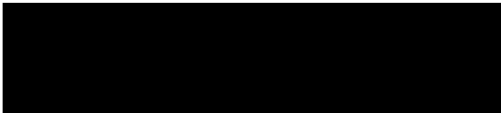




25 August 2022



**OFFICIAL INFORMATION REQUEST FOR ALL RECORDS IN THE POSSESSION, CUSTODY OR CONTROL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO THAT SCIENTIFICALLY PROVES THAT SARS-COV-2 VIRUS CAUSES COVID-19**

I refer to your official information request dated 4 August 2022 for “all records in the possession, custody or control of the University of Otago that scientifically proves SARS-COV-2 virus causes COVID-19 disease.”

We have liaised with the Department of Microbiology and Immunology in respect of your request and confirm that Professor Quiñones-Mateu’s paper “Characterization of the First SARS-CoV-2 Isolates from Aotearoa New Zealand as Part of a Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic” scientifically proves that SARS-COV-2 virus causes COVID-19 disease. As stated in our response to your previous Official Information Act request dated 4 August 2022, this study was published using validated and internationally accepted processes. The Department does not agree that this paper is “not scientific” simply because it does not have a hypothesis.

We note that the information you have requested is similar to information you have previously requested from the University, namely:

- On 8 September 2020 you requested “all records in the possession, custody or control of the University of Otago describing the isolation of a SARS-COV-2 virus, directly from a sample taken from a diseased patient, where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material (i.e. monkey kidney cells aka vero cells; lung cells from a lung cancer patient).”
- On 5 March 2021, you requested “all studies and/or reports in the possession, custody or control of The University of Otago describing the purification of SARS-COV-2.”
- On 14 September 2021, you requested “all studies and/or reports in the possession, custody or control of University of Otago describing the purification of any “COVID-19 virus” (aka “SARS-COV-2”, including any alleged “variants” i.e. “B.1.1.7”, “B.1.351”, “P.1”) (for example: via filtration, ultracentrifugation and chromatography), directly from a sample taken from a diseased human where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material (i.e. monkey kidney cells aka Vero cells; fetal bovine serum).”
- On 15 December 2021, you requested “all records of the SARS-COV-2 cell culture experiment” in relation to the University’s claim that it had isolated SARS-COV-2 in 2020.

- On 21 January 2022, you requested “all records in the possession, custody or control of the University of Otago that contain additional details (listed below) of the so-called "virus isolation" and "whole genome sequencing" procedures/methodologies for SARS-COV-2 as Professor Miguel E. Quinones-Mateu claimed to have isolated and sequenced SARS-COV-2.”
- On 28 February 2022, you requested additional information in relation to your request regarding “the Cell Culture and Genetic Sequencing Experiments.”
- On 31 March 2022, you made twelve separate requests for “records based on the 'Characterization of the First SARS-CoV-2 Isolates from Aotearoa New Zealand as Part of a Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic' (10.3390/v14020366).”
- On 4 May 2022, you requested records from the paper 'Characterization of the First SARS-CoV-2 Isolates from Aotearoa New Zealand as Part of a Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic' (10.3390/v14020366) in relation to the whole-genome SARS-COV-2 sequences submitted to GISAID.
- Between 3 May 2022 – 5 May 2022, seven other requests were made by requesters on your behalf in relation to information pertaining to the paper 'Characterization of the First SARS-CoV-2 Isolates from Aotearoa New Zealand as Part of a Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic' (10.3390/v14020366).
- On 8 July 2022 you requested “all records in the possession, custody or control of the University of Otago that scientifically proves the existence of SARS-COV-2 virus.”

We have already provided information to you in response to these requests on the subject of SARS-COV-2 virus, including the following:

- On 8 September 2020, you requested information in relation to the isolation of SARS-COV-2 virus. We responded on 6 October 2020 with a detailed letter from Professor Miguel Quiñones-Mateu explaining how SARS-COV-2 is detected and isolated.
- In response to your request dated 21 January 2022, we provided a copy of Professor Miguel Quiñones-Mateu's paper 'Characterization of the First SARS-CoV-2 Isolates from Aotearoa New Zealand as Part of a Rapid Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.'

Accordingly, we reject your request under s 18(h) on the basis that:

- We have provided all relevant information and you continuing to ask us for the same or similar information in relation to SARS-Cov-2 and Covid-19 means your request is frivolous or vexatious. In light of the history and context to this request, which I have outlined above, my view is that your approach has gone beyond what is reasonable and become excessive and disproportionate.
- I note, the Ombudsman's guidance provides that a request is more likely to be considered frivolous or vexatious if it is “set against a background of long and complex correspondence and requests, that have collectively taken a lot of time and resources to address, and had a significant impact on staff and the agency's other operations.” This matter qualifies as such, with our office and the Department of Microbiology and Immunology having spent significant resources responding to numerous requests on this subject.
- Your repeated requests are causing unreasonable distress to staff, as the burden of dealing with your requests necessarily falls to Professor Quiñones-Mateu, who has already spent a significant amount of time responding to previous requests.

We also reject your request under s 18(g)(ii) on the basis that it is necessary to maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of our employees from improper pressure or harassment. We acknowledge that our academic staff have an obligation to provide official information when requested by members of the public. In this instance staff have invested significant time and effort to respond to your numerous requests. However, in our view, the number of requests made and the manner in which you have previously communicated with our staff, amounts to improper pressure or harassment.

You have also requested that we provide sufficient information about relevant records that are already publicly available, so that you may identify and access each one with certainty (i.e. title, author(s), date, journal, where the public may access it, and a URL where possible). We have decided to reject this aspect of your request under s 18(d) on the basis that this information is publicly available. The University is under no obligation to collate such information on your behalf.

In light of the above, the University considers it appropriate to close its file on this matter and that it would not expect to enter into further correspondence with you in relation to this subject, or release further documents to you.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kelsey Kennard', with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kelsey Kennard

Official Information and Compliance Coordinator  
Office of the Registrar



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## OIA: SARS-COV-2 Proof of Causation

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Thu, Aug 25, 2022 at 11:28 AM

To: UoO - Official Information Act <oia@otago.ac.nz>

Greetings University of Otago,

According to the official information act, I am lodging a complaint for the response that you provided.

- You failed to provide any records that scientifically proves SARS-COV-2 causes COVID-19 using the scientific method.
- Proof of causation is not the same request as proof of existence or proof of isolation therefore your 18(h) is invalid
- I am not sending my request directly to any particular staff member, I only make references to help the University Otago to locate such records.
- The records that I request are not available in the public domain so an 18(d) is invalid

### **Remedy**

1) Provide the records that satisfy my request for scientifically proving SARS-COV-2 causes COVID-19 using the scientific method

OR

- 2) Provide a proper response rejecting based on 18(e) that these records do not exist
- 3) Issue an apology for claiming an 18(h)
- 4) Issue an apology for accusing me of a criminal act (harassment)

If you are unwilling to apologize for your invalid claims of harassment, I will be left with no other option but file a defamation lawsuit against the University of Otago for claiming that I am harassing one of its staff.

Kind Regard

[Quoted text hidden]

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