

# Submission to the Independent Review of Tasmania's Right to Information Framework

Robert Hogan – April 2025

## Introduction

In March 2022, I began examining the University of Tasmania's (UTAS') plans to relocate its southern campus from Sandy Bay to the Hobart CBD and the Tasmanian Government's knowledge of, and involvement, in these plans.

Very little information on this matter was available in the public domain and I have had to make extensive use of the Right to Information (RTI) system. This has involved:

- 29 RTI applications (including two refreshed applications) to the Premier, Ministers, government agencies, UTAS (17 applications including the two refreshed applications) and the Hobart City Council.
- 31 primary decisions to date, counting three refusals, two decisions on one application, four remade decisions and two partial decisions where further decisions are expected.
- 13 internal review applications and decisions.
- 12 external review applications to the Ombudsman, in four of which (all against UTAS) I sought and was granted priority consideration. 10 of these external review applications sought review of internal review decisions; one was because the respondent was 'out of time' to provide a decision and one was because the principal Officer had been the primary decision maker.<sup>1</sup>
- Five out of five external review decisions in my favour, including the four priority cases against UTAS.<sup>2</sup> Of the remaining seven cases, I have discontinued three; one was handled under the *Ombudsman Act 1978* and three remain on foot.

Summary details of all applications and decisions are provided at Attachment A.

These statistics presented here should not be seen as indicating that I have been satisfied with the majority of primary decisions. I have had to prioritise to make best use of my time and I have also not wanted to place demands on the Ombudsman's office that might jeopardise the expedited processing of priority cases.<sup>3</sup> It has also been the case that I have not sought reviews due to processing delays reducing the currency of certain issues and/or new – more important – issues emerging or becoming apparent in relation to UTAS' plans.

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<sup>1</sup> For brevity, I have sometimes referred to the institutions to which I have made RTI applications or their RTI processing officers as 'respondents'. I have on occasion referred to the applicant as the 'complainant'.

<sup>2</sup> The four cases involving UTAS are dealt with more fully in the section on the Ombudsman below in my submission. The fifth case involved the Department for Education, Children and Young People: [https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/791137/R2210-004-Final-decision-Hogan-and-DECYP\\_5B309.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/791137/R2210-004-Final-decision-Hogan-and-DECYP_5B309.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> As internal review of UTAS' decisions invariably confirmed the primary decision, my decision on seeking internal review at UTAS largely became one of whether I wished to ultimately refer the matter to the Ombudsman.

In fact, very few primary decisions have been fully responsive to the terms of my requests, and almost no internal review decisions have been fully responsive the terms of my requests – the one possible exception being an internal review decision by the Department of Treasury and Finance.

I have met with constant processing delays, unwarranted refusal of applications, excessive and unjustified use of exemptions, poor/confusing arrangement of released documents, and – most concerning of all (as this might be used deliberately and is hard to detect) – a failure to identify all relevant documents. On the occasions where the respondent has failed to identify relevant documents, this has generally emerged only after I have chronologically arranged documents myself and then closely reviewed them, making it difficult to meet the internal review deadline.

Far too frequently, the attitude I have met in respect of my applications appears to have been “What can we get away with providing?” rather than “What is the most we can provide to respond to the request?”. Such an attitude can only be put down to organisational culture and/or lack of training.

The attitude is frustrating on an issue which is of vital public importance in Tasmania, particularly as the *Right to Information Act 2009* is strongly aimed at transparency and accountability and, as the set fee works to applicants’ favour (unlike the fee structure for Commonwealth FOI applications).

In the following I will comment on some of the particular issues I have encountered and make suggestions (in bolded text) for amendment to the RTI Act/process where I can. I will avoid going into too much detail, but I can substantiate all my comments and would be happy to elaborate and/or provide the Independent Review with full documentation if desirable.

### **Organisational culture**

#### **Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC)**

As the Secretary of DPAC is the Head of the Service, DPAC should set the lead in being responsive to RTI applications and in ensuring that the Service is as responsive as possible.

