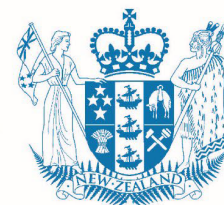


Hon Penny Simmonds

Minister for the Environment
Minister for Tertiary Education and Skills
Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment



29 October 2024

K Jack
fyi-request-28584-4e7e5195@requests.fyi.org.nz

Ref: PSTE-OI-24-024

Dear K Jack

Thank you for your email of 30 September 2024 requesting the following information:

- 1. Any drafts, summaries, and/or final copies of the initial report of the University Advisory Group (UAG) due to have been provided to the government in August, and any communications regarding this initial report;*
- 2. All communications (email, text, phone, etc.) between your office and the chair of the UAG Sir Peter Gluckman;*
- 3. All materials held by your office related to the selection/invitation of Sir Peter Gluckman as UAG chair.*

I have considered your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act).

My office has not identified any drafts or summaries of the initial report in scope of **part one** of your request. However, I can advise that I received a copy of the interim report on 3 October 2024 (after the date of your request), which I am withholding in full under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the Act, to maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.

Regarding **part two** of your request, I confirm that I have met with Sir Peter Gluckman on several occasions since late last year, as set out below:

Date	Time	Details
14.12.23	3:30 – 4:30 PM	Initial meeting to discuss UAG
17.1.24	3:00 – 3:30 PM	Diarised meeting
24.1.24	2:45 – 3:15 PM	Teams call
8.2.24	9:30 – 10:00 AM	Teams call
12.3.24	9:00 - 9:45 AM	Diarised meeting
13.6.24	10:15 – 10:45 AM	UAG Meeting with Sir Peter, Minister teams' in
11.7.24	11:15 – 11:45 AM	Sir Peter and Alastair MacCormick
1.8.24	9:00 – 9:30 AM	Teams call, Briefing on 1 st report on the Science System Advisory Group

These meetings have consisted of discussions on the formation of the UAG and its progress. Sir Peter has utilised these meetings to keep me informed about other pieces of work of interest to me as well. There are no minutes from these meetings.

Regarding **part three** of your request, I can advise that there is no material held by my office related to the selection of Sir Peter Gluckman. As such, I am refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) of the Act, as the documents alleged to contain the information requested do not exist or, despite reasonable efforts to locate them, cannot be found.

Even though I do not hold any material on the selection of Sir Peter Gluckman, I am happy to provide some contextual information on this matter. Early in the formation of the 54th Government, I had informal conversations with my caucus colleagues about establishing a university advisory group. For background, in 2023, the Ministry of Education conducted initial scoping for a review of the wider higher education funding system signalled by the previous Government. I directed the Ministry to convene an expert advisory group (UAG) to provide a report outlining challenges and opportunities, looking primarily at the university system, to support future policy development.

The UAG's work was to be undertaken in parallel with the work of MBIE's Science System Advisory Group which was focused on assessing the current state of the science system and providing advice. Looking at the systems together provided an opportunity for a cohesive consideration of the role of universities in the research and knowledge system alongside the role of the science, innovation and technology system.

The considerable alignment with the Science System Advisory Group that Hon Judith Collins was setting up was identified early on by myself, Hon Judith Collins and officials. It made sense to have these advisory groups chaired by one person to ensure efficiencies across findings and approach. As a result of this alignment, I directed the Ministry of Education to appoint Sir Peter Gluckman to the UAG role.

Thank you again for your email. You have the right to ask an Ombudsman to review this decision. You can do this by writing to info@ombudsman.parliament.nz or Office of the Ombudsman, PO Box 10152, Wellington 6143.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Simmonds', written in a cursive style.

Hon Penny Simmonds
Minister for Tertiary Education and Skills