

Principal Consultant, Freedom of Information and Information Disclosure

Business and Customer Services

Position number	00044547
Agreement	Public Sector CSA Agreement 2022 or as replaced
Classification	Level 7
Reports to	Manager, Corporate Information Services (Level 8)
Direct reports	Senior Information Access Officer (Level 5)

Context

Education Business Services (EBS) is the key provider of professional business services and support for Western Australian public schools, statutory boards and divisions of the Department. These highly valued services are delivered through the areas of finance, information and communication technologies (ICT), and infrastructure. We continually strive to enhance the capability and responsiveness of our staff, systems and processes across the organisation to deliver high quality education.

The Business and Customer Services (BCS) directorate supports the EBS objectives and outcomes of its customers by providing value for money corporate services through skilled and motivated people. The BCS aims to deliver services within an environment of standardised systems and processes. The services are delivered through the areas of payroll, finance and information management.

The Corporate Information Services branch works to improve the quality, accessibility, reliability and security of information to support the Education system. It is responsible for the provision of records management, system administration, Freedom of Information (FOI) and the legal disclosure of information, as well as Library and switchboard services.

We are committed to contemporary work practices and adhere to the following service delivery principles:

Responsive: We respond to and reflect the needs of our customers.

Flexible: We are flexible and understand that our customers are not all the same.

Transparent: We are clear and open about our services, processes and decision making.

Accountable: We hold ourselves to high standards and deliver on our commitments.

Collaborative: We work in partnership with our customers.

Visit education.wa.edu.au to find out more information about the Department of Education.



Key responsibilities

Strategic Management

- Lead and manage in issues as they arise from FOI and information access and disclosure activities that impact on government and provide solutions for consideration by the Department.
- Develop a culture of continuous improvement to maximise best practice for FOI and information access and disclosure across the Department, through example and education.
- Support and audit business practices in accordance with the requirement of law and policy.
- Provide consultancy service to the Department, schools and associate professional bodies on FOI and information access and disclosure processes.
- Proactively manage corporate knowledge associated with information access and disclosure.

Management and Coordination

- Manage and control the activities of the Information Access and Release Team providing leadership, training and guidance to staff to ensure a high- quality customer experience that aligns with the Departments values and community expectations.
- Ensure information access and disclosure services are highly accessible and responsive to customer needs.
- Scope and escalate notable and significant public information access issues.
- Negotiate and conciliate information access outcomes in line with the Department and community interests.
- Manage the investigation of information release complaints and oversee and provide advice to facilitate the resolution of complex/contentious disputes.
- Manage, develop, implement and maintain quality assurance processes that contribute to the accuracy, legality and integrity of information to clients.
- Undertake research and evaluate documents and interprets and applies legislation and policy in making decisions on the release of information in relation to FOI and legal information disclosure requests.
- Develop and implement corporate policies, processes, procedures, standards and protocols relating to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992* and information access and disclosure.
- Manage with all internal review matters received from applicants and external review matters received from the Office of the Information Commissioner on behalf of the Department.
- Prepare Contentious Issues Briefing Notes, Estimates Committee Briefing Notes and responses to Parliamentary Questions on FOI and legal information disclosure matters as required.
- Monitor and manage staff leave entitlements to ensure accrued leave is cleared within a reasonable timeframe and in accordance with relevant awards, agreements and Departmental policy.
- Manage staff performance in accordance with the Public Sector Performance Management Standard and Departmental policy.

Communication and Customer Focus

- Build and maintain effective relationships with key stakeholders internal and external to the Department.
- Represent the Department as required, on committees and working parties in relation to information access and disclosure.
- Develop and deliver in-house training courses on FOI and information access and disclosure for the Department.
- Engage and collaborate with Western Australian Government agencies to achieve best practice for FOI and information access and disclosure policies and procedures.

- Liaise and negotiate with internal and external stakeholders related to FOI, and consult third parties in relation to personal and commercial information and legal information disclosure matters.

Branch Support

- Understand and comply with information security policies and procedures to ensure information holdings/systems are kept confidential and utilised accurately and reliably.
- Contribute to a work environment that is safe, fosters equity and diversity, enables the achievement of personal and EBS goals and facilitates accomplishments of designated roles and deliverables.

Selection criteria

1. Demonstrated ability to interpret and apply legislation relating to information access and sharing, including Freedom of Information.
2. Highly developed skills of analysis, demonstrating sound judgement when analysing information from a range of sources and making recommendations.
3. Highly developed written and verbal communication skills and experience in preparing high-level correspondence for a wide range of stakeholders at all levels.
4. Highly developed interpersonal and negotiation skills, with experience liaising with a variety of clients, building, and maintaining relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
5. Demonstrated ability to build an effective team environment, facilitating cooperation and partnerships by working collaboratively, including the ability to mentor and support team members.

Eligibility and training requirements

Employees will be required to:

- consent to a Nationally Coordinated Criminal History Check and obtain a current Screening Clearance Number issued by the Department of Education's Screening Unit prior to commencement of employment
- obtain or hold a current Working with Children Check
- complete the Department's induction program within 3 months of commencement
- complete any training specific to this role required by Departmental policy
- complete the Department's training in Accountable and Ethical Decision-Making within 6 months of appointment and every 3 years thereafter
- complete the Department's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness online course within 3 months of commencement.

Certification

The details contained in this document are an accurate statement of the responsibilities and other requirements of the position.

ENDORSED

Date 4 July 2024
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