Instead, DPAC has performed poorly on both applications that I have submitted to it:

- On 4 May 2022, I submitted my first RTI application to DPAC. I received a decision on 31 August 2022. In part because there were clear gaps in documentation, I submitted an internal review application on 27 September 2022, to which I received an unsatisfactory response on 6 March 2023 – 10 months after my initial application. I sought external review, but discontinued my application in April 2024, due to competing priorities.
- On 4 December 2024, I submitted a second RTI application to DPAC. My application was not handled in the requisite period, but after considerable communication and discussion of issues, I was informed that I would receive a decision on 28 February 2025. As I had not received a decision by 2 April 2025, I sought external review from the Ombudsman under s46(1) of the RTI Act. I have been advised by the Ombudsman’s office that it has directed DPAC to provide a decision by 5 May 2025 – which would be six months after the date of my initial application. I am unsure of the reasons for DPAC’s delays/failure to provide a decision, but note that my application related to the late rezoning/sale amendment to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024*, which I take to be politically sensitive.

### **UTAS**

I will start with some key points:

- In the first two months of my RTI dealings with UTAS, UTAS (1) totally inappropriately, unilaterally reworded the scope of my first two RTI applications and (2) refused three of my first four applications without – as I rightly believed at the time - justification in the RTI Act (there is overlap in these two categories, as one of the applications UTAS refused was one where it had unilaterally reworded the scope and, indeed, already made a decision: see Attachment A). These ‘errors’ by UTAS were the foundation of my first two external review applications to the Ombudsman: see section on **The Ombudsman** below). In retrospect, it is hard to see these ‘errors’ as anything other than lack of knowledge of the RTI Act and/or an attempt by UTAS to see what it could get away with.
- The Ombudsman has decided in my favour in four of four cases against UTAS. Taken together with the Humphries and Moyle cases, this amounts to six adverse decisions against UTAS since 2022.<sup>4</sup>
- In each of my four cases, UTAS’ internal review decision maker confirmed the decision of the primary decision maker – in three of these cases UTAS’ internal reviewer was UTAS’ General Counsel.
- In the period 20 March 2022 to 26 January 2023, I submitted nine RTI applications to UTAS and received a total of 48 pages of documents from UTAS. This is in comparison to the approximately 3,620 pages I received after UTAS came under clear pressure and scrutiny by the Ombudsman’s office (this was after I had commenced submitting external review applications, but before any of these applications reached decision).
- As is evident in the Ombudsman’s decisions in my favour, UTAS fought hard against my RTI applications to keep key documents out of the public domain that should have been there as a matter of course. These included:
  - UTAS’ 2016 STEM Business Case, which was submitted to Infrastructure Australia;
  - The *Southern Future Business Case*, which was the basis of the UTAS Council’s decision on 5 April 2019 to relocate its southern campus from Sandy Bay to the CBD, and therefore of vital interest to the community; and
  - UTAS Council Minutes. (UTAS had ceased to publish Council Minutes (or even summaries of Council Minutes) in the early 2010)s.

In my statement to the Legislative Council Select Committee Inquiry into the Provisions of the *University of Tasmania Act 1992* on 2 March 2023, I said:

“Since March 2022 I have been exploring through a series of right to information (RTI) applications and other research what, if any, substantive evidence there is to support UTAS’ three main arguments for its relocation, namely: to ensure its financial viability; to improve student access; and to reinvigorate the city. At the same time, I have sought to explore the decision-making processes of the UTAS council; UTAS’ relationship with the state government; and the extent to which state agencies have analysed UTAS’ arguments for a CBD move.

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<sup>4</sup> Humphries decision at: [https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/651894/R2202-032-Humphries-and-UTAS-Final-Decision.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/651894/R2202-032-Humphries-and-UTAS-Final-Decision.pdf)

Moyle decision at: [https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0008/787616/R2202-063-Final-decision-Moyle-and-UTAS.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/787616/R2202-063-Final-decision-Moyle-and-UTAS.pdf)

I have spent the last year pulling away a veil of secrecy that should not be there. The proposed CBD move is the prism through which I have seen the terms of reference for this inquiry; but many of the issues I have identified have equal if not more applicability to the other various serious concerns staff, students and members of the public have raised about UTAS, including issues of online learning and mental health. That matters have reached the current point represents a failure of accountability, a failure of transparency, a failure of government and a failure by the parliament.”

After two more years of dealing with UTAS, and experience now totalling 17 applications, I remain firm in my view, with one qualification.

Latterly, due - I believe - to pressure from the Ombudsman (or his office) and the prospect of further external reviews, UTAS has ‘performed’ better, or appears to have performed better in respect of some of my RTI applications. Moreover in 2023 it recommenced publishing UTAS Council Minutes as part of a transparency project.

