



Ben  
[fyi-request-5840-c0ea19ce@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-5840-c0ea19ce@requests.fyi.org.nz)

Dear Ben

Thank you for your 8 May 2017 email to the Ministry of Education requesting the following information:

- 1. copies of the current policy, procedure, manual or other process document that records the Ministry's process or processes for handling and deciding requests under the OIA;*
- 2. any diagram or flowchart of the Ministry's process or processes (if any have been created);*
- 3. copies of any template response letters that form part of the Ministry's process or processes (if any have been created).*

Your request has been considered under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

One of our key responsibilities as a Government department is operating in an open and transparent way. Responding to requests under the Act from the public about the services they fund is one of the key ways we do this.

At the Ministry of Education, the Government, Executive and Ministerial Services (GEMS) team is responsible for responding to all requests for official information. Last year, the Ministry responded to around 900 requests under the Act. We perform well when it comes to timeliness of response and quality of decisions, and we also invest a significant amount of effort into proactively releasing information.

To ensure we maintain the standard we are currently working at in responding to requests, we recently updated the generic process and created documentation to communicate to staff the Ministry's process. A copy of this process has been released to you in full and is attached to this letter.

As part of the induction process for new staff to the Ministry, we provide an induction pack which includes a hand out document to explain what the Act is, and what our responsibilities are as public servants. It also provides Ministry contacts if more information is required. A copy of this document has been released to you in full and is attached to this letter.

As we treat each request on an individual basis, the Ministry does not have template response letters. For this reason, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act as the information you have requested does not exist.

Thank you again for your email. If you have further questions please feel free to contact the Ministry's Official and Parliamentary Information Manager, Simon Sanders at [Simon.Sanders@education.govt.nz](mailto:Simon.Sanders@education.govt.nz) or on 04 439 5005. If you are still unsatisfied with my response, you have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review it. You can do this by writing to [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Yours sincerely



Ellen MacGregor-Reid  
**Deputy Secretary**  
**Strategy, Planning and Performance**

# GOVERNMENT, EXECUTIVE & MINISTERIAL SERVICES OIA Process - Skeletal lifecycle steps



**Stage 1 (end of day 3)**  
*Agree on the Approach*

**Stage 2 (end of day 6)**  
*Gather Information*

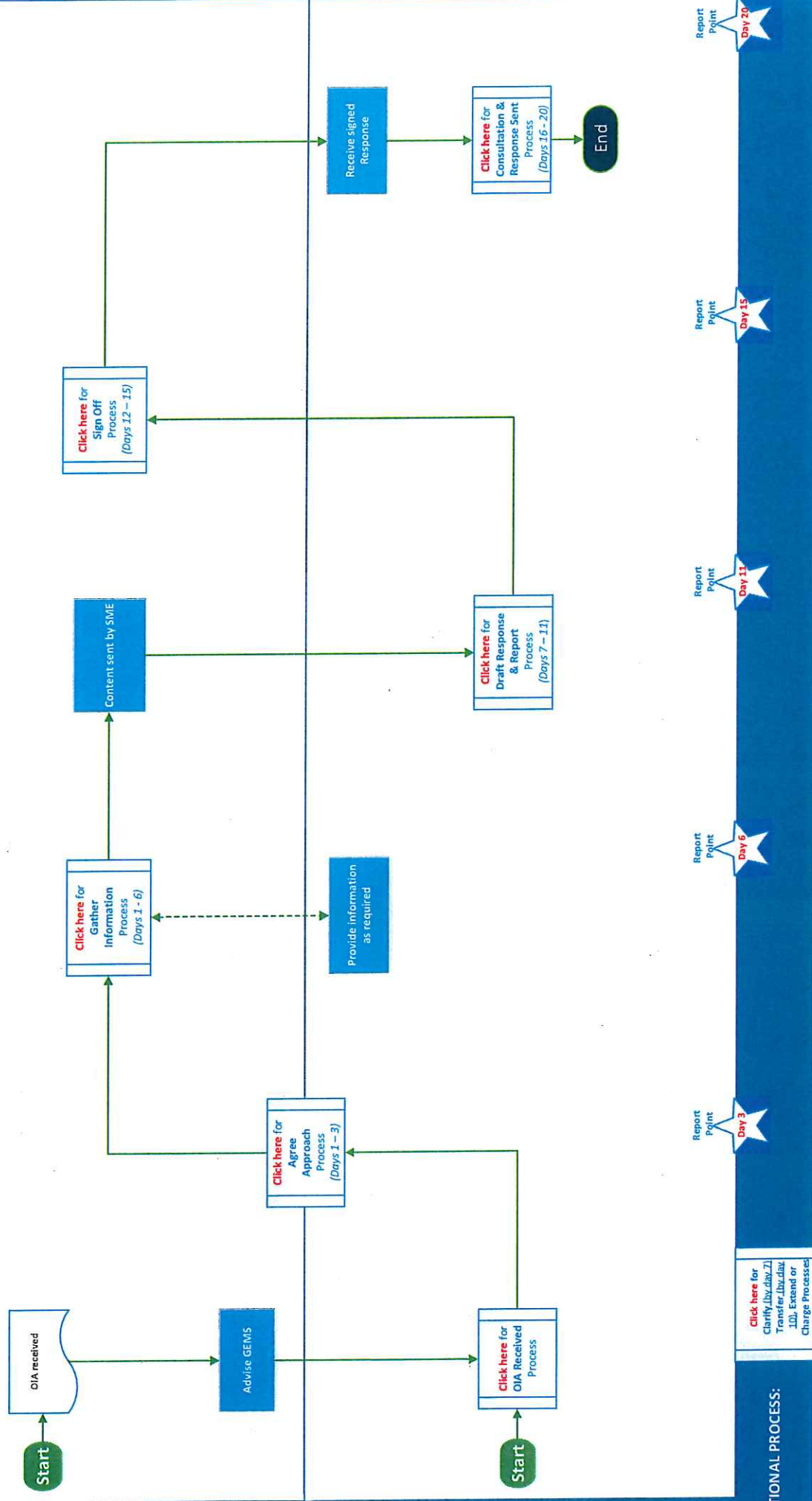
**Stage 3 (end of day 11)**  
*Draft the Response*

