

What do I need to know if someone requests information from me about the University or about any other information we hold here?

- Requests for information that we hold need to be made in recorded format, e.g. an email or a letter. Requests for environmental information may be made by phone.
- The person requesting the information does not need to tell you it is being made under FOI or under the EIRs. All they need to do is to request the information
- You are not entitled to know why they want the information or to check whether the person requesting it is genuine
- A request for information may come to any part of the University from anywhere in the world
- By law, the request for information must be answered within 20 working days

What should I do when I receive a request for information and do I need to recognise it as an FOI or EIRs request?

How you handle the request depends on the nature of it and your role in the University.

- If you routinely give out certain information to the public, staff and students, continue to give out this information as before
- If you receive a request for information which
 - mentions Freedom of Information or the EIRs OR
 - is not information you already routinely provide in the course of your work, OR
 - you are unsure of, OR
 - is unusual, OR
 - asks for information that the University holds

pass the request immediately to your IMPS Contact. If this is not possible (for example because they are not available or you do not know who they are) pass the request to IMPS (contact details opposite).

When you are in doubt about any request for information you receive please contact your IMPS Contact or the IMPS Office.

Freedom of Information

at the University of Reading

Essential information for all staff

If you have any questions about Freedom of Information or the Environmental Information Regulations, and what it means for you, contact Information Management and Policy Services (IMPS) using the details below.

For further information,
please contact IMPS:
Room 221, Whiteknights House
0118 378 8981
imps@reading.ac.uk
www.reading.ac.uk



The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs) 2004

- Gives everyone both in and outside the University a right of access to information held by the University of Reading
- Covers all digital and paper records and information held by the University whether current or archived

There are some situations where information is not required to be released and should not be released

The University of Reading fully supports this increased public access to information; however FOI and the EIRs are not intended to mean that all University information may now be divulged by you. Reasons including personal data, confidentiality, and the commercial interests of the University may still mean that some information is not and should not be released.

The University Publication Scheme

- To help with our obligations under FOI and the EIRs, we have already produced a Publication Scheme
- This details the types of information the University routinely provides to the public and how the public may access the information
- It includes things like the University structure and organisation, its services and procedures, practices and guidelines
- In addition, the public will have a right to ask for information which is not contained in the publication scheme

Records management

- Our obligations under FOI and the EIRs also require the University to observe good records management practice
- To handle requests within the 20 working day timescale we all need to ensure the information we hold is well managed
- The University is developing information management policies, including records management and retention schemes

You will find the University's policies and publication scheme at: **www.reading.ac.uk/foi**

We also have an office responsible for Freedom of Information: Information Management and Policy Services (IMPS), Room 221, Whiteknights House.

Tel: 0118 378 8981

Email: imps@reading.ac.uk

We also have local 'IMPS Contacts' in schools and directorates, to provide a link between Schools/Directorates and the IMPS Office.

Members of staff and requests for information

What do FOI and the EIRs mean for me?

- As an individual you will be entitled to access information from public authorities including from the University itself
- As an employee of the University you need to be aware of the Act and be prepared to act quickly if you receive a request for information
- All University records including the records you keep are potentially now open to greater scrutiny by the public