**However**, this point in turn requires qualification. When it comes to more critical issues/documents, UTAS reverts to previous practice on RTI applications, as I have recently found in seeking to explore UTAS’ involvement in the last-minute rezoning/sale amendment to the *University of Tasmania (Protection of Land) Bill 2024* and UTAS’ STEM plans.

In this regard, while I note that UTAS has published its STEM Business Case submitted to the Commonwealth Government on 26 March 2025 and some related documents, it has not published the appendices to the Business Case, which are critical to understanding and assessment of that document. At this stage, UTAS is totally resistant to providing any part of these appendices under RTI. This is despite the relevant guidance provided on such matters by Ombudsman’s decisions.<sup>5</sup>

While not a matter directly for the Independent Review, but relevant to the issue of UTAS’ culture, I also note that there are significant delays in UTAS’ publication of UTAS Council Minutes and that these Minutes are becoming less and less informative over time (from the resumption of publication in 2023, they were already less informative than Council Minutes for the period 1 January 2015 to April 2022 that I obtained through the involvement of the Ombudsman and his office). Either critical matters are not being discussed in the UTAS Council (which should be of major concern to the Council), these matters are the subject of UTAS Council decisions/communications between meetings that are not being published, a second set of minutes is being kept or some combination of these.

The simple fact is that for UTAS transparency remains a selective exercise.

I will have more specific comments (and some suggestions) to make relevant to UTAS’ approach to RTI below.

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<sup>5</sup> Particularly these two cases decided in my favour (with my brief working titles):

STEM Business Case and *Southern Future Business Case*:

[https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/715770/R2210-003-Hogan-UTAS-STEM-Precinct-RTI-Final-Decision.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/715770/R2210-003-Hogan-UTAS-STEM-Precinct-RTI-Final-Decision.pdf);

Deloitte research: [https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/731193/R2305-015-Robert-Hogan-and-the-University-of-Tasmania.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/731193/R2305-015-Robert-Hogan-and-the-University-of-Tasmania.pdf)

## **The Ombudsman and the Ombudsman's office**

Over the last three years I have had extensive dealings with the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman's office

I have found the staff obliging and helpful and committed to doing their jobs well, and I am highly appreciative of the good results their efforts have produced.

However, processing of my review applications has been adversely affected by staff shortages and by turnover in staff. One of my review requests took over two years from the date of external review application to reach a decision, notwithstanding that it was accorded priority consideration. I understand that recent efforts have been aimed at addressing these problems and an increase in staffing levels – if the internal review step is removed from the RTI Act (see section below) – may further help.

In my dealings with the Ombudsman's office, it has frequently taken a view that mediating between the applicant and the respondent, or encouraging the respondent to be more forthcoming, is preferable to proceeding straight to a full review and an Ombudsman's decision. I understand the merits of this approach and the fact that the RTI section must maintain cordial and productive relations with agencies/institutions, while RTI applicants come and go. The results can be very good and much more immediate than a simple review/decision process would produce, and I have already noted above how in one period the Office's efforts yielded some 3,620 pages of documents compared to the 48 pages initially provided by UTAS.

That said, **I believe that Ombudsman's decisions should detail and forcefully 'call out' poor performance, particularly where such performance is repeated, as this should act as a driver of necessary cultural change.**

- I note here that I consider the Ombudsman's decision in the case of 'Deloitte's research' to represent 'best practice' in my (limited experience) in terms of the speed of the review process, the amount of context and detail included, and the level and acuteness of criticism directed at the respondent. It was informative to the general reader, and it should have sent a clear message to even the most unreceptive organisation.<sup>6</sup> I would be happy to elaborate on the reasons for this view.

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<sup>6</sup> The four Ombudsman's decisions in my favour, with timelines, were as follows:

Evidence for three refusals: [https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/770869/R2208-030-Final-decision-Hogan-and-UTAS-with-header.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/770869/R2208-030-Final-decision-Hogan-and-UTAS-with-header.pdf) ; application for external review submitted 21 July 2022; Ombudsman's decision 16 July 2024

UTAS Council Minutes: [https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/710479/R2208-020-Final-Decision-Hogan-and-UTAS.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/710479/R2208-020-Final-Decision-Hogan-and-UTAS.pdf) ; application for external review submitted 12 August 2022; Ombudsman's decision 2 June 2023

