

Administrative Access Scheme Procedure



1 Purpose

To identify the process to be followed when assessing access requests for information, held by the University, without the need for a formal application under the *Right to Information Act 2009* (RTI Act) or the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (IP Act). The procedure outlines the responsibilities of Enterprise Information Management Services and provides guidelines for processing access requests.

This procedure is pursuant to the University's Administrative Access Scheme Policy.

2 Scope

This procedure applies to all access requests for information received from University Members and the public.

3 Procedure Overview

This procedure outlines the processes involved in:

- access to a Student file (applicant's personal information)
- access to an Employee file (applicant's personal information)
- other information held by the University.

4 Procedures

4.1 Applications

All requests for access to information must be made, in writing, and submitted to Enterprise Information Management Services. However, applicants are encouraged in the first instance to discuss their request with Enterprise Information Management Services.

Refer Section 7 below for information concerning application lodgement.

4.1.1 Access to Student File (applicant's personal information)

Students seeking to apply for access to their own Student file must complete a **Request to**

Access Student file form which is available on-line. Refer Section 7 below.

Completed forms and identification such as Student identification card or a current Queensland Driver Licence must be submitted to Student Support and Retention for verification.

Enterprise Information Management Services will process all requests and send the relevant Documents to the Student by preferred method i.e. post or email.

4.1.2 Access to Employee File (applicant's personal information)

Employees seeking to apply for access to their own employee file must complete a Request to Access Employee File Form. Hard copy forms are also available from the People Portfolio, S Block. Completed forms and suitable identification such as the employee identification number must be submitted to the People Portfolio or Enterprise Information Management Services, O4 Block. Refer Section 7 below.

Supervisor access: Supervisors who require access to an employee's file must complete a Request to Access Employee File (Supervisor) Form. Hard copy forms are also available from the People Portfolio. Completed forms must be submitted, as per 4.1.2 above. Refer Section 7 below.

4.1.3 Other access requests

All requests, **other than for access to a Student or Employee file**, must be made in writing (email, facsimile or letter) and addressed to the Manager (Enterprise Information Management Services). Requests must include the applicant's full name, signature, contact details and sufficient detail about the requested information to assist in the search, retrieval and determination process. Email requests must include a scanned attachment containing the applicant's signature. Refer to Section 4.5 of this procedure for contact details.

Each request will be considered on its own merit taking into consideration Out of Scope Material, identified per Section 6 below. On each occasion the Manager (Enterprise Information Management Services) will refer to the publicly accessible USQ Publication Scheme to determine if information requested may be readily available from that particular source. Refer Section 7 below.

Where information requested is not readily available from the USQ Publication Scheme the Manager (Enterprise Information Management Services) will liaise directly with the relevant senior manager responsible for oversight of the requested information and/or relevant University activity to ascertain whether or not the information can be released under the Administrative Access process i.e. without the need to resort to a formal RTI application.

All negotiated outcomes i.e. decisions to release or not release between the Manager (Enterprise Information Management Services) and senior management will be documented by either email, file note or both. The Manager (Enterprise Information Management Services) will maintain an appropriate file to record all such decisions.

Should the University make a determination not to administratively release the requested information the Manager (Enterprise Information Management Services) will, in accordance with the University's obligations under the RTI Act , inform the applicant of their rights to seek access under the RTI Act, or, if applicable, under the IP Act. Refer Section 4.4 below.

4.2 Release of Information

The University is committed to protecting the privacy of information relating to its Students and Employees. Personal information of an individual will not be disclosed to any other third party without the individual's consent unless required or authorized to do so by law. To ensure that only authorized people receive the requested information, the University may seek further information and/or documentation from an applicant to verify their identity, including but not limited to, sighting of a current Queensland Driver Licence, or Student or Employee identification card.

The University may, at its discretion, refuse to deal with an application under the Administrative Access Scheme that does not meet the University's requirements or is deemed to be unreasonable e.g. requests for information previously provided to the applicant or voluminous requests. In these circumstances applicants may be required to seek access through the formal process i.e. an application under the RTI Act or the IP Act. Refer Section 4.4 below.

4.3 Fees and Charges

Fees and charges are dependent on the category of Documents requested.

