1. Background

The University is required under section 20 of the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (“the GIPA Act”) to have an information guide that:

(a) describes the structure and functions of the agency, and
(b) describes the ways in which the functions (including, in particular, the decision-making functions) of the agency affect members of the public, and
(c) specifies any arrangements that exist to enable members of the public to participate in the formulation of the agency’s policy and the exercise of the agency’s functions, and
(d) identifies the various kinds of government information held by the agency, and
(e) identifies the kinds of government information held by the agency that the agency makes (or will make) publicly available, and
(f) specifies the manner in which the agency makes (or will make) government information publicly available, and
(g) identifies the kinds of information that are (or will be) made publicly available free of charge and those kinds for which a charge is (or will be) imposed.

This Information Guide was adopted by Richard Fisher, General Counsel, on <date>. 
2. Structure and Functions

About the University

The University of Sydney was established by an Act of the NSW Legislative Council in 1850. In 1989, three former colleges of advanced education were amalgamated with the University. They were:

- Cumberland College of Health Sciences
- Sydney College of the Arts
- Sydney Conservatorium of Music
- Sydney College of Advanced Education (Sydney Institute of Education, Institute of Nursing Studies and the Guild Centre only)

From 1994 to 2005 the Orange Agricultural College was part of the University. In 2005 it became part of Charles Sturt University.

The University’s physical locations include these teaching and research locations:

- Camperdown/Darlington Campus
- Cumberland Campus (Lidcombe)
- Camden Campus
- Mallett Street Campus (Camperdown)
- Rozelle (Sydney College of the Arts)
- In addition to the Edward Ford Building on the Camperdown Campus, Sydney Medical School campuses and teaching hospitals include:
  - Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health
  - Central Clinical School
  - Concord Clinical School
  - Nepean Clinical School
  - Northern Clinical School
  - School of Rural Health (Dubbo and Orange)
  - University Centre for Rural Health (Northern Rivers)
  - Sydney Adventist Hospital Clinical School
  - The Children’s Hospital at Westmead Clinical School
  - University Centre for Rural Health
  - Westmead Clinical School
- Surry Hills Campus
- 133 Castlereagh Street, CBD
- Sydney Conservatorium of Music
- One Tree Island Research Station (Great Barrier Reef)

Functions

The functions of the University are prescribed in the University of Sydney Act 1989 (NSW) (“the Act”).
The object of the University is the promotion, within the limits of the University's resources, of scholarship, research, free inquiry, the interaction of research and teaching, and academic excellence.

The principal functions of the University for the promotion of its object are set out in section 6(2) of the Act as follows:

a) the provision of facilities for education and research of university standard
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 the carrying out of research, to meet the needs of the community
d) the participation in public discourse
e) the conferring of degrees, including those of Bachelor, Master and Doctor, and the awarding of diplomas, certificates and other awards
f) the provision of teaching and learning that engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry
g) the development of governance, procedural rules, admission policies, financial arrangements and quality assurance processes that are underpinned by the values and goals referred to in the functions set out in this subsection, and that are sufficient to ensure the integrity of the University's academic programs.

The University has other functions set out in section 6(3) of the Act:

a) the University may exercise commercial functions comprising the commercial exploitation or development, for the University's benefit, of any facility, resource or property of the University or in which the University has a right or interest (including, for example, study, research, knowledge and intellectual property and the practical application of study, research, knowledge and intellectual property), whether alone or with others
b) the University may develop and provide cultural, sporting, professional, technical and vocational services to the community
c) the University has such general and ancillary functions as may be necessary or convenient for enabling or assisting the University to promote the object and interests of the University, or as may complement or be incidental to the promotion of the object and interests of the University
d) the University has such other functions as are conferred or imposed on it by or under this or any other Act.

Organisational Structure and University Governance

Organisation Chart

The University is a body corporate under the name of The University of Sydney. At 14 October 2016 the organisational chart was as below:
The current organisation chart can be accessed through the University’s website. (sydney.edu.au/about-us/governance-and-structure/organisational-structure.html)

Further information on the structure of the University, including portfolios of responsibility, faculties, centres, international and local partnerships, and campuses, can be accessed through the About Us tab on the University's website (sydney.edu.au/about-us.html).

The Senate

The Senate is the governing authority of the University of Sydney and has the functions conferred or imposed on it by or under the Act.

The Senate oversees all major decisions concerning the conduct of the University, including staff appointments and welfare, student welfare and discipline, financial matters and the physical and academic development of the University. It awards all degrees and diplomas and is responsible to the Parliament of NSW. The Senate has established committees to assist it in the exercise of its functions. The statutory powers and responsibilities of Senate defined by section 16 of the Act include:

- appointing the Vice-Chancellor as the principal executive officer of the University, and monitoring his or her performance
- approving the mission and strategic direction of the University, as well as the annual budget and business plan
- overseeing and reviewing the management of the University and its performance
- establishing policy and procedural principles, consistent with legal requirements and community expectations
- approving and monitoring systems of control and accountability, including general overview of any controlled entities
- overseeing and monitoring the assessment and management of risk across the University, including commercial undertakings
- overseeing and monitoring the academic activities of the University.