**Stage 4 (end of day 15)**  
*Sign Off*

**Stage 5 (end of day 20)**  
*Consult Ministers Office (if required) & Respond*

**Business Unit**

**GEMS**



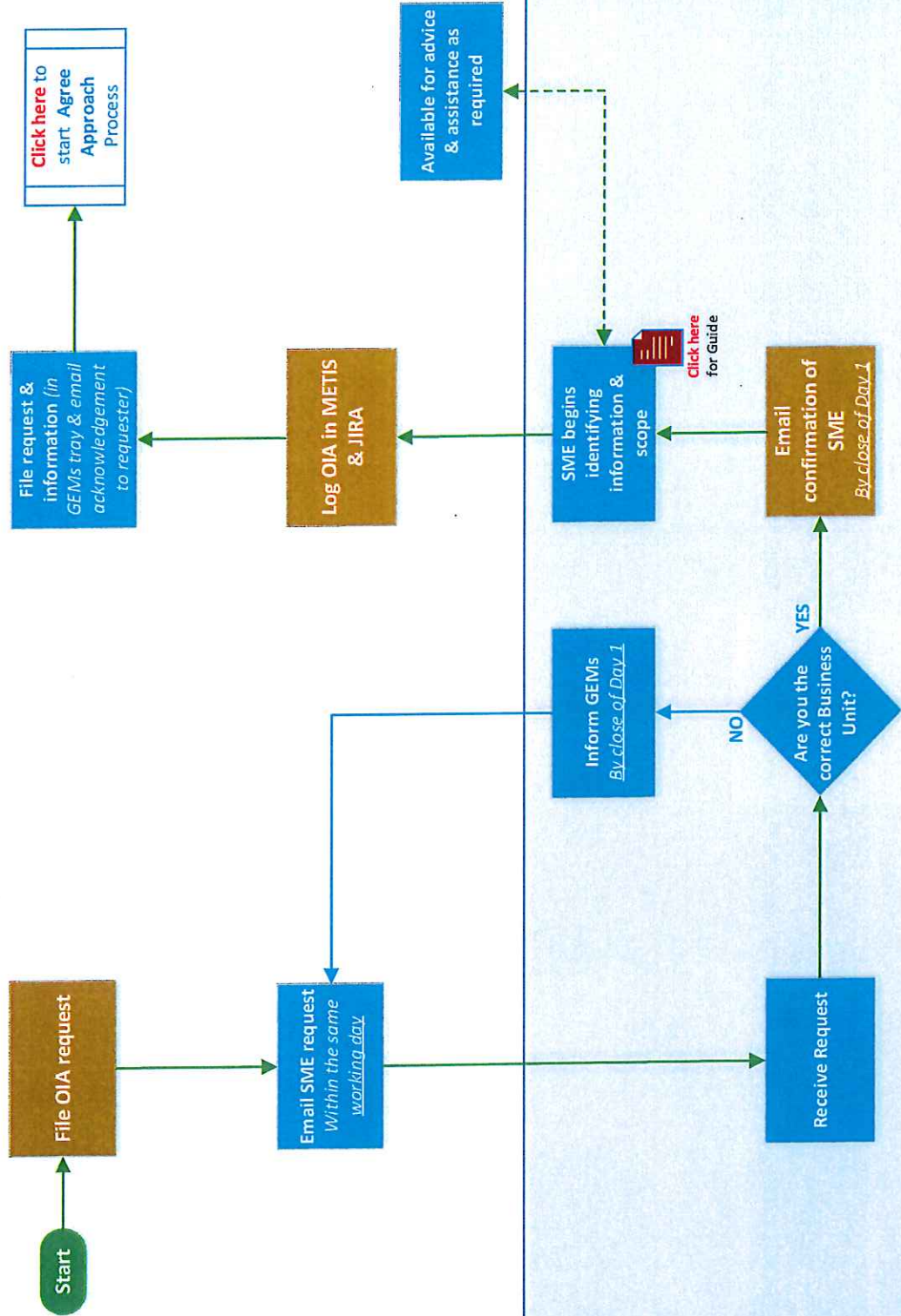
Click here for Clarify (by day 7), Transfer (by day 10), Extend or Change Processes

ADDITIONAL PROCESS:

