

Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations– Policy and Procedures

1 Introduction

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRS) came into force on 1 January 2005. They established a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities. They need to operate in conjunction with the Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018, and oversight of all three rests with the Information Commissioner.

This legislation and regulation promote a 'culture of openness and accountability, alongside protecting privacy rights, across the public sector. As such they encourage proactive publication of information and on-going development of good records management, as well as governing access to information held by public authorities.

Compliance with the legislation includes adoption of a 'Publication Scheme' as described below, as well as ensuring information requests are handled appropriately according to the relevant legislation. It also requires the University to manage information and records appropriately, as addressed by other policies.

2 Scope, Roles and Responsibilities

Since information is part of almost all University activities, information policies have a wide scope. All University members have an obligation to be aware of relevant legislation, related University policies and their impact.

Within an environment where information needs to be regarded as open, unless there is good reason for

The University of Reading wholly owns a number of companies, which have also adopted Publication Schemes of their own. These can be found on our Freedom of Information website [University owned companies \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)

4 The Publication Scheme

The initial requirement of the FOIA is adoption of a 'Publication Scheme'. The University's Publication Scheme can be found at [Publication scheme \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)

4.1 What is a 'Publication Scheme'?

5.2 Receiving requests

Requests have to be made in writing but do not have to mention the FOIA or EIRs. This means any enquiry requesting information not included in our Publication Scheme could be a request under FOIA or EIRs. As such, the University is obliged to provide the information (or reasons for withholding it) within 20 working days, and consequently it is important to check post and email regularly and to respond to such enquiries, or requests, urgently.

Where information is known, and open, it should be provided directly, especially where our Service is familiar with providing such information. However, if information is not readily available, or where there is the potential of applying FO exemptions or EIRs exceptions and not providing all the requested information, 29, -1.279 Td [(i)-1 (t)0.6 (s)-8.9 1i.5 (es)-3-4 (t)0..6 (s)-8.6 (o-2.3 (29)2.2 (h i)-s)-7.9 (k1 (