The Chancellor

The Chancellor is elected by Senate for a four-year term of office. The statutory powers and responsibilities of the Chancellor are defined by section 10 of the Act. The Chancellor:

1. is the Chair of Senate, presides over Senate meetings and exercises procedural control over meetings
2. ensures that Senate functions effectively, with a paramount fiduciary duty of loyalty to act in the best interests of the University
3. presides on important ceremonial occasions
4. works co-operatively with the Vice-Chancellor, and is available to give counsel and encourage communication on all issues concerning the well-being of the University
5. in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor, provides a high-level bridge to members of the wider community.
Academic Board

The Academic Board reports to Senate and provides academic advice to both Senate and the Vice-Chancellor on all academic matters, including academic priorities and policies of the University, academic aspects of the University's strategic plan, policies concerning the conditions of appointment and employment of academic staff, the maintenance of academic standards and any academic matters it considers to be of strategic importance. Specifically, the Academic Board has delegated authority to approve new courses and approve changes to existing courses; determine policy regarding programs of study and assessment; determine requirements to be satisfied by candidates for awards of degrees, diplomas and certificates; and to determine the terms and conditions of awards, scholarships and prizes. The Academic Board has established committees to assist it in connection with the exercise of its functions.

University Executive

The University Executive (“the UE”) is responsible for University-wide planning, decision-making and oversight. It is accountable to Senate for the prosecution and management of initiatives under the University’s strategic plan, and for the academic and financial health of the University. The UE has established committees to assist it in connection with the exercise of its functions.

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal

The Vice-Chancellor is the University's principal executive officer. The Vice-Chancellor leads the University and determines its overall direction in consultation with the Senate, the University Executive and Academic Board.

Further information on Senate, Academic Board and University Executive can be accessed through the Secretariat website. (sydney.edu.au/secretariat/university-secretariat)

3. The University and the public

The University’s functions impact on members of the public by undertaking research and through the opportunities it offers for higher education, short and professional development courses.

The University is a cultural and educational hub, but is also part of the local communities and surrounding suburbs. Its gardens and public spaces, cultural and recreational facilities are open to all visitors and local residents. The University’s theatres and galleries, including the Seymour Theatre Centre, host lectures, talks, exhibitions and performances. Sydney University Museums house permanent collections and provide a changing program of free exhibitions. Members of the public may also contribute to the collections and creation of exhibitions, and through donation to the University.

The University provides live music performances open to the public on its campuses including Carillion and Great Hall Organ recitals and musical events at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. There is also a have a community garden, currently situated at Camperdown/Darlington on Wilkinson Road, which focuses on growing sustainable produce. Volunteers are welcome to
get involved, further information is available in the Community and Visitors pages on the University’s website (sydney.edu.au/about-us/community-and-visitors.html).

The Centre for Continuing Education provides short courses to the public on wide variety of subjects. The Sydney Ideas program provides a lecture program, some free of charge, to the public. Many of the sessions are videoed or podcast.

The University’s libraries are also open to for browsing by the public and membership cards can be requested through the Library’s website.

Opportunities exist for public participation in policy formulation through appointment to bodies and associated organisations which contribute to the University's affairs, including the University Senate, Alumni Council and various Foundations and subsidiaries or joint ventures. At Senate meetings, members of the University Community or other observers may be present for the consideration of non-confidential items. Members of the public are also able to provide input by contacting the University regarding matters related to the University’s functions with which they have a concern.

Enquiries or comments can be made to the University on 1800 063 487 (free call 24 hours) or by email local.community@sydney.edu.au or through the contacts page (sydney.edu.au/contact-us.html).

4. Information held by the University

The University is required to keep full and accurate records of its business activities. It holds records of its teaching and research functions and associated governance and administrative activities. The records deal with matters such as:

- Approvals for courses of study and curricula
- Staff appointments
- Student admission and progression
- Examination and assessment
- Quality assurance and professional development
- Course delivery
- Fellowships and scholarships
- Donations
- Research administration and data
- Intellectual property administration and management
- Research Centres
- Student and staff support
- Student and staff discipline
- Convocation
- Operation of faculties and other business units
- University governance
- University infrastructure
5. Making information publically available

The University makes information publically available in the following ways:

- As Open Access Information (accessible free of charge on the website)
- Through proactively released information (accessible free of charge on the website)
- Through an informal application (free of charge), and
- Through formal applications under privacy legislation or the GIPA Act (fees apply)

Open Access Information & Proactively Released Information:

- This information Guide
- Information about the University contained in any document tabled in Parliament by or on behalf of the University other than any document tabled by order of either House of Parliament
- The University’s:
  - contracts register and disclosure log
  - Strategic plan
  - Policy Register and policies
  - Calendar
  - Annual Report
  - Leadership and organisational structure
  - Faculty handbooks
  - Act, By-Law and Rules
  - Delegations of Authority
  - Senate Rules
  - Non-confidential Agenda and Minutes of the Senate meetings
  - Academic Board Agenda and Minutes
  - Archives Online
  - Publically available research data in the eScholarship Repository
  - Heritage Register (available on the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage website)
  - Information published on the University website (excluding the University intranet).

Information Available through Informal Release

The University will generally provide the following types of information in response to an informal request, without the need make a formal access application under the GIPA Act:

- documents that have already been made public in some other way
- other reasonable requests for information, which are not excessive, and the release of which would not require third party consultation or raise concerns in terms of public interest considerations against disclosure. Current staff and enrolled students may request access to their routine files without the need for a formal access application, using the forms on the University’s Right to Information website ([sydney.edu.au/arms/gipa/forms.shtml](sydney.edu.au/arms/gipa/forms.shtml))
This form of release does not require a fee or an application form. Information may be released with deletions, released subject to reasonable conditions, or released in a preferred form. There may be charges for photocopying and for documents available for sale to the public.

**Information Available through Formal Access Applications**

In some circumstances, access to information will require a formal application under relevant laws. The public has a right to access information in this way unless there is an overriding public interest against its disclosure.

Further information on how to make a formal access application or to contact the University’s Right to Information Officer can be accessed through the University’s Right to Information webpages [sydney.edu.au/arms/gipa](http://sydney.edu.au/arms/gipa)

Information regarding access to government information may also be obtained from the NSW Information and Privacy Commission at [ipc.nsw.gov.au](http://ipc.nsw.gov.au) or 1800 472 679.