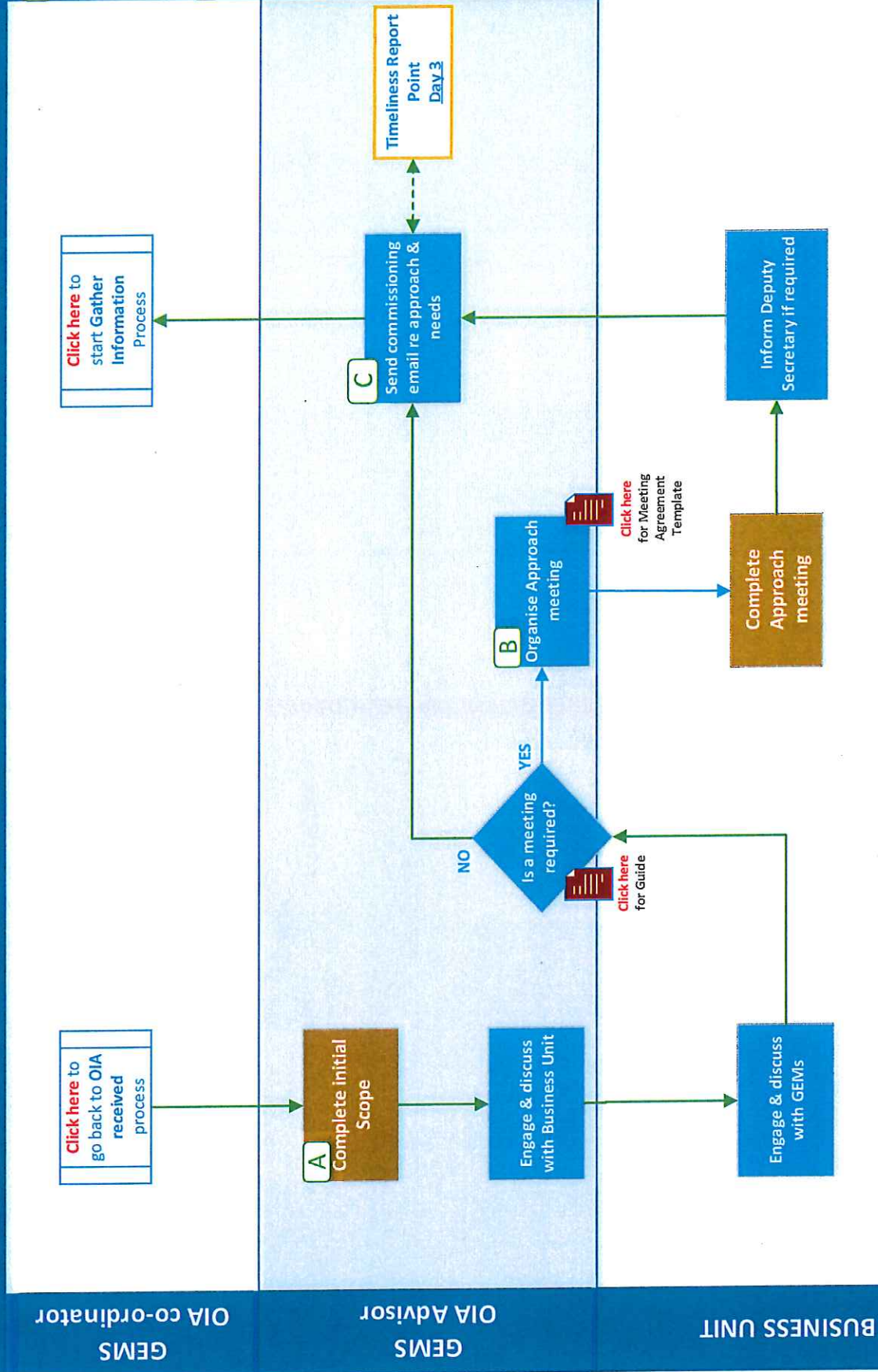




# OIA Received



# OIA Stage 1 – Agree Approach (by end of day 3)



## NOTES:

- A** Initial scope & ID transfer:
- Business Unit
  - Ministers office review
  - Background research eg:
    - Requester
    - Previous OIA
    - Media statements

- B** Possible meeting participants:
- Business Lead
  - Legal
  - Media
  - Regional Reps

- C** Upload approach in JIRA
- Upload approach in JIRA

## ADDITIONAL PROCESSES

Click here for  
 Clarify\_(by.day.Z)  
 Transfer\_(by.day  
 .10), Extend or  
 Charge Processes

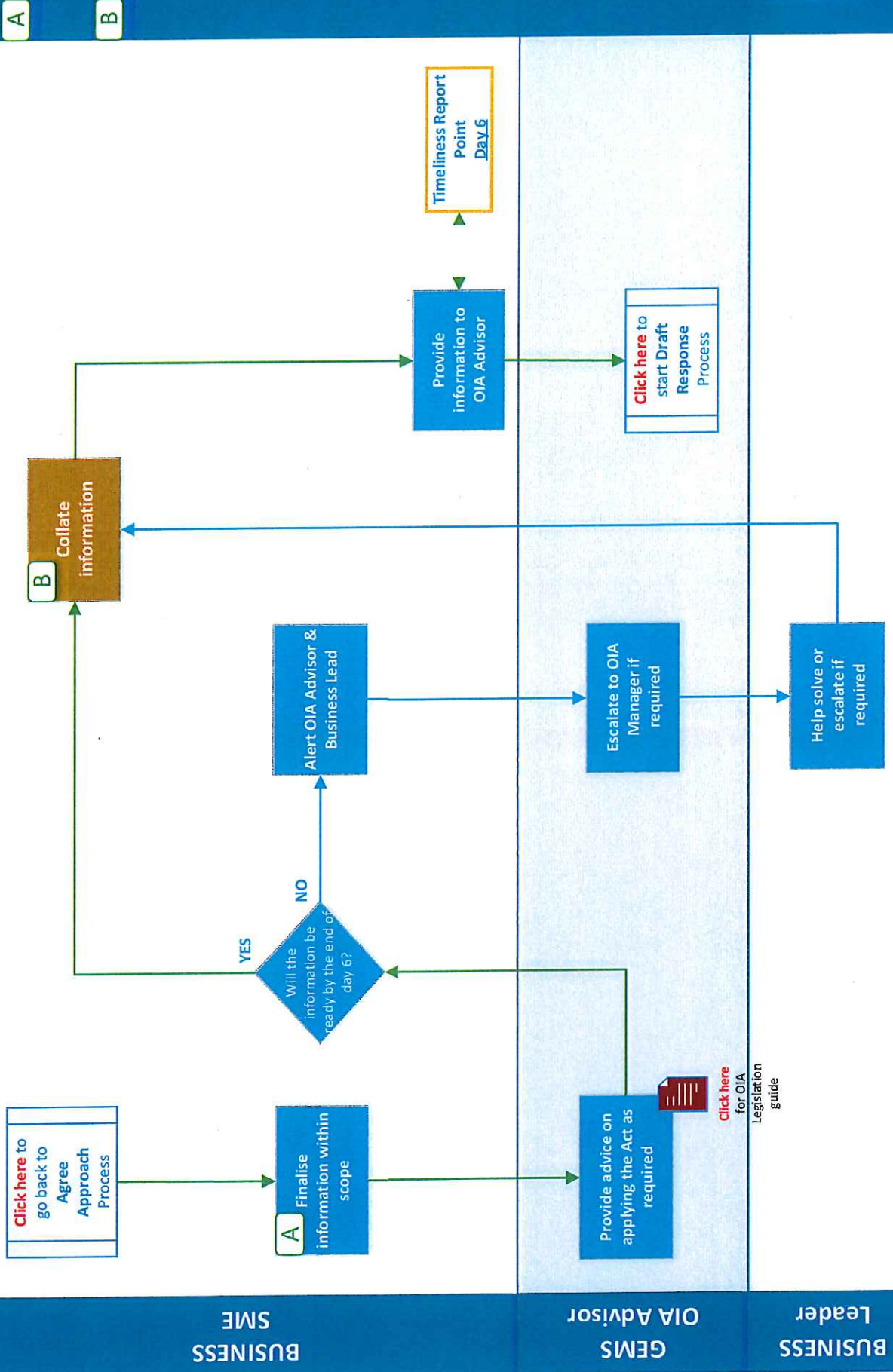


# OIA Stage 2 - Gather Information (by end of day 6)

## NOTES:

- A** Search or request:
- Relevant databases
  - Archives

- B** Obtain all information including support information eg. Context



## ADDITIONAL PROCESSES

[Click here](#) for Clarify (by day 7), Transfer (by day 10), Extend or Change Processes

[Click here to return to Skeletal Map](#)

