. Routine study or employment-related documents and information, as contained in the applicant's student or staff file.

(16) What can't be applied for under this scheme:

a. Official UQ academic transcripts and testamurs (refer to the Degree Certificates, Transcripts and Documents webpage for more information on ordering these).
b. Documents and information relating to complaints, appeals and/or misconduct matters (application for these must be made through an access application) or documents and information (including employment-related) that UQ could refuse to provide access to if it had been requested in an access application under the RTI Act.

(17) Where documents applied for under this scheme contain information considered to be confidential or otherwise exempt under the RTI Act, that information will be edited from the documents.

Access to Referee Reports (Academic Staff Levels A-D)

(18) Current academic staff who have applied for confirmation of continuing appointment or promotion (excluding professorial confirmation and promotion) may apply for access to their referee reports.

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(19) To apply for access to referee reports, staff members must:

a. lodge a written request to the UQ Right to Information Office at rti@uq.edu.au;
b. include a copy of their current staff ID card; and
c. provide sufficient information regarding which referee reports are required.

(20) Access under this scheme will only be granted where the referee has consented to the release of the report to the staff member. Where the University does not hold the relevant consents, application for these reports must be made through an access application.

Access to Information by Third Parties

(21) Third parties, typically solicitors and insurers, may apply for access to the personal information of their client (or the claimant, where applicable).

(22) To apply for access to the information, third parties must:

a. submit their request via UQ's Third-Party Information Requests portal;
b. provide signed written authorisation from the individual whose records are requested; and
c. provide sufficient information regarding the information to which access is sought.

(23) The University charges an application fee for all such requests, along with a per-page photocopying/scanning/collation fee for any requests involving 150+ pages. These fees are set out in the schedule of fees and charges on the University's Access to Personal Information website.

(24) The scope of information accessible under this scheme is the same as for access to student and staff files outlined under the 'Access to Student and Staff Files' provisions of this Procedure (but also extends to patients of UQ Health and Rehabilitation Clinics). Where access is sought to information and/or documents that are outside of the provisions of this scheme, an access application may be made.

Access Applications

(25) An access application for University-held documents under the RTI Act can be made if access to the information is not available through UQ's publication scheme or administrative access schemes.

Valid Applications

(26) An access application under the RTI Act must:

a. be made in writing to the UQ Right to Information Office (preferably at rti@uq.edu.au, using the RTI application form);
b. be accompanied by payment of the application fee as set out in the Right to Information Regulation 2025;
c. contain sufficient information to enable the documents to be identified; and
d. state an address to which correspondence can be sent.

(27) In addition to the above, if the application is for documents containing the applicant's personal information, the application must also be accompanied by:

a. evidence of the applicant's identity; and
b. where an agent is making application on behalf of an applicant, evidence of the agent's authorisation.

(28) There is no application fee payable by an applicant applying under the RTI Act if the only document applied for

contains their personal information.

(29) RTI Act applications will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the RTI Act.

Amendment Applications

(30) Under section 78E of the RTI Act, individuals who have had access to a document of the University, whether or not under the RTI Act, can apply to the University to have their personal information contained in the document amended if it is inaccurate, incomplete, out of date, or misleading.

(31) Where applicable, individuals should use the relevant Change of Details forms and channels for updating their contact details and contact preferences with the University.

Valid Applications

(32) The basic compliance requirements for an amendment application are the same as those for an access application, as outlined in the 'Valid Applications' provisions. In addition, to apply to have their personal information amended, an applicant must:

a. have previously accessed the document;
b. state what information they claim is inaccurate, incomplete, out of date, or misleading;
c. state the way in which the applicant claims the information to be inaccurate, incomplete, out of date, or misleading and the grounds of the applicant's claim;
d. if the applicant claims the information to be inaccurate or misleading – state the amendments the applicant claims are necessary for the information to be accurate or not misleading; and
e. if the applicant claims the information to be incomplete or out-of-date - state the other information the applicant claims is necessary to complete the information or to bring it up-to-date.

(33) Previous access to the information may have been through an access application, or by another means, and typically an applicant will be required to confirm the previous access by:

a. providing a copy of the document;
b. describing the document in sufficient detail to satisfy the decision-maker that the applicant has had access to it; or
c. providing details about when and how the document was previously accessed.

(34) An individual cannot make a valid application for amendment of their personal information under the RTI Act if they have not had access to the document the information is in.

