Statement of Affairs
University of Western Sydney (UWS), March 2009

A statement issued in accordance with sections 14 and 15 of the NSW Freedom of Information Act 1989.

As a public institution in NSW, UWS is required to publish a Statement of Affairs as part of its FOI operations. This statement contains extracts, mostly from existing publications, that constitute a Statement of Affairs that is compliant with the directives given in the Act and the NSW FOI Manual.

Section 15 (1) requires that:

An agency shall cause copies of:
(a) its most recent statement of affairs ...to be made available for inspection and purchase by members of the public.

and

Section 14, (2) requires that:

A statement of the affairs of an agency shall contain:
(a) a description of the structure and functions of the agency, (see p.3) and
(b) a description of the ways in which the functions (including, in particular, the decision-making functions) of the agency affect members of the public (see p.5), and
(c) a description of any arrangements that exist to enable members of the public to participate in the formulation of the agency’s policy and the exercise of the agency’s functions (see p. 7), and
(d) a description of the various kinds of documents that are usually held by the agency (see p. 9), including:
   (i) a description of the various kinds of documents that are available for inspection at the agency (whether as part of a public register or otherwise) in accordance with the provisions of a legislative instrument other than this Act, whether or not inspection of any such document is subject to a fee or charge, and
   (ii) a description of the various kinds of documents that are available for purchase from the agency, and
   (iii) a description of the various kinds of documents that are available from the agency free of charge, and
(e) a description of the arrangements that exist to enable a member of the public to obtain access to the agency’s documents and to seek amendment of the agency’s records concerning his or her personal affairs (see p. 10), and
(f) a description of the procedures of the agency in relation to the giving of access to the agency’s documents and to the amendment of the agency’s records concerning the personal affairs of a member of the public (see p. 10), including:
   (i) the designation of the officer or officers to whom inquiries should be made, and
   (ii) the address or addresses at which applications under this Act should be lodged.
Principal published sources

The following web pages provide quick access to the core criteria of this statement:

   Keywords: governance strategic directions, research, learning, teaching, colleges, schools.
   campuses structure, community engagement,

   Keywords: mission, values, planning, teaching and learning, research, regional and community engagement.

   Keywords: administration, organisation, division. organisation chart.

   Keywords: board of trustees, academic senate, governance structure, annual report.

   Keywords: college, school.
1. **The University’s structure and function**

Act ref. s.14(2)(a)“a description of the structure and functions of the agency”.

The University of Western Sydney (UWS) commenced operation on 1 January 1989 and is a statutory body established by the University of Western Sydney Act 1989.


**Structure**

The University’s *structure* is outlined in two primary documents:

1. The governance structure, which outlines the relationships between the basic organisational units of the University. It can be accessed via: [http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws/governance](http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws/governance) and
2. The organisation chart, which give more detail on the structure of the organisational units reporting to the Vice Chancellor. It can be accessed via: [http://www.uws.edu.au/campuses_structure/cas/structure](http://www.uws.edu.au/campuses_structure/cas/structure)

**Function**

The object of the University is expressed concisely in the UWS Act:

“The object of the University is the promotion, within the limits of the University’s resources, of scholarship, research, free inquiry, the interaction of research and teaching, and academic excellence.” [s.8(1), UWS Act 1989]

The principal *functions* of the University in the achievement of this object are:

(2) The University has the following principal functions for the promotion of its object:

(a) the provision of facilities for education and research of university standard, having particular regard to the needs and aspirations of residents of Greater Western Sydney,

(b) the encouragement of the dissemination, advancement, development and application of knowledge informed by free inquiry,

(c) the provision of courses of study or instruction across a range of fields, and the carrying out of research, to meet the needs of the community, beginning in Greater Western Sydney,

(d) the participation in public discourse,

(e) the conferring of degrees, including those of Bachelor, Master and Doctor, and the awarding of diplomas, certificates and other awards,

(f) the provision of teaching and learning that engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry,

(g) the development of governance, procedural rules, admission policies, financial arrangements and quality assurance processes that are underpinned by the values and goals referred to in the functions set out in this subsection, and that are sufficient to ensure the integrity of the University’s academic programs.