BUSINESS SME

GEMS OIA Advisor

BUSINESS Leader

# OIA Stage 3 - Draft Response (by end of day 11)

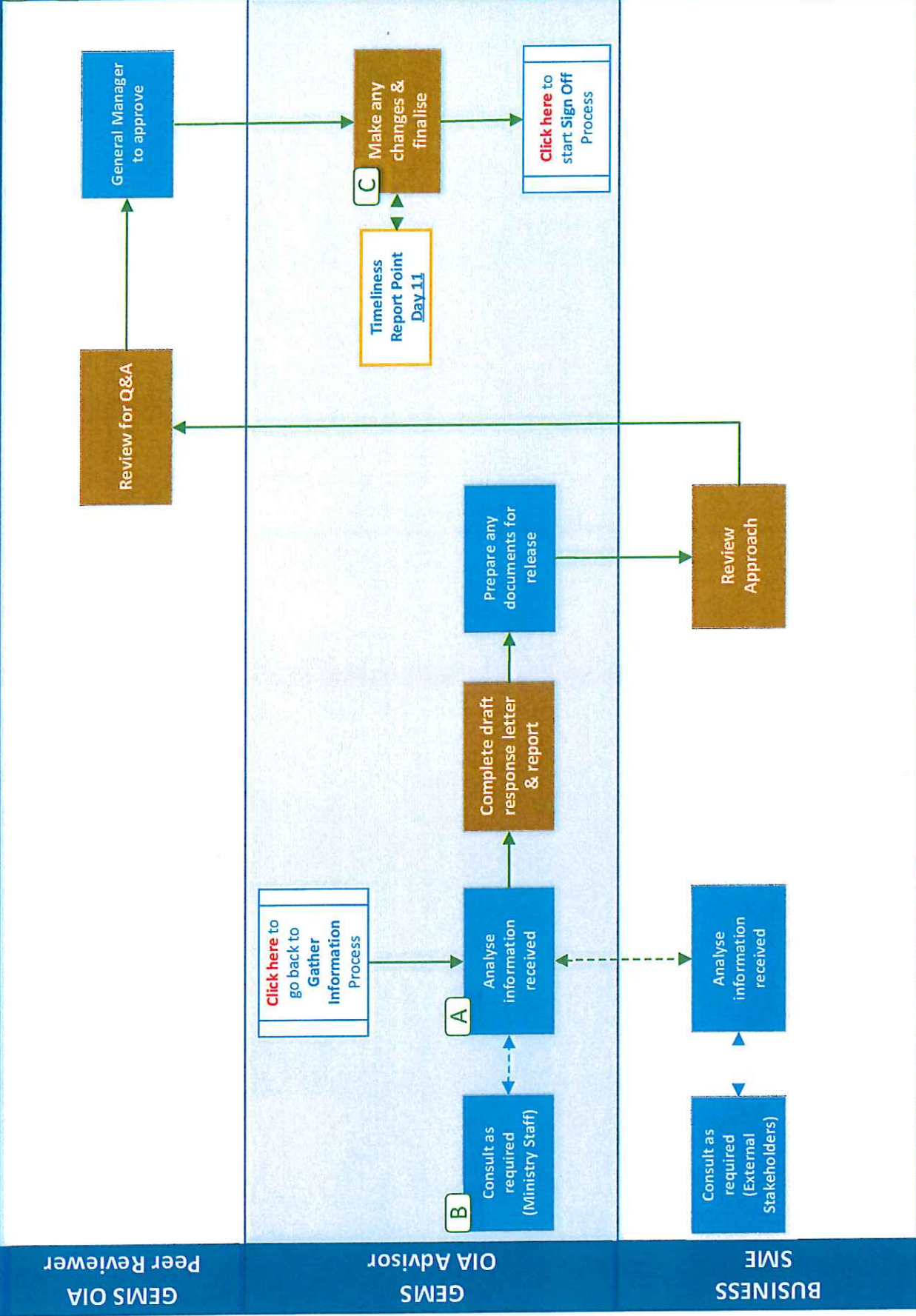
## NOTES:

- Against OIA Act and the request
- Consult MoE staff about release of information about them
- Advise SME about the result of staff consultations
- Consult External people about release of information eg. Schools, organisations
- Send final copy for review as required to:
  - Media
  - Legal
  - Business Lead
  - Office of Secretary of Education if required

