Agency Information Guide

Section 1 - Introduction

(1) This Agency Information Guide (AIG) has been prepared in accordance with the University of Newcastle's ("University", "we, "us" or "our") obligations under the Government Information (Public Access) Act NSW 2009 (GIPA Act) and is a key mechanism in the accessibility of information and its appropriate release.

(2) This Agency Information Guide:

a. describes the structure and functions of the University;
b. describes the ways in which our functions affect members of the public;
c. specifies any arrangements that enable members of the public to participate in the formulation of our policy and exercise of our functions;
d. identifies the various kinds of government information held by us;
e. identifies the various kinds of information that we make, or will make publicly available;
f. specifies the way we make, or will make, government information publicly available; and
g. identifies the kind of information that is, or will be made publicly available free of charge, and those kinds of information for which a charge is, or will be, imposed.

(3) For the avoidance of any doubt, this Guide is considered a policy document and as such, the same principles apply.

Section 2 - About the University of Newcastle

Establishment

(4) We are established by the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

Structure

(5) We are a body corporate under the name of the University of Newcastle. Our structure is detailed in our Annual Report.

(6) Our organisational structure can be accessed in the Organisation Chart. The organisation chart provides a visual representation of the way the University is administered, from the Council, to the Vice-Chancellor, flowing down to the Colleges, and Divisions; and includes our controlled entities.

(7) Our controlled entities are:

a. The University of Newcastle Research Associates Limited (TUNRA) ABN 97 000 710 074;
b. NUservices Pty Ltd ABN 59 641 266 506;
c. Newcastle Australia Institute of Higher Education Pty Ltd; and
d. NUsport Pty Ltd ABN 67 096 090 372.

(8) A full list of business names registered by the University can be found here in the Australian Business Register.

(9) We are a multi-campus institution and education facilitator. Information regarding our campuses and locations can be found here.

Section 3 - Functions of The University and their Public Effect

(10) The object of the University is the promotion of scholarship, research, free inquiry, the interaction of research and teaching, and academic excellence, as outlined in Part 2 Section 6 of The University of Newcastle Act 1989 (the Act).

(11) Core functions of the University are:

a. providing facilities for education and research of university standard, having particular regard to the needs of the Hunter region, Central Coast and surrounding areas;
b. the encouragement of the dissemination, advancement, development and application of knowledge informed by free inquiry;
c. the provision of courses of study or instruction across a range of fields, and carrying out research, to meet the needs of the community;
d. participating in public discourse;
e. conferring of degrees, including those of Bachelor, Master and Doctor, and the awarding of diplomas, certificates and other awards;
f. providing teaching and learning that engages with advanced knowledge and inquiry;
g. developing governance, procedural rules, admission policies, financial arrangements and quality assurance processes that are underpinned by the values and goals and that ensure the integrity of the University's academic programs;
h. the exercise of commercial functions comprising the commercial exploitation or development, for the University benefit, of any facility, resource or property of the University, whether alone or with others;
i. the development and provision of cultural, sporting, professional, technical and vocational services to the community;
j. general and ancillary functions as may be necessary or convenient for the University to promote the objectives and interests of the University, or as may complement or be incidental to the promotion of the objectives and interests of the University; and
k. any other function imposed on it by the Act, or any other act.

How we engage with the public

(12) We serve the communities where our campuses are located, predominantly in the Newcastle, Hunter Valley and Central Coast areas of NSW. In these regions, we maintain close partnerships with business and industry.

(13) Engaging with the communities we serve is intrinsic to our mission. At the heart of engagement between us and the community is mutually beneficial relationships that strengthen our region and enhance research and innovation, and teaching and learning for our students.

(14) Our students, staff, and alumni are a resource for our whole community. Through community-based learning, Work Integrated Learning, volunteering, leadership programs, research and innovation and teaching and practice our students and staff combine with the community to build on existing strengths and provide not just educational but cultural, sporting, professional, technical and vocational services to members of the public.

(15) Members of the public are encouraged to provide comment on the activities of the University through direct contact, select committees, or via our AskUON Feedback form. We welcome all feedback on how we can better serve our communities. Feedback will be given serious consideration to inform improvements to how we do things.

(16) More information about the University's community involvement can be found at Community Engagement.

Governance

(17) Our decision-making is guided by the strategic objectives in our Strategic Plan.