(3) The University has other functions as follows:

(a) the University may exercise commercial functions comprising the commercial exploitation or development, for the University’s benefit, of any facility, resource or property of the University or in which the University has a right or interest (including, for example, study, research, knowledge and intellectual property and the practical application of study, research, knowledge and intellectual property), whether alone or with others, with particular regard to the need to contribute to the development of Greater Western Sydney,

(b) the University may develop and provide cultural, sporting, professional, technical and vocational services to the community, with particular regard to the need to contribute to the social, economic and intellectual life of Greater Western Sydney,
(c) the University has such general and ancillary functions as may be necessary or convenient for enabling or assisting the University to promote the object and interests of the University, or as may complement or be incidental to the promotion of the object and interests of the University,
(d) the University has such other functions as are conferred or imposed on it by or under this or any other Act.” [s.8(2) and (3), UWS Act 1989]

The University’s mission is:
“to be a University of international standing and outlook, achieving excellence through scholarship, teaching, learning, research and service to its regional, national and international communities, beginning with the people of Greater Western Sydney.”

UWS aims to bring knowledge to life for its students through relevant and high-quality educational programs and outcomes, and for the people of Sydney’s Greater West through applied research excellence, national and international alliances and exemplary engagement with the community and the Region.

Administrative units
The structure and functions of the University's major administrative units are attached at: http://www.uws.edu.au/campuses_structure/cas/structure

Academic units
The structure and functions of the University’s major academic units (colleges, schools and research centres) are attached at: http://www.uws.edu.au/about/colleges_schools
2. **How the functions of the University affect members of the public**

Act ref. s.14(2)(b) “a description of the ways in which the functions (including, in particular, the decision-making functions) of the agency affect members of the public”

**Primary effects of the University**
The University’s mission revolves around three core activities:

- Learning – the provision of relevant, quality and flexible learning experiences/programs for students
- Research – the provision of internationally recognised research programs and training
- Regional and Community Engagement – the provision of leadership and scholarship in community engagement.

These three core activities form the principal way that the University *affects members of the public*.

These programs collectively provide education and employment to around 38,000 members of the University; some 35,000 students and 3,000 staff. See the Pocket Profile linked to [http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws](http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws) for the most recent data on the populations of the University.

**Learning**
Learning and teaching are the cornerstones of the University’s educational role, and an overview of these functions is provided at: [http://www.uws.edu.au/learning_teaching/learning_and_teaching](http://www.uws.edu.au/learning_teaching/learning_and_teaching)

In particular, the Teaching and Learning Plan (linked to the above page) provides the current set of strategic goals in place for UWS.

**Research**
Research programs and partnerships provide opportunities for research degree students, and a specific focus for various research centres and groups. See [http://www.uws.edu.au/research](http://www.uws.edu.au/research) for details on each of these avenues of research activity.

**Regional and Community Engagement**
Through the ‘Engage with Us’ webpage directly linked to the UWS Home page, [http://www.uws.edu.au](http://www.uws.edu.au):

- the *Greater Western Sydney community* in general may engage with UWS in a variety of ways via: [http://www.uws.edu.au/community/in_the_community](http://www.uws.edu.au/community/in_the_community).
- *School communities* in the Greater Western Sydney region have a substantial opportunity to engage with the University, as outlined at: [http://www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/15166/Schools_Strategic_Plan.pdf](http://www.uws.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/15166/Schools_Strategic_Plan.pdf).
- Events open to *the public* are notified on a fortnightly basis at: [http://pubapps.uws.edu.au/events_diary/](http://pubapps.uws.edu.au/events_diary/)
- *University alumni* can keep in touch with the University as outlined at [http://www.uws.edu.au/alumni](http://www.uws.edu.au/alumni)

The University hosts the Whitlam Institute and its program of projects and activities which include public participation are available at: [http://www.whitlam.org/whitlam/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57&Itemid=81](http://www.whitlam.org/whitlam/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57&Itemid=81).

