

Protection of Privacy and Access to Information at the University of Guelph

1. Introduction

This document serves as a guide to individuals or organizations seeking information about protection of privacy relative to personal information held by the University of Guelph or, more generally, about access to information under the custody and control of the University.

The University of Guelph is an autonomous institution incorporated under the *University of Guelph Act* (1964) and is supported, in part, by public funds. Within this context, the University operates with a high degree of self-regulation and accountability. Effective June 10, 2006, the University's guidelines on "Protection of Privacy and Access to Information" will be overtaken by the fact that the provincial *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*¹ has been amended to include Ontario universities.

Consistent with its commitment to accountability, the University actively disseminates information about its operations, activities, policies, practices and procedures regularly making public a wide range of information through, for example, its website² and its official publications³.

The University also institutes measures to protect the personal privacy of those who work, study and have studied here. The regulation of the collection, storage, utilization, and dissemination of personal information concerning its members is part of the University's ongoing effort to ensure that decisions concerning individuals are based on accurate information, that information gathered for one purpose is not used inappropriately for another, and that the privacy of individuals is not invaded through disclosure of sensitive information to third parties without the necessary approvals.

All departments of the University are governed by relevant legislated provisions affecting personal privacy and access to information such as the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA), the *Regulated Health Professions Act*, the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, the *Health Care Consent Act*, the *Mental Health Act* and the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*.⁴

To the extent that the University has records of a non-personal nature under its custody and control that are not covered by these various pieces of legislation, access will be granted to the extent possible without compromising the integrity of the University or its members, or prejudicing its ability to operate at the optimal level.

¹ Ontario's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) will apply to universities beginning June 10, 2006. It specifies access and privacy obligations for information under the custody and control of the University and, in so doing, specifically excludes certain categories of records from its provisions.

² See Appendix A for a listing of commonly referenced websites with information about University policies, programs and services.

³ See Appendix B for website references for the University's regular publications.

⁴ See Appendix C for web links to these pieces of legislation.

2. Requests for Information and Related Questions

Those seeking information from the University of Guelph should direct their inquiry to the academic or administrative unit most likely to be the source of the information. If the requestor is unsure about which academic or administrative unit to approach with their request, they may contact the University Secretariat at univsec@uoguelph.ca or call (519) 824-4120 ext. 56760 for guidance.

Questions concerning the University's policies and processes that apply to requests for access to information or that pertain to its collection, use or disclosure of personal information may also be directed to the University Secretariat. The University Secretary has been designated by the University as the individual responsible for the administration of the University's obligations under FIPPA and other relevant privacy and access legislation.

APPENDIX A

Commonly Referenced Websites with Information about University of Guelph Policies, Programs and Services

Policies	http://www.uoguelph.ca/policies/
Academics	http://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/
Admissions	http://www.uoguelph.ca/admissions/
Research	http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/
Services	http://www.uoguelph.ca/services.shtml
Resource & Planning Reports	http://www.uoguelph.ca/analysis_planning/reports.shtml
Financial Reports	http://www.fin.uoguelph.ca/reports/index.cfm
Budget Development 2006-07	http://www.uoguelph.ca/president/budget.shtml

APPENDIX B

Regular Publications of the University of Guelph

<i>At Guelph</i>	http://www.uoguelph.ca/atguelph/
<i>The Portico</i>	http://www.uoguelph.ca/theportico/
<i>President's Report</i>	http://www.uoguelph.ca/president/report/
<i>Research Facts</i>	http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/publications/
<i>Research Magazine</i>	http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/publications/
Media Releases	http://www.uoguelph.ca/mediarele/

APPENDIX C

Web Links to Privacy and Access Legislation

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

<http://www.accessandprivacy.gov.on.ca>

Health Care Consent Act

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/96h02_e.htm

Health Protection and Promotion Act

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/90h07_e.htm

Mental Health Act

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/90m07_e.htm

Regulated Health Professions Act

http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Statutes/English/91r18_e.htm

Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act

http://www.privcom.gc.ca/legislation/02_06_01_e.asp