(18) As a New South Wales (NSW) Government agency, we are accountable to the NSW public. As a body that receives public funding, we are also accountable to the government providing the funding.

University Council

(19) The University Council (Council) is our governing body. Section 16 of the University of Newcastle Act gives Council responsibility for the management of the affairs and concerns of the University, and Council may act in all matters concerning the University.

(20) The Council has established several standing council committees to assist in its decision-making. Information regarding our governing bodies can be found at Governing Bodies.

Academic Senate

(21) Academic Senate is our principal academic body. It oversees academic governance and the maintenance of academic standards; advises the Vice-Chancellor and Council on matters relating to the conduct and standards of teaching, scholarship, and research; approves and amends academic policies; and has a major role in our academic quality assurance processes. Further information in relation to the Academic Senate's role and function can be found here.

(22) Members of Academic Senate are elected or ex-officio and include both academic staff and student representatives.

Academic Senate Committees

(23) Academic Senate is supported by several committees to help deal with specialised issues. Further information on these committees and their functions can be found here.

Executive Leadership Team

(24) The Executive Leadership Team is drawn from senior leadership of our colleges and divisions and provides advice to the Vice-Chancellor on matters of strategic importance and operational significance.

University Committees

(25) Students and staff, and in some cases other community members, can contribute to policy development through committee membership.

Section 4 - Government Information held by us

(26) We support openness regarding government information. The information we hold includes, but is not limited to:

a. master sets of by-laws, rules and policies;
b. master sets of Academic Senate, Council, Health and Safety and similar committees and governing bodies

meeting papers;

c. Annual reports;
d. registers of graduates, scholarships, and final academic transcripts;
e. final approved curricula;
f. records of ownership of intellectual property;
g. research project final reports; and
h. strategic plans.

Open Access Information

(27) We maintain a range of open access information at Access to Information. This includes:

a. this Agency Information Guide;
b. information about us contained in any document tabled in Parliament by or on behalf of us, for example our Annual Report;
c. our relevant policy documents, contained in our Policy Library;
d. information on disclosures made because of a formal GIPA application that we consider to be in the broader public interest, found in our Disclosure Log; and
e. a Register of Government Contracts entered into by us in which we spend, or are likely to spend, over $150,000.

Proactive Release of Information

(28) We proactively release a wide range of information on our website and through public access facilities.

Published Information

(29) We regularly produce free publications of direct interest to students. These program documents, handbooks, and brochures are available at Student Central.

(30) Detailed information relating to all University matters is published annually in our Annual Report.

Research

(31) Information relating to research funding, grants and contracts, performance, reporting, monitoring and promoting ethical research, and contact information is available at Research Advantage.

(32) Researcher profiles are available here.

(33) Research theses are available in the Open Research Newcastle system.

Corporate Information

(34) We hold data collected because of our administrative and quality assurance activities.

(35) The following principles apply to data that is used for internal quality assurance and benchmarking purposes:

a. institutions are de-identified unless the information is already in the public domain - this includes removing any obvious attributes that may be present in the comparative data; and
b. qualitative data is reviewed to confirm de-identification and anonymity.

Library

(36) We operate a number of Library buildings and an online library environment (see Library Spaces). The Library holds information relating to and identifying persons entitled to use its services. Further information and contact details are available on the Library Catalogue.

University Archives

(37) The University Archives unit is in the Auchmuty Library on Callaghan Campus. Further information about the Archives unit is available at Archive and Manuscripts Collections. Many important and valuable research collections relating to the region have been deposited in the archives including:

a. The Pender Archive;
b. Records of the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle;
c. The Percy Haslam Collection; and
d. Living Histories.

Donors

(38) We are a registered deductible gift recipient and receive philanthropic support from various sources. Confidential donor information is not made public. Further information can be found at Make a Gift - Support our Students and Research.

Alumni

(39) Alumni of the University includes our graduates, past and present members of the University Council, academic staff, and other people admitted under the By-law. We are committed to building and nurturing lifelong relationships with its alumni. More information can be found on the Alumni webpage.

Section 5 - How to Access our Information

Informal Access to our Information

(40) Wherever possible, we provide requested information informally, without the need of a formal application.

(41) We may impose reasonable conditions prior to release of the information.

