

Title:		ANU procedure for access to staff and student files.			
File Number:					
Purpose:		To provide a process by which Staff & Students (past & present) may view or obtain copies of their staff or student files..			
Relevant to:		All staff			
Responsible Officer:		Freedom of Information Coordinator			
Effective Date:	01 May 2011	Date Approved:		Review Date:	
Approved By:		<p style="text-align: right;">Date</p> <p>FOI Coordinator,</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p> <p>Director, Human Resources</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p> <p>University Counsel</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Date</p> <p>Registrar</p>			
Key Words:		Freedom of Information – FOI - Personnel – Student - Access			

PRINCIPLES

- To allow past and present staff members and students of the University to access and/or receive copies of information about their engagement with the University utilising established procedures under Section 15A of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Cth)* ('FOI Act').
- To ensure that the information is properly examined in accordance with the FOI Act and the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*, before being released to the relevant staff member or student.

PROCEDURES

1. Request for access to personal information by current or former staff members or students must be lodged with the Director, Human Resources Division (for requests from staff members) or the Registrar, Division of Registrar and Student Services (for requests from students).
2. Upon receipt of a request for access to personal information by a staff member or student, the Director, Human Resources Division or the Registrar, Division of Registrar and Student Services (as the case permits) will provide the Freedom of Information (FOI) Coordinator with a copy of the request and the contact details of the nominated supervising officer responsible for processing the request.
3. Upon receipt of a copy of the request, the FOI Coordinator will retrieve all relevant files for the staff member or student.
4. The FOI Coordinator will then examine the relevant file(s) to determine if there is material that should be partially or fully withheld pursuant to the disclosure exemptions under Part IV of the FOI Act and the University's obligations under the Privacy Act.
5. The FOI Coordinator will then prepare a document that indicates which documents on the file(s) are to be partially or fully exempted with an explanation for the exemption listed for each document. The partially or fully exempted documents will also be flagged in the relevant file(s) so that they can be easily identified by the supervising officer.
6. The relevant file(s) will then be forwarded to the Director, Human Resources (for request from staff members) or the Registrar, Division of Registrar and Student Services (for requests from students), who will arrange for the file(s) to be viewed by the staff member/student or copied for the staff member/student.
7. Procedures where the file(s) is to be viewed:
 - a. Prior to the viewing of the file(s), the supervising officer will remove from the file(s) any documents that have been marked by the FOI Coordinator as being partially or fully exempt and will:
 - i) replace the fully exempt document with a file note indicating that the document has been removed and the reason for the exemption; and
 - ii) replace the partially exempt document with a redacted copy of the document masking the exempt content.
 - b. When the staff member/student views the file(s) they must present at least one form of photographic identification and the staff member/student must be supervised at all times by the nominated supervising officer.
 - c. The requesting staff member/student is entitled to request and receive a copy of any document they are entitled to view on the file. For partially exempt documents, the staff member/student is entitled to receive a copy of the non-exempt portion of that document (i.e. the section of the document that has not been masked).
 - d. If a copy of the entire file(s) is requested at the time of the viewing, the requesting staff member/student will be informed that the copy will be forwarded to them within 5 working days.
 - i) If a copy of the file(s) is requested a postal address must be provided to which the copy can be sent via registered post.

- e. Upon completion of the viewing, the supervising officer will:
 - i) reinsert a full copy of any partially exempt document; and
 - ii) replace the file note inserted for any fully exempt document with the original document, thereby returning the file to its former condition.
 - f. The file(s) will then be returned to either University Records or Student Records for storage.
8. Procedures where a file(s) is to be copied:
- a. The information noted by the FOI Coordinator as being partially or fully exempt must be removed before the file(s) is copied.
 - i) A postal address must be provided to which the copy can be sent via registered post.
 - b. Once copies are made of the file(s), the supervising officer will then forward the copy to the staff member/student with the relevant pro forma covering letter prepared by the FOI Coordinator.
 - c. The pro forma letter will identify the documents that have been removed, the reason for the exemption and provide advice on further steps the requesting staff member/student can take to seek further information or access to the exempt material (including by lodging a formal FOI request with the FOI Coordinator).
9. Section 15A of the FOI Act prescribes that all requests must be completed within 30 days. Where the University fails to notify the staff member/student of the outcome of their request within 30 days, the staff member/student may lodge a request for access to this information with the FOI Coordinator, pursuant to section 15 of the FOI Act.