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Legal Services

Legal Services is the central point within the University for dealing with legal issues.

Legal Services provides comprehensive legal advice and services to management and staff on University-related matters and also coordinates any external legal services. Some of the services we offer include:

- providing verbal and written advice to University staff at all levels within the University
- drafting, reviewing and negotiating various contracts and agreements. These include funding agreements, research contracts, services and consultancy agreements, confidentiality agreements and memoranda of understanding (MOUs)
- dealing with official information requests and privacy queries
- advising on copyright matters and handling copyright clearance of student notes
- managing litigation and other legal processes involving the University.

Legal Services does not provide personal legal advice to individual staff members and students. Contact [Human Resources](#) for advice on employment matters.

Requests for information

As a Tertiary Education Institution and a Crown Entity, Victoria University of Wellington and its subsidiary companies are subject to the Official Information Act 1982 (the OIA).

All information held by Victoria University of Wellington, including by Council or by individual staff members, is subject to the OIA and can be requested by any member of the public. This includes all emails, files, memos, records, images or even handwritten notes. Any request for information is technically a request under the OIA, whether the requester refers to the OIA or not.

The overarching principle of the OIA is that information must be made available unless there is 'good reasons' for withholding it. The only available 'good reasons' are those specified in the OIA. Should the University wish to withhold all or some information, it must provide the requester with its reasons for doing so based on the limited grounds specified in the OIA. The grounds in favour of withholding information must always be weighed against the public interest in release.

RELATED LINKS

[— Privacy Act](#)

[— Official Information Act](#)

[— Copyright Act](#)

[— University Policies](#)

[— Human Resources](#)

Legal Services manages requests that are made to the University under the OIA. All OIA requests should be forwarded to oiarequests@vuw.ac.nz

It is important to act promptly as all requests for information must be responded to within 20 working days of receipt of the request.

Policy

Legal Services oversees the development, approval and review of University-wide policy documents.

The team maintains consistency across the University's policy portfolio and ensures that the number of policy documents is kept to the minimum necessary for sound business practice.

Legal Services' key policy responsibilities include:

- developing and managing the processes by which policies are created and maintained
- providing advice to policy developers throughout the drafting process
- undertaking quality control checks of all policies prior to their approval
- notifying document sponsors when a policy is due for review
- ensuring policies are consistent with New Zealand legislation
- answering general queries on any policy matters.

An [electronic repository of all University-wide policy](#) is maintained by Legal Services, which provides links to policy documents sorted by policy area. For general assistance with policy matters, contact policy-help@vuw.ac.nz, or for queries regarding a specific policy document, contact the document sponsor.



Simon Johnson

GENERAL COUNSEL

simon.johnson@vuw.ac.nz

Phone: 04 4636551

Room 212, Hunter Building

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