STEM Business Case and *Southern Future Business Case*:

[https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/715770/R2210-003-Hogan-UTAS-STEM-Precinct-RTI-Final-Decision.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/715770/R2210-003-Hogan-UTAS-STEM-Precinct-RTI-Final-Decision.pdf); application for external review submitted 8 December 2022; Ombudsman's decision 30 June 2023

Deloitte research: [https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/731193/R2305-015-Robert-Hogan-and-the-University-of-Tasmania.pdf](https://www.ombudsman.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/731193/R2305-015-Robert-Hogan-and-the-University-of-Tasmania.pdf) ; application for external review submitted 29 May 2023; Ombudsman's decision 23 October 2023

**I also believe that the Ombudsman should ‘call out’ repeated failings by organisations, as repeated failings are sure indicators of cultural and systemic issues.** In this regard, I find it is disappointing that the Ombudsman has not singled UTAS’ poor performance out for consideration/comment in his annual reports, or elsewhere as far as I know. With one decision against UTAS in 2021-22, two in 2022-23, two in 2023-24, and one early in 2024-25, comment appears overdue. I accept that such public comment may not be the Ombudsman’s standard practice and that some results may be achieved by working behind the scenes but – as I have indicated – public criticism should act to drive cultural change.

As a final point under this heading, I appreciate the rationale behind the Ombudsman’s practice of providing respondents, but not the complainant, with a draft of a decision adverse to the respondent. However, I suggest that there should be some opportunity for complainants to view the draft decision as a matter of course, perhaps after respondents have submitted comments, as in some instances there may be (material) errors or issues in the decision warranting comment.

### **Internal review**

Based on my experience, the internal review process has generally acted only to confirm the original decision and merely adds delay and effort before the external review process can be accessed.

**I would strongly support a proposal that the internal review process should be removed from the RTI Act and that resources should instead be re-allocated to the Ombudsman’s office to provide for an increased number of external reviews.**

**I suggest that the Ombudsman’s powers should also be increased to allow on-site visits to the premises of the primary decision maker and full access to electronic records and meta-data.** I would be happy to expand on my reasons for this suggestion.

There is of course a danger that the external review system could be swamped, and care may need to be taken to ensure the Ombudsman has the discretion and confidence to reject frivolous applications or ‘fishing expeditions’.

A better resourced Ombudsman with increased powers should, again, act a powerful driver of cultural change in Tasmania’s RTI system.

### **Refusal of RTI applications under s12(3)(c)(ii) of the RTI Act**

On 3 May 2022 UTAS refused three of my then four RTI applications under s12(3)(c)(ii) of the RTI Act (through one short email).

This sub-section of the RTI states:

“(c) the principal officer of a public authority or a Minister may refuse an application made in accordance with section 13 if the information that is the subject of the application –

...

(ii) will become available, in accordance with a decision that was made before receipt of the application, as a required disclosure or routine disclosure within a period of time specified by the public authority or Minister but not exceeding 12 months from the date of the application.”

As there is no right of review under this section of the Act, I submitted an RTI application seeking evidence of UTAS’ decision. After I received totally unsatisfactory (and, I believe, evasive) initial and

internal review decisions by UTAS, I applied for external review by the Ombudsman<sup>7</sup>. However, notwithstanding grant of priority consideration, because of complexities surrounding this matter. I had to wait over two years for the Ombudsman's decision. Even then, given limits on the Ombudsman's powers, I had to make refreshed applications on two of the matters on which I had applied and seek the intervention of the Ombudsman's office with UTAS on the third. The result was that I waited 30-31 months from submission of my original applications to receipt of the information I originally sought.

**I suggest that any agency refusing an application under s12(3)(c)(ii), should be required to provide records showing that it had previously made a decision to release material fully responsive to the terms of the application. The refusal itself should be appealable. Alternatively, s12 of the RTI Act may warrant more fundamental consideration, as it has the potential to be (mis) used to delay, or even fully obstruct, provision of material that should be in the public domain.**

I have particular concerns about UTAS' 'three refusals decision' and would be happy to elaborate.

### **What is information/a record?**

I have frequently requested "all records" relating to the subject of my RTI applications, as I have wished to see primary documents rather than have someone provide a (subjective) summation of information.

Because it quickly became apparent that not all RTI processing officers understood "records" to include emails, I started specifying "records" to include emails.