- **Student and employee files** (applicant's personal information)
 - nil fees and charges apply
- **Employee file accessed by a supervisor** with appropriate authority
 - nil fees and charges apply
- **Other information:**
 - where information can be easily retrieved from sources such as the University's Publication Scheme or University Policy and Procedure Library - refer Section 7 below.
 - nil fees and charges apply where reasonable resources and effort will be required to identify and retrieve requested information
 - search/retrieval fee - \$30.00
 - reproduction costs - \$0.25 per A4 page

4.4 Alternative methods to access information

Access to information may also be sought by:

- making an application under the RTI Act.
- making an application under the IP Act.
- subpoena or other instrument of legal discovery.

A formal request under the RTI Act or IP Act for information held by the University may be lodged with Enterprise Information Management Services by completing the RTI & IP Application Form. Refer Section 7 below.

4.5 Further information

Further information concerning the USQ Administrative Access Scheme can be obtained by contacting:

Manager
Enterprise Information Management Services
West Street
University of Southern Queensland
TOOWOOMBA QLD 4350
Telephone: (07) 4631 2303
Email: righttoinformation@usq.edu.au

4.6 Processing timeframes

Enterprise Information Management Services will endeavour to process Administrative Access requests as follows:

4.6.1 Student information requests

- **Student File:**
 - **1 x day** after receipt of request
- **Student placement (Faculty) file:**
 - **14 x days** after receipt of request
- **Other** (list specific Documents):

- **1 to 3 x days**, subject to level of urgency and workloads

4.6.2 Employee information requests

- employee request - **1 to 3 days** after receipt of request
- supervisor's request - **1 x day** after receipt of request

For further information refer to Section 7 below.

4.6.3 Other requests

All requests, **other than for access to a Student or Employee file**, will be processed within 25 business days by the Manager (Enterprise Information Management Services) taking into consideration the following:

- the complexity, breadth and scope of the request
- the format and accessibility of the information requested
- the necessity for consultation/negotiation with senior management and others
- the volume of Documents falling within the scope of the request
- work-loads and priorities of Enterprise Information Management Services.

4.7 Confidential Information

University members must respect the privacy of others and ensure that personal information is accessed and used only for University purposes and not disclosed to third parties unless required or authorised by law. Individuals who have access to such information have a duty to maintain the confidentiality, integrity and security of such information, irrespective of the storage medium.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
Responsible Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services)
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Administrative Access Scheme Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	4/7/2014
Effective Date	4/7/2014
Review Date	4/7/2017
Relevant Legislation	Information Privacy Act 2009 Right to Information Act 2009
Related Policies	Access to the Student Record Base Policy and Procedure Handling Personal Student Information Policy and Procedure Privacy Policy Records and Information Management Policy
Related Procedures	Right to Information Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Administrative Access Scheme Office of the Information Commissioner (Qld) Request to Access Student File Request to Access Employee File Request to Access Employee File (Supervisor) Right to Information RTI & IP Application Form USQ Publication Scheme
Definitions	Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary

Employee

A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the USQ Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University.

Student

A person who is admitted to an Award Program or Non-Award Program offered by the University and is: currently enrolled in one or more Courses or study units; or not currently enrolled but is on an approved Leave of Absence or whose admission has not been cancelled.

University

The term 'University' or 'USQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.

University Members

Employees of the University whose conditions of employment are covered by the USQ Enterprise Agreement whether full time or fractional, continuing, fixed-term or casual, including senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University; Members of the University Council and University Committees; Visiting and adjunct academics; Volunteers who contribute to University activities or who act on behalf of the University; Individuals who are granted access to University facilities or who are engaged in providing services to the University, such as contractors and consultants, where applicable.

Definitions that relate to this procedure only

Administrative Access

Discretionary release of requested information outside of formal Right to Information (RTI) and Information Privacy (IP) process.

Document

Documents may be in a range of formats including, but not limited to:

- paper (hard copy), electronic or microfilm

- files, maps, plans, drawings, photographs
- data from business systems or databases or on standalone drives including hard drives, back-up, and University sticks
- emails, text messages and word-processed Documents
- audio or video media such as cassettes and video tapes or electronic recordings
- optical media such as CDs and DVDs.

Out of Scope Material

Documents containing information which will not be released under this scheme includes:

- information that is prohibited under law;
- information that is irrelevant
- information that is exempt under the RTI and IP Acts;
- information in draft form;
- information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in archives or is difficult to access for similar reasons.

Keywords	Student file, Employee file, RTI, Right to Information, informal access, IP, Information Privacy
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