



Company Policy

Freedom of Information

July 2022

Freedom of Information Requests (FOI)

Any written request for official or business information received by GDI Hub should, theoretically, be treated as a FOI request.

However, it is not intended that the Freedom of Information Act should put unnecessary bureaucratic procedures in the way of disclosing requested information. FOI does not change the way in which simple requests for information are handled within the operational work area.

Operational staff are not required to answer FOI requests. However, all staff are expected to know how to recognise a potential or actual FOI request and know to refer it to GDI Hub's senior management team. An FOI request could form part of a letter of complaint or other form of correspondence.

Anything done as normal working business such as answering standard queries, requests for GDI Hub publications or any other issue which operational staff have always responded to as a matter of course are not dealt with as FOI. These should continue to be dealt with as business as usual.

FOI requests are those that ask for more complex or potentially sensitive requests for information. They will include requests where the information is not already in the public domain e.g. information not already published by GDI Hub or on the GDI Hub's web site or where there is uncertainty as to whether GDI Hub can or should release the information.

FOI requests have to be in writing. This includes email. Requesters do not have to say why they want the information or prove who they are. The requester does not have to be British or resident in the UK.

Although the Act stipulates that requests must be in written format, the Act also obliges public authorities to assist even those who *propose* to make a request but have not yet done so. This consequently means that an oral request for information cannot be ignored; staff should advise the applicant of the need to make their application in writing.

All FOI requests are dealt with by GDI Hub's senior management team. The team deals with all requests for information that go beyond the day-to-day correspondence that are normally dealt with.

GDI Hub will handle any FOI request within 20 working days, apart from certain circumstances. Information requested must be provided unless it is subject to exceptions (24 are described in the Freedom of Information Act).

Customers asking about accessing information under FOI should use the airtable form to make their request

<https://airtable.com/shrzDS8XKA3JwsL4o>

Alternatively, they can write to:

GDI Hub, UCL Here East, 8-9 East Bay Lane, Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, London, E15 2GW

Where a request or a potential FOI request has already been received in the office, staff should complete the airtable form: <https://airtable.com/shrzDS8XKA3JwsL4o> to refer it immediately to their line manager who will decide whether it should be dealt with as an FOI or as part of business as usual practices.