The various Schools of the University have range of community engagement opportunities, some of which are small and/or episodic. The School of Medicine has undertaken a significant project in order to engage substantial community participation. Details are accessible at: [http://www.uws.edu.au/medicine/som/community_participation](http://www.uws.edu.au/medicine/som/community_participation).
Decision-making functions
The decision-making functions of the University are spread across a number of levels and an overview of the University’s decision-making structure is given at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws/governance

The University’s governance structure is linked to this page and most directly outlines the various office bearers, units and divisions that manage the respective decision-making functions.

The Board of Trustees carries the highest level of decision-making in the University and has external members appointed by the Board and by the NSW Minister for Education and Training. Elected members are drawn from the University’s staff and enrolled students. For details on the structure and operation of the Board of Trustees, see:

The Academic Senate is responsible for the academic management of the University. For details on the structure and operation of the Academic Senate, see:
http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws/governance/academic_senate

The management of the University’s administration has a number of levels and divisions and is broadly outlined at: http://www.uws.edu.au/campuses_structure/cas/structure

In the majority of cases, the decision-making functions at each level of the University are performed by delegated or elected University staff and students, and a small number of senior representatives external to the University.
3. **How the public can participate in the formulation of the University's policy and function.**

Act ref. s.14(2)(c) “a description of any arrangements that exist to enable members of the public to participate in the formulation of the agency’s policy and the exercise of the agency’s function”

Members of the public are able to engage with the University as a public institution in a community setting by visiting the public areas of its campuses and attending public events on campus. The majority of the University’s formal activities provide participation for the public as members of the University community, ie as students or staff of the University.

**University community**

As members of the University community, students and staff are able to influence policy development and provide input into the University’s operation and management of its core business.

The vast majority of policy and function decisions are made by the formal committees of the University and senior management. See Section 1 for details of the structure of decision-making within the University. The capacity for participation in management decision-making by the public in general is limited; and quite variable for regular members of the University community under the terms of each respective decision-making unit.

**Policy**

All staff and enrolled students have the opportunity to provide feedback on new policies as they are being drafted. See [http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00121#min5](http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00121#min5) for the details of this provision.

**Student Organisation**

The University has established a new student organisation scheduled for operation from April 2009, the details of which will be linked to: [http://www.uws.edu.au/new_student_organisation/new_student_organisation](http://www.uws.edu.au/new_student_organisation/new_student_organisation)

UWS students are encouraged to participate in the activities of this organisation on a voluntary basis.

**Positions on Key Committees**

The two principal governing bodies of the University include elected and appointed members. These members are electable as follows:

**Board of Trustees**


The Board has significant membership from the public. Only three of the 18 members are elected staff. The others include:

- six Ministerially-appointed external members,
- four Board-appointed external members
- two elected currently enrolled students, and
- one elected graduate.

**Academic Senate**


Sixteen of the 44 members are elected, including two students. In addition, two of the 25 official members are students.

**College External Advisory Committees**

College External Advisory Committees provide an opportunity for selected members of the public to have a role in influencing the development of courses. The policy governing their operation is located at: [http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00141](http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00141)
The public participation opportunity is embedded in the “[facilitation of] networking with
business, industry and community figures to leverage consultancy ventures, foster support for
the University, attract donations for scholarships, provide opportunities for research
collaborations, and provide vocational experience for student placements.” (cl. 5)

Research
The research activities of the University often involve partnerships of various forms, including
both public and private partnerships. The broadest opportunities for the public to become
involved in such partnerships are outlined at:
http://www.uws.edu.au/research/work_with_us

Opportunities also exist for individual members of the public to participate in committee
representation. For example, the Human Research Ethics Committee requires one laywoman
and one layman on its committee:
4. **The kinds of documents held by the University.**

