

## **Royal Holloway, University of London**

### **Freedom of Information Complaints Policy and Procedure**

#### **Policy**

The University aims to comply fully with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act (2000), however if, for any reason, you are dissatisfied with the way in which your request for information has been handled, you may invoke this complaints procedure.

Guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) indicates that any expression of dissatisfaction with the University's response to an information request should be treated as a complaint. Accordingly, the University will carry out an internal review on receipt of a specific request, or upon receipt of an expression of dissatisfaction regarding the University's response (or absence of a response) to a Freedom of Information request, subject to the provisions of the procedure below. This complaints procedure seeks to provide a fair and thorough review of the handling of issues and of decisions taken pursuant to the Act.

#### **Procedure**

1. Complaints should be made no later than 60 working days after receiving the University's response to your information request. If the complaint is regarding information which has not been supplied when requested, the complaint should be made no later than 40 working days after the initial request. We cannot consider complaints regarding requests for information which are received outside of this timescale.
2. All complaints should be in writing and directed to [foi@royalholloway.ac.uk](mailto:foi@royalholloway.ac.uk). Where complaints are received at another location within the University they should be forwarded to the above.
3. If the initial request for information was not processed by the Legal and Compliance Department, the complaint will be reviewed by Legal and Compliance staff who will provide a response compliant with the Freedom of Information Act (2000) within 20 working days following receipt of the complaint. If the request for information was processed by Legal and Compliance (including the Freedom of Information team), they will first check to see if they can resolve your complaint informally by providing you with further information or clarification about any decisions they have reached.
4. If the complaint cannot be resolved informally as described in 3 above, the complaint will be referred to the Chief Financial Officer (or their nominee) to conduct an independent Internal Review. The Chief Financial Officer (or their nominee) will convene an internal review panel, which will comprise of themselves and at least one other member of senior staff (considered as staff at the level of Head of Department, Head of Professional Services or higher).
5. The University aims to complete an internal review within 20 working days from the date of receipt of a complaint. In complex cases, it may be that this target is exceeded. Internal reviews will be completed within a maximum of 40 working days from the date of receipt.
6. The internal review panel will consider the complaint and will communicate their decision to the requester in writing. If it is determined that the information should have been supplied, or if any other action should have been taken, then this will be addressed in or alongside this communication. It may be the case that the panel re-affirms the original decision.
7. If a requester remains dissatisfied following the outcome of the internal review procedure, they have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office, at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.  
The Information Commissioner's Office website is: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

The College reserves the right to waive the internal review procedure where there is strong evidence that it is being used or is likely to be used vexatiously or maliciously. This decision will be taken by the Chief Financial Officer (or their nominee) after full consideration of all the facts.