



9 October 2020

Steph Pono

By email to @requests.fyi.org.nz

Dear Ms Pono

I write in response to your Official Information Act ('the Act') request of 25 September 2020, which amended an earlier request from 2 September. Following our conversations, I understand this to seek all electronic communication regarding medical admissions between 1 March 2020 to 20 September 2020 generated from, or sent to, the Vice Chancellor, Dean of the Otago Medical School, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Health Sciences, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), and Registrar and Secretary to the Council. This includes electronic documents received or sent in response to any media articles published about a discussion document which was considered by the Medical Admissions Committee on August 7, and which has subsequently been reported on in media.

We have decided to grant your request in part. We will withhold materials which are subject to legal privilege or court order, pursuant to sections 9(2)(h) and 18(c) of the Act (noting that the University has been involved in a court case relating to medical admissions in 2020). We will redact, or where necessary withhold, material that impinges on the rights of students or external parties to have their privacy protected, or which relates to non-employment related activities or communications of staff, pursuant to section 9(2)(a) of the Act; in particular, any student application information would need to be withheld. We will also withhold or summarise some material in which staff offer free and frank opinion, where this is deemed to be important to protecting the effective conduct of public affairs and is not outweighed by countervailing public interest, pursuant to clause 9(2)(g)(i) of the Act. In particular, we will withhold some material relating to the drafting of finalised responses (finalised responses will be provided, subject to decisions communicated in this letter); we will withhold the internal discussion document considered by the Medical Admission Committee; and pursuant to 16(1)(e), we will summarise internal submissions on that discussion document.

Given the amount of resource required to process your request, we have decided to fix a charge for supply of this information, pursuant to clause 15(1A) of the Act. We have estimated it will take a minimum of twelve hours of staff time to research and collate the information to be supplied. In accordance with general guidance available from the Office of the Ombudsman, we have thus fixed an initial charge for supply of this information at \$836 (calculated at \$38 per half hour with the first hour free). Although it will not reduce collation time, in recognition of our need to withhold some information, we have discounted this by 20% to **\$668.80** as a final fixed charge.

Before we proceed further with your request, please confirm your agreement to pay the charge in full in advance. We will then advise on how to provide this payment. Once payment is received, we expect to be able to provide you with the requested information within 20 working days. Should collation and checking of the information requested take fewer than twelve hours, we will refund you for unused time at a rate of \$30.40 per half hour unused (\$38 x 0.80 as per the discounted rate above).

I advise of your right to seek review of the decisions communicated above via complaint to an Ombudsman. As per our previous communications, I am also happy to discuss with you information that may be able to be provided with a reduced collation time and/or without charge.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS', written in a cursive style.

Chris Stoddart
Registrar and Secretary to the Council
University of Otago