**A**

**B**

**C**



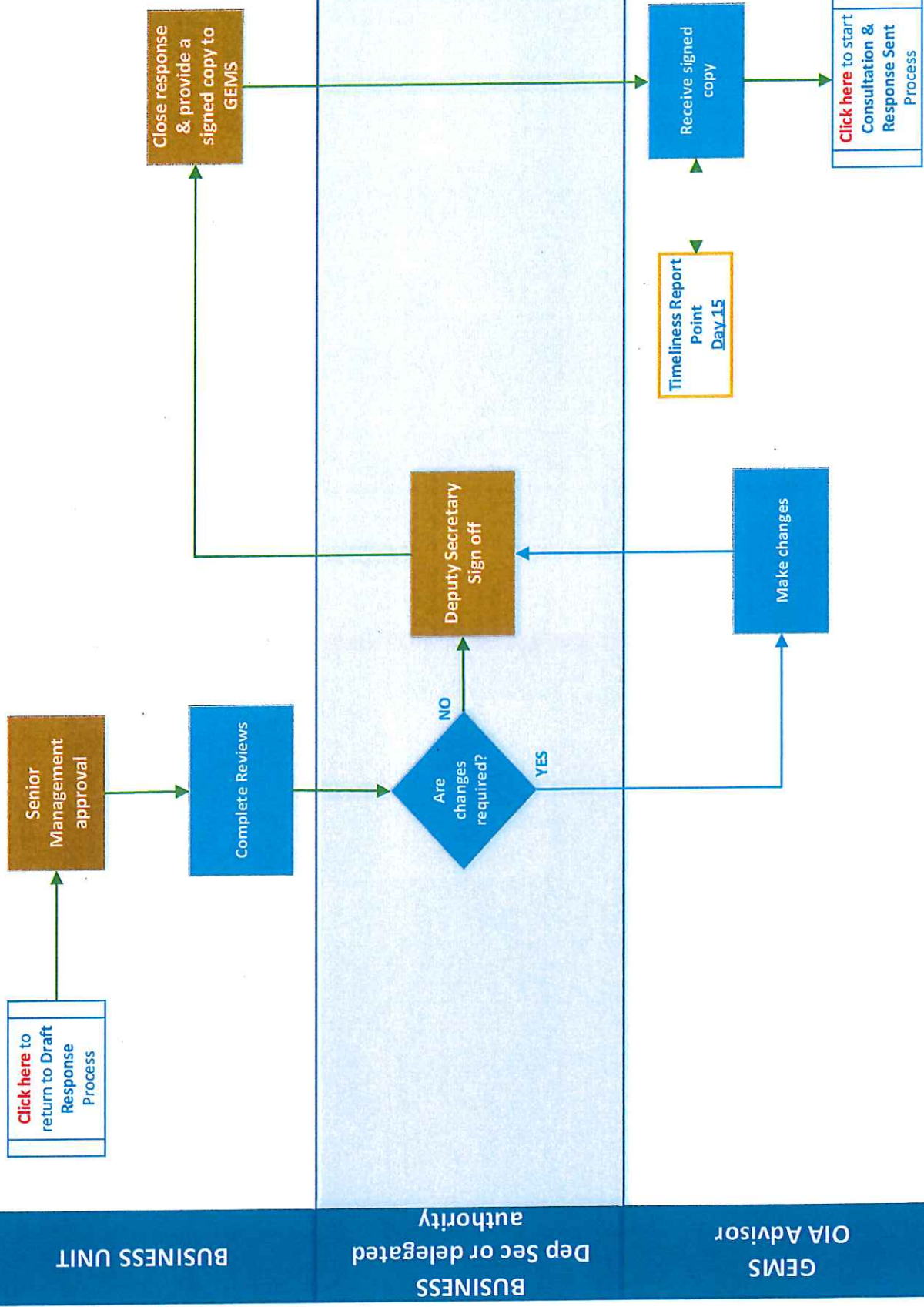
## ADDITIONAL PROCESSES & LINKS

Click here for Transfer (by day 10), Extend or Charge Processes



# OIA Stage 4 - Business Unit Sign Off (by end of day 15)

[Click here to return to Skeletal Map](#)



**ADDITIONAL PROCESSES**

[Click here for Extend or Charge Processes \(Day 10\)](#)

**BUSINESS UNIT**

**BUSINESS  
Dep Sec or delegated authority**

**GEMS  
OIA Advisor**

# OIA Stage 5 – Consultation & Response Sent (by end of day 20)

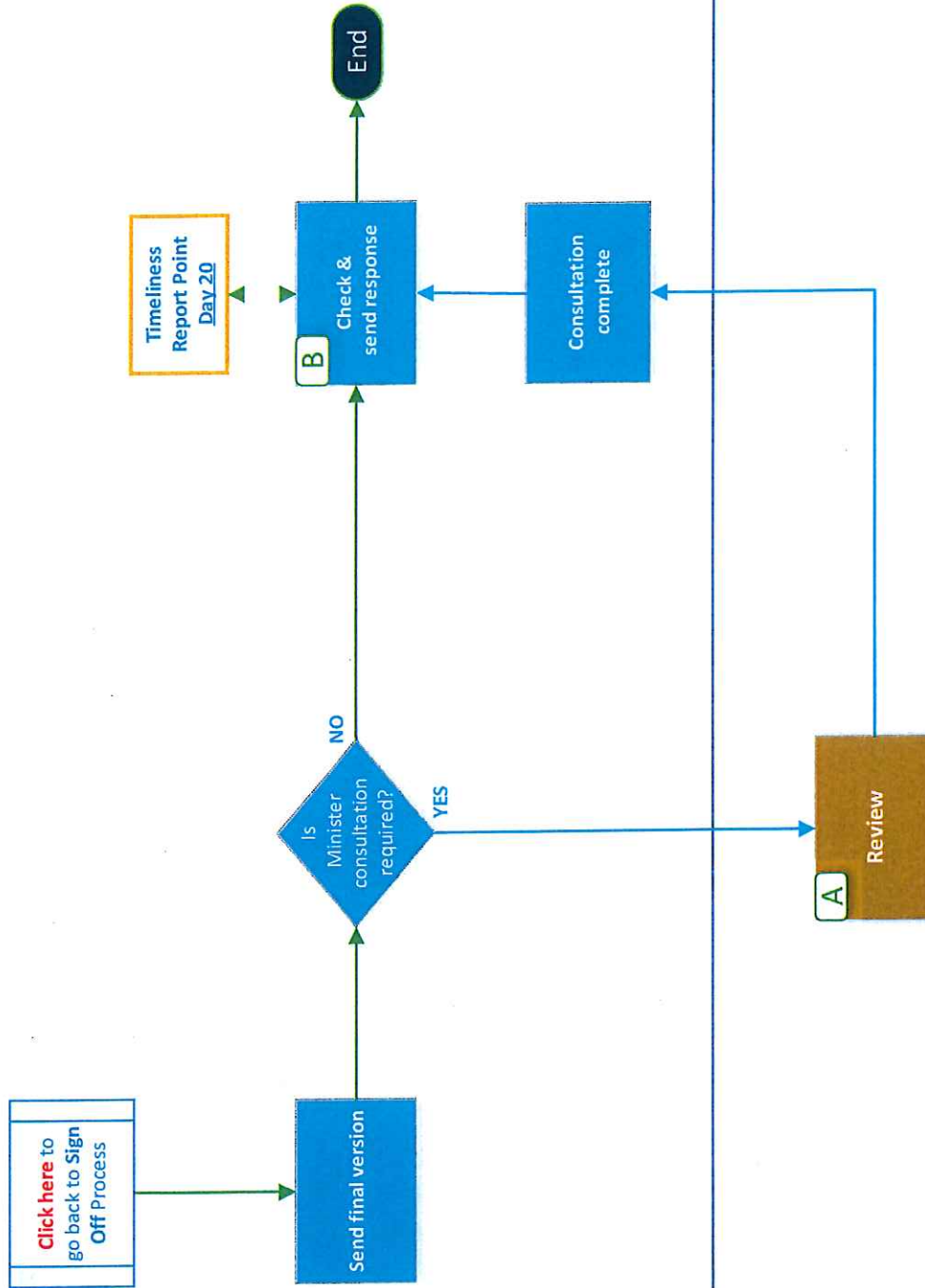
## NOTES:

**A**

Within 5 days

**B**

OIA may publish on the Ministry website, 5 days after being released

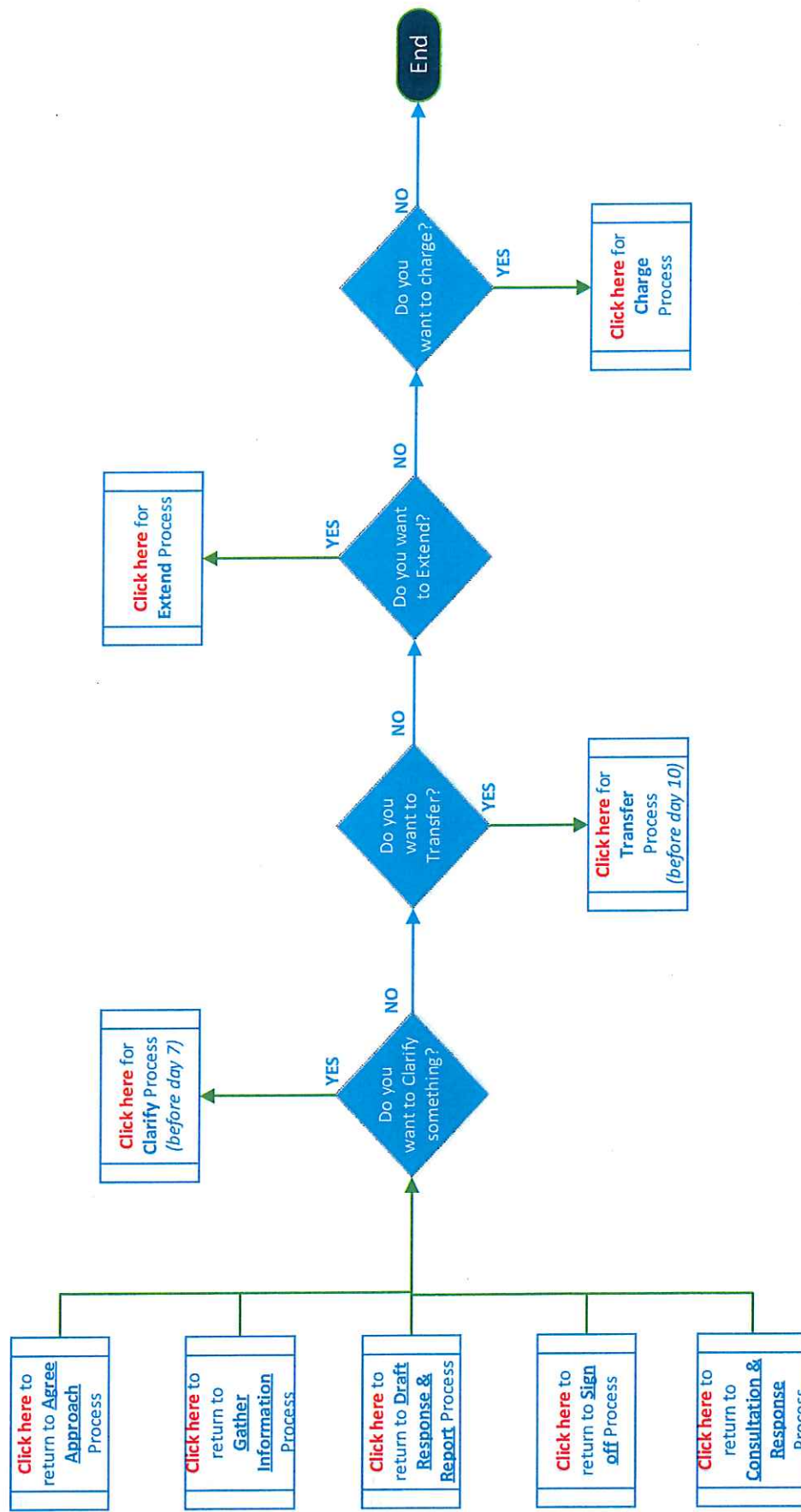


Timeliness Report Point Day 20

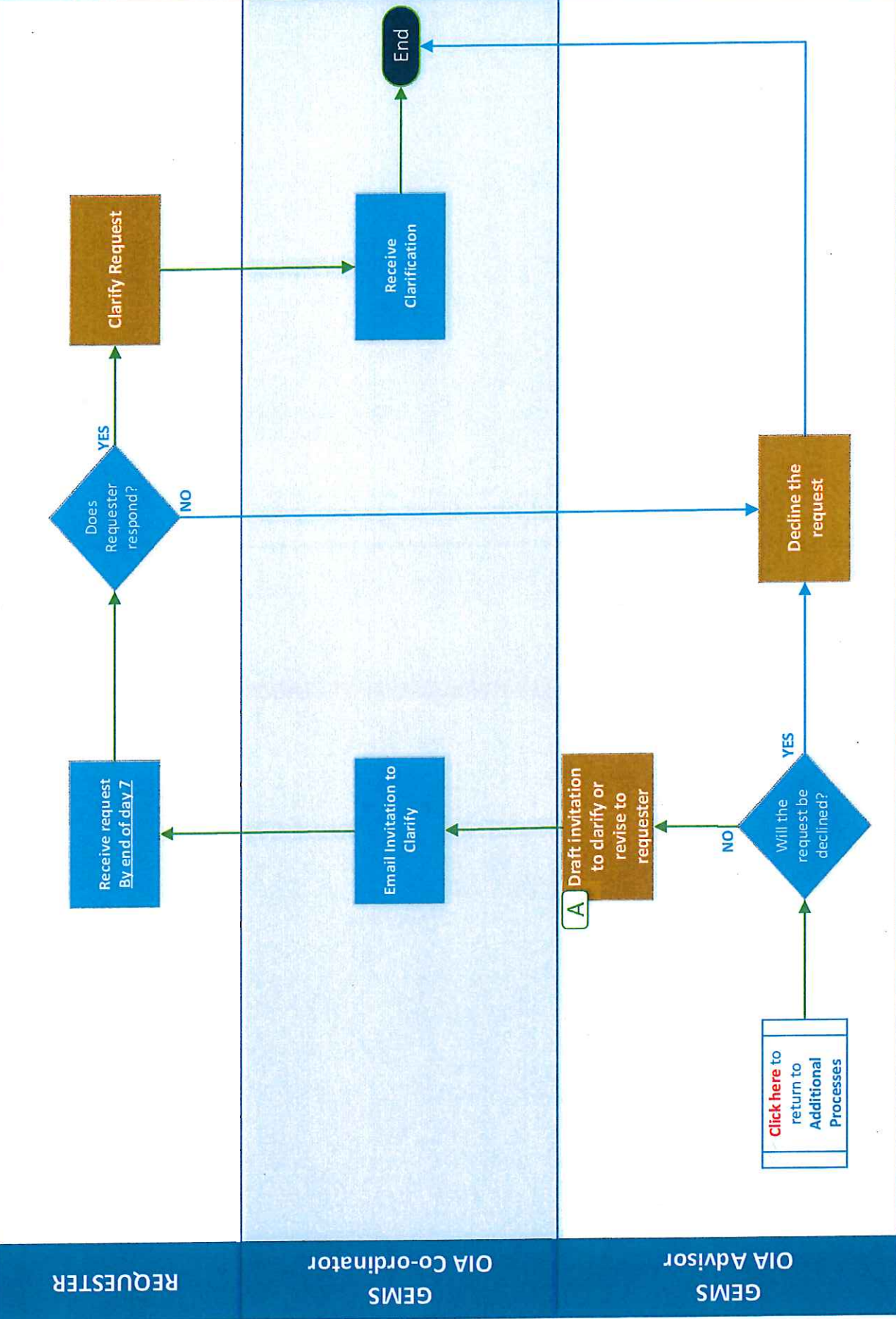
Click here for Extend or Change Processes