(42) Requests for personal information are granted in line with the access principles prescribed by the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) (PPIP Act). If the PPIP Act or this Guide requires that a formal request is made you can apply online or contact the Privacy and Rights to Information Manager.

(43) Information may be accessed informally if it is:

a. your own personnel file – staff members can contact HRServices or their college or division to request information, or
b. your own student information – students can contact Student Central.

(44) The GIPA Act allows you to access certain information unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure. An application fee applies and processing charges may also apply in accordance with the GIPA Act.

(45) The considerations to determine if there is an overriding public interest disclosure are set out in the GIPA Act. A formal application to access information is required where the information is not readily available and cannot be

provided informally. For more detailed information about how you can access information please visit our Privacy Management Plan and Privacy Policy.

(46) You may also find the Data. NSW initiative beneficial.

Formal Applications for Information

(47) A formal application will be required when the information is considered to contain material that is sensitive or critical to the operations of the University or contains details about a third party.

(48) For a formal application to be considered valid, it must include:

a. proof of identity;
b. detailed description of the information sought; and
c. a $30 application fee.

(49) To make an application please visit our website, or write to:

Privacy and Rights to Information Manager
University of Newcastle
University Drive
Callaghan NSW 2308

Fees and Charges

(50) Informal applications are generally free.

(51) The $30 formal application fee covers applications for both personal and non-personal information. A fee of $30 per hour for processing a formal application may also be charged. This processing fee covers time for locating information, decision making, consultation where necessary, and any photocopying.

(52) We may request an advance deposit for estimated processing fees.

(53) You are entitled to up to 20 hours of free processing time for access to your own personal information.

(54) Fees relating to requests for information under the GIPA Act are GST exempt and may be reduced by 50% if you:

a. are under 18 years of age;
b. can demonstrate personal financial hardship;
c. are making the application on behalf of a non-profit organisation; or
d. can demonstrate a special public benefit.

(55) If we make the information publicly available within 3 working days after providing access, you are entitled to a waiver of any processing charge.

Section 6 - Feedback and questions

Privacy and Rights to Information Manager

(56) The Privacy and Rights to Information Manager can assist members of the public, staff, and students to locate

publicly available information and provide advice on the GIPA Act and application process. The Privacy and Rights to Information Manager can be contacted as per below, or via Government Information Public Access:

Privacy and Rights to Information Manager
University of Newcastle
University Drive
Callaghan NSW 2308

Section 7 - Your rights, our responsibilities and Privacy and Information Commission

(57) The Information and Privacy Commission regulates the GIPA Act.

(58) The Information and Privacy Commission has a vast array of resources to assist you regarding your rights, our responsibilities, and the role they play under the GIPA Act at IPC Information Access.

Section 8 - Further Information

(59) Further information is available at our website at Access to Information Portal.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	20th May 2025
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Approval Authority	Vice-Chancellor
Approval Date	14th April 2025
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Alex Zelinsky Vice-Chancellor alex.zelinsky@newcastle.edu.au
Enquiries Contact	Daniel Bell General Counsel and Chief Governance Officer Legal and Governance Services

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Academic transcript" - An official record of studies at the University.

"University" - The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under sections 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Working day" - Any day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a public holiday in Newcastle, on which business may be conducted.

"Academic staff" - A person employed as an academic staff member or appointed as an academic honorary appointee (including adjunct, clinical conjoint, visiting, honorary and conjoint appointments), but does not include persons who are employed solely as teachers or professional staff.

"Award" - When referring to a University qualification, this term means an academic qualification approved by Academic Senate that is conferred when a student has met the relevant program requirements. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

"Controlled entity" - Has the same meaning as in section 16A of the University of Newcastle Act 1989.

"Student" - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

"Intellectual property" - Intellectual property (IP), as defined by the World Intellectual Property Organisation, refers to creations of the mind: inventions; literary and artistic works; and symbols, names and images used in commerce. Intellectual property is divided into two categories: Industrial property includes patents for inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications; and Copyright covers literary works (such as novels, poems and plays), films, music, artistic works (e.g. drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures) and architectural design. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, producers of phonograms in their recordings, and broadcasters in their radio and television programs.

"Research" - As defined in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, or any replacing Code or document.

"Staff" - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the

University.

"College" - An organisational unit established within the University by the Council.