Recently I was surprised when an experienced RTI processing officer told me that they had not understood my request for "all records" to include relevant briefs prepared for Ministers for questions in Parliament.

It has also recently been pointed out to me that WhatsApp and Text messages could fall within the ambit of "all records" where they relate to public business/official duties, including for Ministers. I have not dealt with an RTI processing officer who seemed aware of this.

**I suggest clear and detailed instruction be provided on what constitutes a record to all RTI processing areas and – as appropriate – to line areas and Ministers. Consideration might also be given to prohibiting public officials from using automatic (periodic) delete functions in communications apps.**

This might mean more public business is done informally/off the record in Tasmania than currently, but if the RTI system is otherwise functioning well participants run the risk of such dealings becoming obvious (for example, a Minister issuing a direction that is otherwise inexplicable).

### **Accountability**

In a number of instances, when I have been dealing with RTI processing officers, it has been apparent that these officers have not been adequately supported by line areas that should be identifying and supplying relevant information/records in a timely fashion. **If it is not already the case, I suggest that senior executives in line areas should have to sign off on searches and information provided to RTI processing officers. Again, if not already the case, perhaps sign-off should also be required where exemptions are made.**

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<sup>7</sup> See Footnote 6.

**As it is currently required that RTI applicants go through the RTI processing area in the relevant Department to submit RTI applications to Ministers, Ministers or their offices should also have to provide sign-off.**

I note that the relevant Department for a particular Minister can sometimes be difficult to determine, especially when Ministers are undertaking special tasks, and that a better system might provide for applications to be made directly to Ministers, who might then engage the relevant Department. This might also help ensure that Ministers are engaged in the process.

### **Delays and timelines**

I have faced regular delays in the processing of my RTI applications by respondents, as can be seen in Attachment A. Common problems have included:

- Delays in acceptance of applications. I note that after my first application, I sought to ensure my applications were processed as expeditiously as possible by paying the application fee before I submitted my application, even though I frequently believed fee waiver was warranted. However, early fee payment seems not to have been overly effective. (I note that the Hobart City Council's RTI system did not provide for up front payment of a fee when I last dealt with it; this may be the case with other institutions).
- Delays in consultation.
- Delays in response by RTI processing officers during scope negotiations.
- Frequent requests to negotiate scope outside of the legislated period.
- Frequent requests to renegotiate scope after acceptance, generally accompanied by claims that processing would otherwise lead to very significant delays (and sometimes suggestions that my application would otherwise be refused under s19 of the RTI Act – 'unreasonable diversion of resources').
- Very frequent requests (including repeated requests) for agreement to processing extensions due to shortages of staff, health issues and/or the volume of records to be assessed. Less commonly – but still frequently - I have been advised of processing extensions, rather than asked for agreement.

With two early exceptions (where UTAS then unilaterally reworded the scope of my application anyway), I have, from memory, agreed to all requests. In part this has been because it is not possible to foresee the extent of a delays until their end is reached and/or because I have not wished to use the main alternative available (of seeking review by the Ombudsman for decisions 'out of time').

On occasions, my applications have (ultimately) involved identification of a large number of documents for assessment and in that circumstance it has seemed only reasonable to renegotiate scope (even after acceptance by respondents), and/or agree that documents can be considered in stages and/or agree to extensions.

My view overall, however, is that it is easy for respondents to make excuses for delays. The scope of applications should generally be able to be negotiated within the legislated timeframe.

Respondents would benefit from well ordered files, early involvement of line areas in identifying records and a culture favouring release of records rather than withholding of records (exempting records is time consuming).



### **Ordering of released records**

An issue I have faced a number of times is the release of records in poor order and/or with inadequate cross referencing to schedules of documents.

On several occasions I have reordered records chronologically, revealing major gaps.

**I suggest that respondents generally order records for release chronologically and ensure full cross-referencing with document schedules. This should also help processing officers to identify, and address, gaps themselves.**

### **Use of exemption**

I have frequently encountered what seems, and what has proved to be when the Ombudsman or his office have been involved in UTAS cases, excessive use of exemptions under the RTI Act.

This has chiefly involved exemption of complete records (often poorly described in document schedules) and redaction (exemption) of large and complete sections of text in records, including their headings.

**Again, I suggest that the principle to release as much rather than as little as possible needs to be reinforced. I also suggest that the obligation of respondents to (1) ensure that the subject of exempted documents or redacted sections of documents is clear and (2) release purely factual material should be reinforced.** There should be little reason for complete exemption of records.