# Transfer, Clarify, Extend or Charge



# Clarify – by the end of day 7



**NOTES:**

**A**

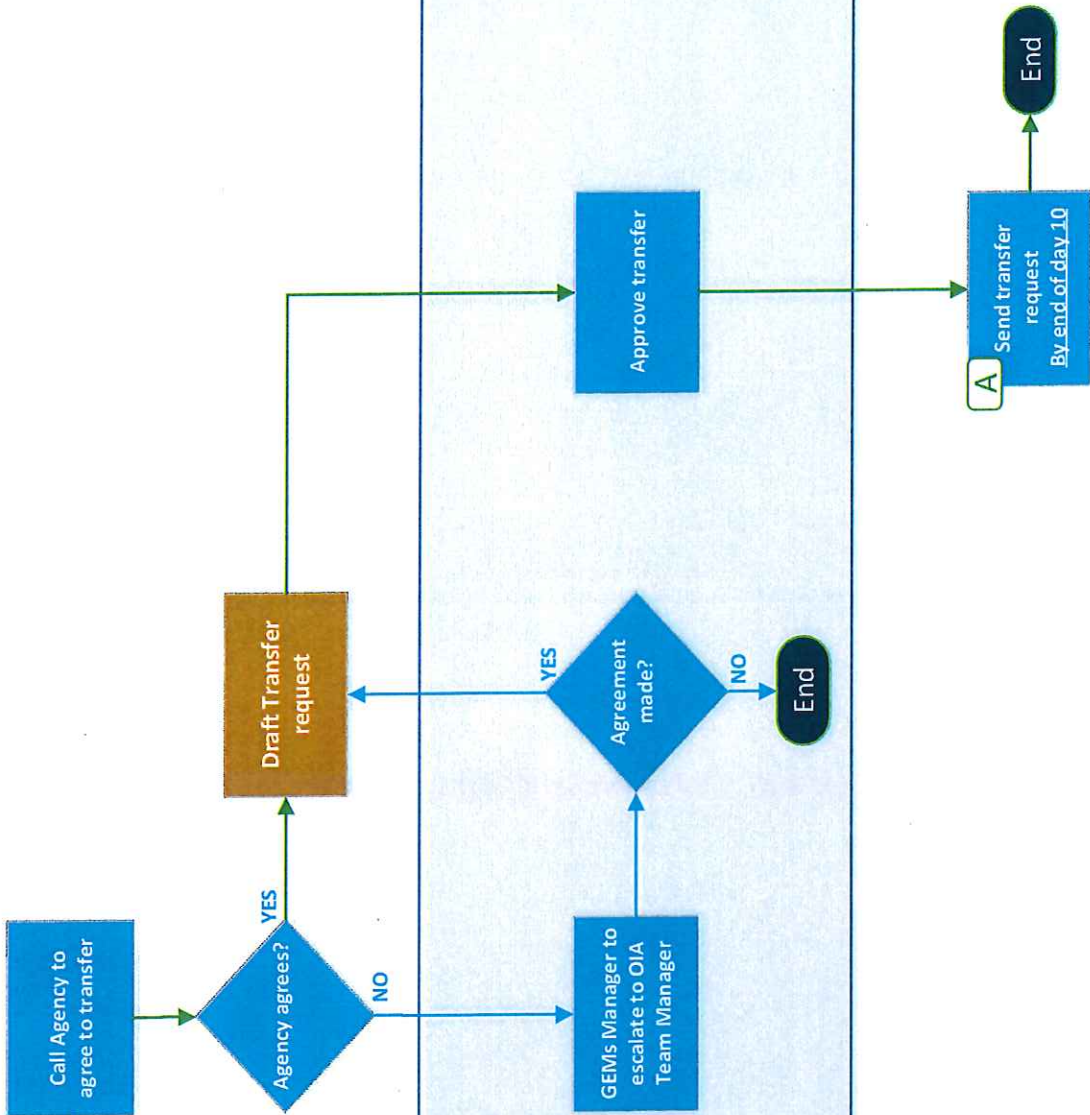
To phone the requester as required:

- OIA Senior Manager
- OIA Senior Advisor
- Business Unit
- SME
- Regional Team
- Media Team



