

University of Cumbria: Freedom of Information Complaints Procedure

Definitions and Responsibilities

1. The Freedom of Information Complaints Procedure covers:
 - complaints that the University has not complied with its Publication Scheme
 - complaints that a request for information has not been properly handled according to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act
 - complaints about the outcome of a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act
2. The Records Management Officer will be the contact point for Freedom of Information complaints and will seek to resolve problems informally wherever possible.
3. If it is not possible to resolve a complaint informally, the Freedom of Information complaints procedure will be available to anyone with a complaint falling under the definition at point 1 above.

Receipt of Complaint

4. Complaints under the procedure must be made in writing. On receipt of a complaint, the Records Management Officer will log the complaint and will send an acknowledgement to the complainant stating the timescale for a response and the name and contact details of the investigating officer. The timescale for a decision should not be longer than 20 working days from the receipt of the complaint.

Role of Investigating Officer

5. The Investigating Officer will be either:-
 - a member of the Records Management Steering/Advisory Group
 - or the Strategic Governance and Compliance Manager (Vice Chancellor's Office)

In either case, the Investigating Officer will have had no involvement in answering the original request and will have received training on the Freedom of Information Act.

6. The Investigating Officer will make a recommendation to an Independent Adjudicator. This will normally be a member of Senior Management Team.
7. The Independent Adjudicator will respond directly to the complainant, with a copy to the Records Management Officer.

Implementation of decision

8. If the investigation results in the original decision being overturned, the information must be disclosed to the applicant as soon as possible after the revised decision is made. The applicant must be informed when this will be.