### **Miscellaneous**

Based on my experience (often frustrating), I make the following suggestions:

- **Processes and charging mechanisms should be standardised as much as possible across institutions covered by the RTI Act.**
- **Institutions should be required to publish all documents they release under RTI, not relating to individual cases, in their disclosure logs unless there is very good reason not to, and to keep those logs up to date.**
- **Coordination between institutions – particularly Government agencies - should be strengthened, when RTI applications cross boundaries, and occur as early as possible. Poor coordination (including different decision dates), in one instance, meant that I did not have an opportunity to seek review relating to what was, on close inspection, glaring gaps in documentation. However, this coordination should be discussed with the applicant, particularly when it is determined to involve an institution to which the applicant did not make an application. I am happy to elaborate on my reason for this last point.**
- **While I am sure much is already being done in this area, RTI processing officers would benefit from clear guidance and solid training.**

### **Conclusion**

I am grateful for the opportunity to provide my views on the RTI system in Tasmania. As I have indicated throughout this submission, I would be happy to elaborate on any of my points and provide additional material if desirable.

## Attachment A: RTI applications and progress as at 28 April 2025

Short title of application ( <b>appl</b> )/remade decision *	Department/ institution to which appl submitted	Date of appl	Decision received#	Internal review request	Decision received	External review request	Decision	Comments +
1 Overseas Trips	UTAS 1	21//3/22	(1) 14/4/22 (2) 3/5/22 appl refused	2/6/22	Refused 27/6/22	21/7/22		1. Internal review on decision of 14/4/22 refused as 'out of time'. 2. Ombudsman's office considered as complaint under <i>Ombudsman Act 1978</i> together with appl 2 and 5, and in conjunction with processing of appl 7.
1a Refreshed appl re Overseas Trips	UTAS 2	6/9/24	8/11/24					Refreshed appl made on advice from Ombudsman's office. See comment 2 on appl 1.
2 Council Minutes	UTAS 3	24/3/22	27/5/22	27/6/22	18/7/22	11/8/22	2/6/23	Priority granted. UTAS rewrote appl and provided only 22 pages of Minutes (see below). UTAS reissued the original 22 pages with some redactions removed 19/6/22.
2a UTAS remade decision re Council Minutes			16/1/23	14/2/23	17/3/22	18/4/23		Remade decision followed intervention by the Ombudsman's office. UTAS released 513 pages of Minutes on 16/1/23. Ext review related to redactions. Discontinued 22/4/24.
3 Consultation	UTAS 4	12/4/22	3/5/22 appl refused					See comment 2 on appl 1,
3a Refreshed appl re Consultation	UTAS 5	6/9/24	21/10/24 28/11/24					Refreshed appl made on advice from Ombudsman's office. See comment 2 on appl 1.

## Attachment A: RTI applications and progress as at 28 April 2025

Short title of application ( <del>appl</del> )/remade decision *	Department/ institution to which appl submitted	Date of appl	Decision received#	Internal review request	Decision received	External review request	Decision	Comments +
4 Consultation and city marketing report	HCC 1	14/4/22	6/5/22					Unresponsive on city marketing report. Ombudsman's office intervened informally.
4a HCC remade decision re marketing report			16/9/22			14/10/22		Ext review sought under s45 of RTI Act as decision made by principal officer. Discontinued 9/4/24
5 Urbis report	UTAS 6	20/4/22	3/5/22 appl refused					See comment 2 on appl 1.
6 DPAC – engagement in UTAS matters	DPAC 1	4/5/22	25/8/22 rec 29/8/22	27/9/22	6/3/23	3/4/23		Discontinued 23/4/24
6b shared by DPAC	Education 1		4/7/22	31/7/22	13/9/22	11/10/22	25/11/24	DPAC provided my request to the Departments of Education and State Growth as it had relevance to them.
6c shared by DPAC	State Growth 2		29/7/22					“
7 Evidence for three refusals (appl 1,3 and 5)	UTAS 7	5/5/22	16/5/22	14/6/22	27/6/22	21/7/22	16/7/24	Priority granted.