# Transfer – by the end of day 10

Click here to return to Additional Processes



**NOTES:**

**A**

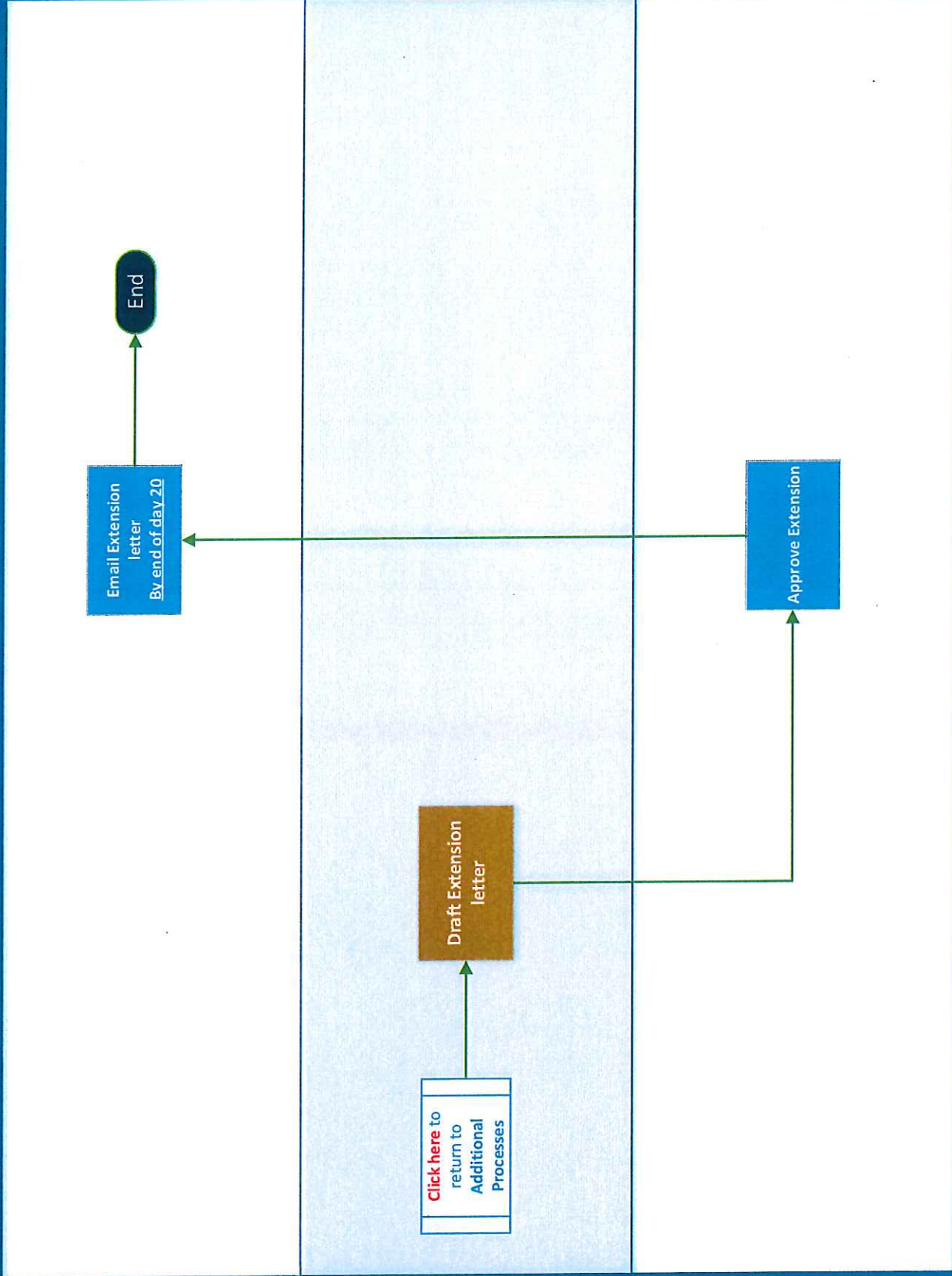
Advise Requester

GEMS  
OIA Advisor

GEMS  
OIA Manager or Senior Advisor

GEMS  
OIA Co-ordinator

# Extend



GEMS  
OIA Co-ordinator

GEMS  
OIA Advisor

GEMS  
OIA Manager or Senior  
Advisor

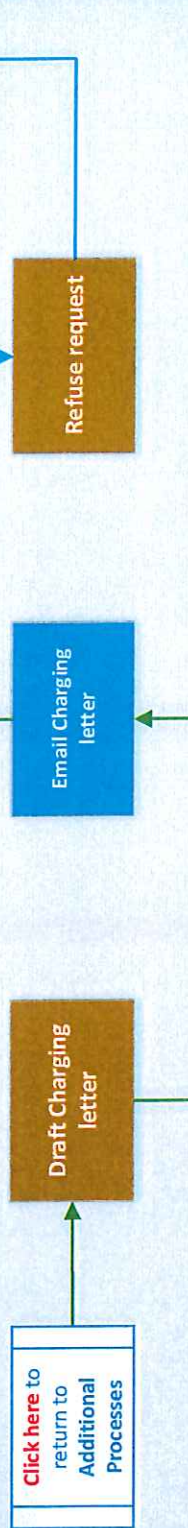


# Charge

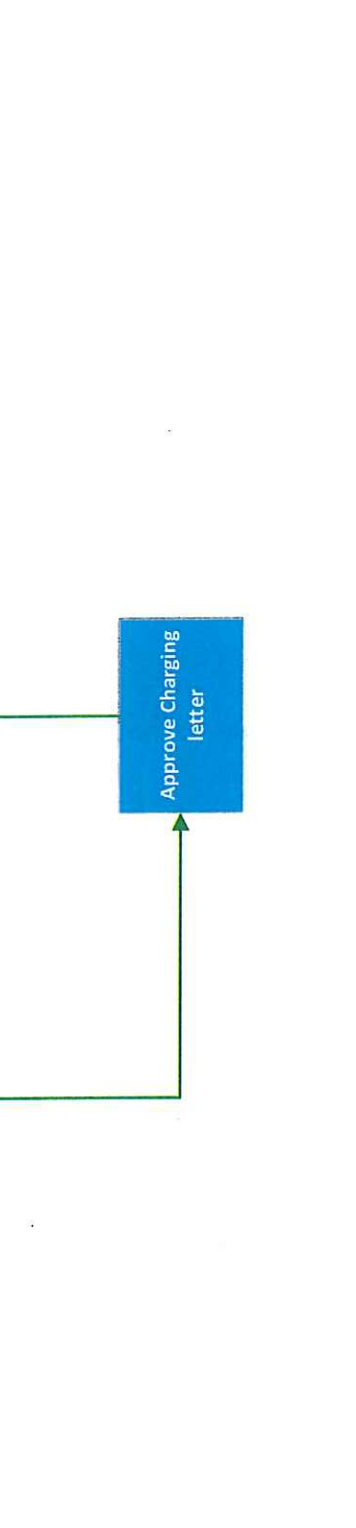
REQUESTER



GEMS  
OIA Advisor



GEMS  
OIA Manager or Senior  
Advisor



Click here to return to Additional Processes

Draft Charging letter

Email Charging letter

Refuse request

Approve Charging letter

End

## The Official Information Act

Congratulations on your new role! If you're new to the public service, you may not have encountered the Official Information Act (OIA) before.

The OIA is an important part of the responsibility that we all have as public servants to operate in an open and transparent way. This one-pager is intended to give you a brief outline of what the OIA is, how it works in practice, what your responsibilities are, and where to get more information.

### *What is the OIA?*

The Official Information Act 1982 is a piece of legislation that all public service agencies are subject to that aims to give New Zealanders access to information held by public service agencies. Everything you do as a public servant is subject to the Act and could subsequently be publicly released.

### *How does the OIA work in practice?*

Any New Zealander or person present in New Zealand can make a request for information held by any public agency. The agency is then obligated to release the information requested within 20 working days. There are certain grounds within the Act under which some information can be withheld or refused, but agencies must start from the point that the information will be released unless there is good reason not to. If a requester disagrees with any decisions we make about the release of information, they have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review our decision.

In the Ministry of Education, the Government Executive and Ministerial Services (GEMS) team manages all OIA requests for the Ministry. In doing this work, they seek information from business units across the Ministry and then prepare it for release.

### *What are my responsibilities?*

You have two primary responsibilities as a public servant in relation to the OIA:

- support the management of requests by working with GEMS as required to identify information within the scope of given requests and provide advice about that information, and
- always, in everything you do at work, be mindful that it is subject to the OIA and at some point in the future could fall within the scope of a request under the OIA.

### *Where can I get more information?*

- Information about how to manage an OIA and our processes is available at [link] [QR code]
- Information about the Ombudsman, including general guides on applying the OIA are available at [link] [QR code]
- You can view the Act itself at [link] [QR code]
- You can contact the GEMS team at [ministerial.requests@education.govt.nz](mailto:ministerial.requests@education.govt.nz)