Act ref. s.14(2)(d) “a description of the various kinds of documents that are usually held by the agency, including:

(i) a description of the various kinds of documents that are available for inspection at the agency (whether as part of a public register or otherwise) in accordance with the provisions of a legislative instrument other than this Act, whether or not inspection of any such document is subject to a fee or charge, and

(ii) a description of the various kinds of documents that are available for purchase from the agency, and

(iii) a description of the various kinds of documents that are available from the agency free of charge”

The University holds a very wide range of document types that are accessible by the public. The following table covers the major document types that are available to the public in some form. Note: the Cost category includes costs associated with FOI applications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Doc. Type</th>
<th>Description of documents available to the public</th>
<th>Policy Ref.</th>
<th>Cost category¹</th>
<th>Custodial Unit</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Archives</td>
<td>The University Archives holds a range of records from the University and its predecessors, private individuals and organisations. State Archives are identified in Disposal Authorities issued by the State Records Authority of NSW.</td>
<td>Records Management Policy <a href="http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00128">http://policies.uws.edu.au/view.current.php?id=00128</a></td>
<td>2. users may be charged for copying.</td>
<td>Records &amp; Archives Management Services (RAMS)</td>
<td>Access to records held in the University Archives collection is generally covered by the Access Directions lodged with the State Records Authority of NSW (private papers excluded). Access for most records in the Archives is restricted for 30 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>All policies are accessible via <a href="http://policies.uws.edu.au/">http://policies.uws.edu.au/</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Policy &amp; Governance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Records</td>
<td>Academic records are kept in the Callista system (student data and results) and the TRIM system (documents). Range of policies relating to student processes/activities. See <a href="http://policies.uws.edu.au/">http://policies.uws.edu.au/</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>1. and 3. Own records only are free to students.</td>
<td>Callista – Office of the Academic Registrar TRIM – Records &amp; Archives Management Services (RAMS)</td>
<td>Access to records is governed by the Access Directions lodged with the State Records Authority of NSW or by other legal authority.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Cost categories
Documents not directly available may incur an FOI application fee.
Therefore, cost categories for all records are:
1. directly available and free,
2. indirectly available, but subject to FOI application fee + any other applicable FOI fees,
3. not available because of privacy and/or other forms of exemption under FOI Act.
5. **How the public can access the University’s documents and amend documents containing their own personal affairs**

Act ref. s.14(2)(e) “a description of the arrangements that exist to enable a member of the public to obtain access to the agency’s documents and to seek amendment of the agency’s records concerning his or her personal affairs”

and

Act ref. s.14(2)(f) “a description of the procedures of the agency in relation to the giving of access to the agency’s documents and to the amendment of the agency’s records concerning the personal affairs of a member of the public, including:
(i) the designation of the officer or officers to whom inquiries should be made, and
(ii) the address or addresses at which applications under this Act should be lodged.”

**Public Access to Documents**
Members of the public may request ‘directly available’ documents from the respective custodial units of the University. If the custodial unit is not known, or if any other advice is sought, the public may contact the FOI Officer for advice on relevant contacts and procedures (see below). For example, a staff member may seek documents related to his or her employment and be directed to the Office of Human Resources. A student may seek records of e-mail correspondence with the University and be directed to the relevant section of the Office of the Academic Registrar.

**Public Access to Amendment of Records of Personal Affairs**
A member of the public may only make amendments to records held by the University that constitute his or her personal affairs. The arrangements for doing this are outlined at [http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws/governance/policy_and_governance/freedom_of_information](http://www.uws.edu.au/about_uws/uws/governance/policy_and_governance/freedom_of_information)

**FOI Officer contact details:**

- **postal address:**
  - The FOI Officer
  - PO Box 1000
  - St Marys NSW 1790

- **e-mail**
  - foi@uws.edu.au

- **phone**
  - (02) 9678 7832

**UWS FOI homepage**