(35) There is no application fee for amendment applications made under the RTI Act.

Processing Amendment Applications

(36) Amendment applications will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the RTI Act.

(37) When granting the amendment application, the University may do so by:

a. amending the personal information; or
b. adding an appropriate notation to the personal information.

(38) If the University refuses to amend the applicant's personal information, the applicant can require the University to add a notation to the document:

a. that states the way in which the applicant claims the information to be inaccurate, incomplete, out of date or misleading;
b. if the applicant claims the information to be inaccurate or misleading - setting out the amendments the applicant claims are necessary for the amendment to be accurate or not misleading; and
c. if the applicant claims the information to be incomplete or out-of-date - setting out the information the applicant claims is necessary to complete the information or to bring it up-to-date.

Review of Decisions

(39) The RTI Act provides that an applicant who is dissatisfied with certain decisions made in relation to their application may apply to the University for internal review, and may apply to the Office of the Information Commissioner for external review. Applications for review must be made within 20 business days after the date of the written notice of the decision.

(40) Applications for internal review must be made in writing to the UQ Right to Information Office (preferably through rti@uq.edu.au) and state an address to which notices under the RTI Act may be sent to the applicant for internal review.

(41) Applications for external review must be made in writing to the Office of the Information Commissioner Queensland within 20 business days from the date of the written notice of the decision, or within the longer period the information commissioner allows.

Section 4 - Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities

UQ Right to Information Office

(42) UQ's Right to Information Office is responsible for administering UQ's administrative access schemes and its obligations under the RTI Act.

(43) The functions of the UQ Right to Information Office include:

a. processing applications made to UQ under its administrative access schemes;
b. dealing with applications made to UQ under the RTI Act, in accordance with the delegation from the Vice-Chancellor and President; and
c. advising UQ staff on right to information and information access matters.

Vice-Chancellor

(44) As the University's principal officer, the Vice-Chancellor has powers and responsibilities under the RTI Act. This includes the responsibility to deal with access and amendment applications.

(45) The Vice-Chancellor may delegate those responsibilities, in accordance with the RTI Act and the University of Queensland Act 1998, from time to time.

Section 5 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance

(46) The Director, Governance and Risk is responsible for:

a. monitoring UQ's compliance with its obligations under the RTI Act;

b. reviewing this Procedure as required to ensure:
    i. its currency and accuracy; and
    ii. that UQ's processes comply with requirements under relevant legislation; and
c. providing sufficient training opportunities and awareness-raising materials to enable UQ staff to meet their obligations under this Procedure.

Section 6 - Recording and Reporting

(47) The Right to Information Office is responsible for:

a. recording all requests for access to or amendment of information made under the RTI Act or as otherwise contemplated in this Procedure; and
b. providing management with an annual report on UQ's compliance with the RTI Act.

(48) The Right to Information Office also reports annually to the Queensland Government in relation to the operation of the RTI Act at the University.

Section 7 - Appendix

Definitions

Term	Definition
Affiliates	Academic title-holders, visiting academics, emeritus professors, adjunct and honorary title-holders, industry fellows and conjoint appointments.
Document	For the purposes of the RTI Act , a document is very broad and includes: - any paper or other material thing on which there is writing; and - any thing on which there are marks, symbols or perforations having a meaning for a person qualified to interpret them; and - any thing from which sounds, images or writings can be reproduced (with or without the aid of anything else) or a record of information produced from such a thing or a record of information that exists in digital form and is capable of being reproduced, transmitted, stored or duplicated by electronic means.
Document in the possession or control of the University	A document will be considered to be in the possession or control of the University if it: - was created in, or received by the University and remains in its possession or control; - is a document which the University is entitled to access; or - is a document in the possession or under the control of an officer of the University in that officer's official capacity.
Independent Organisations	Independent organisations include residential colleges (other than UQ Gatton Halls of Residence), staff and student unions and the sports associations.
Personal Information (for the purposes of the RTI Act)	As defined in the Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld) to be information or an opinion about an identified individual or an individual who is reasonably identifiable from the information or opinion: - whether the information or opinion is true or not; and - whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not

Term	Definition
Staff	- Members of the University Senate; - all UQ employees, including continuing, fixed-term, research (contingent funded) and casual employees; - persons acting in an honorary or voluntary capacity for or at UQ, including work experience students; and - Affiliates.

Status and Details

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