



University of East Anglia

Information Services Directorate

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[REDACTED]

23 March 2016

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI_16-073)

We have now considered your request of 14 March 2016 for the following information:

- 1. Do you have data protection policies and data breach policies in preparation for a breach?*
- 2. Do University staff train in cyber-security and data protection policies?*
- 3. In what format does this training come and is it ever repeated for staff?*
- 4. Does the university use any of the following - firewalls, anti-virus software, advanced endpoint protection, mobile security?*
- 5. If so, which?*

Our response is as follows:

1. Yes. The Data Protection Policy is available from the UEA website.¹ Section 5.8 describes the data breach management process.
2. Yes. We offer online information security and data protection training for all staff.
3. The information security training is online. Data protection training is available in face-to-face sessions, online, or bespoke presentations tailored for a particular audience. The online training is always available and can be rerun. Face-to-face training is regularly repeated and features in the University's Centre for Staff Education and Development (CSED) annual schedule.²
4. Yes.
5. *Information exempted pursuant to s.31(1)(a), Freedom of Information Act.*

The Act contains a number of exemptions that allow public authorities to withhold certain information from release. We have applied the above exemption because we believe disclosing the types of security product used by the University could

¹ <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/7068603/Data-Protection-Policy.pdf>

² <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/csed>

expose our IT systems to various types of unlawful attack and consequently prejudice the prevention of criminal activity.

As with other large organisations, universities are reliant on the smooth running of their IT networks. Maintaining the security of these networks is a significant challenge for all universities, who are increasingly subject to both general cyber security threats and also targeted attempts to obtain information from students and staff.

Release of any information under the Act represents a disclosure to the world at large. If we were to disclose the requested information, a motivated individual or group could target any known or potential vulnerabilities in the products we use, increasing the risk of a successful attack on our systems.

Having determined that disclosure of this information would expose the University to a real and significant risk of crime, application of the s.31 exemption also requires us to consider the public interest in withholding or disclosing this information.

We acknowledge there is a public interest in increasing transparency in how the University manages its business. We are also aware of a growing interest in how organisations ensure the security of their information.

However there is a very strong public interest in preventing criminal activity that could damage the running of the University and the security of information held by and about individual staff and students. On balance we believe this interest outweighs any lawful public interest in the specific security products used by the University.

We hope this information will meet your requirements, however if you are not satisfied you have the right of appeal against this response. If you wish to appeal, please set out in writing your reasons for appealing and send to the above address. You must appeal within 60 calendar days of the date of this letter. Any appeal received after that date will not be considered nor acknowledged. This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Information Commissioner's Office.

You also have a subsequent right of appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office. Further information is available on their website:

https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us, or by telephone on 0303 123 1113.

Please note that any material over which UEA has copyright is released on the understanding that you will comply with all relevant copyright rules regarding reproduction and/or transmission of the information provided.

Please quote our reference given at the head of this letter in all correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Ellen Paterson
Information Policy and Compliance Manager
University of East Anglia