### Attachment A: RTI applications and progress as at 28 April 2025

Short title of application ( <del>appl</del> )/remade decision *	Department/ institution to which appl submitted	Date of appl	Decision received#	Internal review request	Decision received	External review request	Decision	Comments +
7a UTAS remade decision re Evidence for three refusals								Unsatisfactory - rolled into external review process.
8 VC selection	UTAS 8	11/8/22	17/10/22	14/11/22	13/12/22			Review decision unresponsive but decided not to seek external review.
9 STEM and Southern Future Business Cases	UTAS 9	16/8/22	20/9/22	18/10/22	10/11/22	8/12/22	30/6/23	Priority granted. Under persuasion from the Ombudsman's office, UTAS published STEM Business Case and redacted version of Southern Future Business Case on 16 January 202, although contrary to UTAS' claims that this was complete it was heavily redacted and missing key appendices.
10 Yes campaign	UTAS 10	27/10/22	25/11/22					
11 UTAS borrowings	Treasury 1	22/11/22	15/3/23	14/4/23	11/8/23			Int review seemed a reasonably full response, although some exemptions could have been challenged.
12 Deloitte research	UTAS 11	26/1/23	17/3/23	17/4/23	15/5/23	29/5/23	23/10/23	Priority granted.

### Attachment A: RTI applications and progress as at 28 April 2025

Short title of application ( <del>appl</del> )/remade decision *	Department/ institution to which appl submitted	Date of appl	Decision received#	Internal review request	Decision received	External review request	Decision	Comments +
12a UTAS remade decision re Deloitte research			19/12/23					Additional papers covered by terms of original request provided.
13 TAO re UTAS	TAO 1	20/4/23						TAO replied 4/5/23 - not covered by RTI Act
14 UTAS borrowings 2	Treasury 2	18/8/23	10/11/23	10/12/23	13/2/24			My review appl was deemed 'out of time', but request to still consider accepted.
15 Conflict of interest/Green Bond	UTAS 12	23/8/23	27/11/23					Unsatisfactory but not pursued
16 Moody's rating	UTAS 13	18/10/23	6/11/23					
17 Sandy Bay population growth	HCC 2	21/11/23	28/5/23					Unsatisfactory but not pursued
18 'Gap' Council Minutes	UTAS 14	25/1/24	26/2/24	26/3/24	29/4/24	23/5/24		On foot.

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Short title of application ( <del>appl</del> )/remade decision *	Department/ institution to which appl submitted	Date of appl	Decision received#	Internal review request	Decision received	External review request	Decision	Comments +
19 Green Bond	UTAS 15	29/7/24	5/11/24					Additional request for references to me dropped following negotiation
20 UTAS - Govt/ALP communications, STEM	UTAS 16	23/9/24	6/12/24	7/1/25	7/2/25	5/3/25		On foot.
21 Premier re UTAS Bill 2024 and STEM	DPAC 2	4/12/24						Appl discontinued on advice from DPAC that it would not provide anything more than the DPAC response (appl 22). I now doubt this.
22 DPAC re UTAS Bill 2024 and STEM	DPAC 3	4/12/24				2/4/25		Appl only accepted on 5/2/25. DPAC undertook to provide response by 28/2/25. External review sought under s46(1) of RTI Act
23 Min Palmer re UTAS Bill 2024 and STEM	Education 2	4/12/24	14/1/25					Some direct follow up with Minister Palmer regarding use of WhatsApp etc
24 Education re UTAS Bill 2024 and STEM	Education 3	4/12/24	Part 1 - 21/2/25					Decision only related to first batch of documents. Awaiting second decision.
25 Min Ogilvie re UTAS Bill 2024 and STEM	State Growth 2	4/12/24	Part - 23/3/25					Partial decision only; still awaiting final response.

## Attachment A: RTI applications and progress as at 28 April 2025

Short title of application ( <del>appl</del> )/remade decision *	Department/ institution to which appl submitted	Date of appl	Decision received#	Internal review request	Decision received	External review request	Decision	Comments +
26 Treasury re UTAS Bill	Treasury 3	4/12/24	3/2/25					
27 ALP/Lib communications; STEM; UTAS Bill	UTAS 17	20/12/24	4/4/25					I will seek internal review.

\* Fuller description, or copies of, applications available upon request.

# Date decision received is the date it was emailed to me; not the date it was signed (frequently several days earlier).

+ Comments have been kept to a minimum. Fuller detail on issues encountered available upon request. I also note that there is extensive detail on a number of my RTI dealings available in my blog posts at: <https://theutaspapers.com/>