



University of East Anglia

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[Redacted]

02 January 2018

Dear [Redacted]

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI_17-305)

We have now considered your request of 12 December 2017 as clarified on 18 December for information relating to this University’s finances.

Our response is on page 4-5 of this letter, together with a copy of your request and within the attached document entitled FOI_17-305 Appendix A.

On this occasion, it is not possible to provide all the requested information. In line with your rights under section 1(1)(a) of the Act to be informed whether information is held, we confirm that the University does not hold information on the number of emergency loans refused. The University does not maintain records of refused emergency loans as the criteria for accessing the loan funding is clearly stated on the application and very few students apply who are not eligible.

Additionally, the Act contains a number of exemptions that allow public authorities to withhold certain information from release. We have applied the following exemption to part of your request.

| Exemption | Reason |
|--|--|
| s.22(1), Information intended for future publication | Some of the requested information is in preparation for later publication |
| s.40(2), Personal information | Disclosure of information would contravene one of the data protection principles |

Section 22(1) exemption

The section 22(1) exemption applies to the recommendation of the Senior Officers Remuneration Committee (SORC) in regards the Vice-Chancellor’s 2017/18 salary.

It has been a long-standing and consistent practice of the University to publish the salary and benefits of the Vice-Chancellor in the Annual Financial Statements. The Financial Statements are audited up to 30 November each year and are subsequently published in December of that year. We therefore would expect to publish details of Vice-Chancellor’s 2017/18 salary in December 2018.

We believe that to adhere to the accepted publication schedule is sensible, in line with accepted practices, and fair to all concerned. With this sort of information, it is

correct to manage the availability of the information by planning and controlling its publication, the timetable of publication requires internal consideration of the information prior to its public release, and we feel that it is reasonable in all the circumstances to withhold the information at this time.

When considering the application of this exemption we are required to assess the public interest in withholding or disclosing the requested information. There is no doubt a public interest in knowing the salary and benefits afforded the Vice-Chancellor.

However, we would argue that this interest is satisfied by the publication of this information within the audited Annual Financial Statements of the University each December. Additionally, we do not believe that the public interest is served by releasing unverified and unaudited figures that could be in error and/or misleading when but a small delay will result in accurate figures being made available accompanied by any necessary contextual information.

Therefore, on this occasion, we consider the public interest in withholding the information requested in question 1 as it pertains to the award to the Vice-Chancellor for 2017/18 outweighs the public interest in providing the requested data at this time.

Section 40(2) exemption

In regards the application of section 40(2), we believe that there are data within the documents requested that meet the definition of 'personal information' as defined by section 1(1) of the UK Data Protection Act 1998 (hereafter 'DPA'). Specifically, we believe that the exact salaries of senior staff and their personal submissions to the SORC qualify as personal data as defined by the DPA.

When a request is made under FOIA for information that includes personal data we are required to consider whether disclosing those data would breach the data protection principles contained within the DPA.

In considering a disclosure under FOIA, the University must also take into account that any information released under the Act will be placed in the public domain, through our own website disclosure log or by other means.

We have followed the Information Commissioner's guidance¹ in assessing whether it is fair to disclose this information under FOIA, and have considered how any legitimate public interest in this information is balanced against the rights and freedoms of the individuals concerned.

We believe that disclosure of the requested information would breach the first data protection principle under the DPA; namely that information must be fairly and lawfully processed, and that the processing also meets one of the conditions set out in Schedule 2 of that Act.

We note that none of the requested information is publicly available. The individuals concerned would not have had a reasonable expectation that this information would be made public. We do not think there is a legitimate interest in disclosing this information to the public, particularly as release of some of the information could prejudice the interests of the individuals concerned. We have therefore concluded that disclosure of this information would not be fair.

We have contacted all the affected individuals and all have explicitly withheld their consent to the release of this information. Additionally, we do not believe that there are any Schedule 2 conditions present that would allow release in the face of an

¹ <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1213/personal-information-section-40-and-regulation-13-foia-and-eir-guidance.pdf>

explicit withdrawal of consent based upon the prejudice to the individual data subjects' rights, freedoms and legitimate interests.

We hope this information will meet your requirements, however if you are not satisfied you have the right of appeal. 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

Dave Palmer
Information Policy and Compliance Manager
University of East Anglia

Response to Freedom of Information Act 2000 request (FOI_17-305)

I would like to submit a freedom of information request regarding selected elements of university finances. Please email on receipt of this request to notify me that it is being processed.

1. Please can you provide copies of minutes from all remuneration committee meetings held between 1st August 2016 - 31st July 2017. These must state the names of staff members on the remuneration committee. If you do not have a remuneration committee, please submit minutes from any meetings in which senior and executive committee pay and benefits were decided.

Our response is within the attached document entitled FOI_17-305 Appendix A.

[Information exempted pursuant to s.22(1) & s.40(2), Freedom of Information Act]

Some of the information within the above-noted document has been exempted from release for the reasons stated in the letter above.

2. Please state the total number of hardship grant and hardship loan applications submitted by students between 1st August 2015 and 31st July 2017

3. Please state the total number of hardship grant and hardship loan applications refused to students between 1st August 2015 and 31st July 2017

4. Please state the total number of hardship grants given out to students between 1st August 2015 and 31st July 2017, and the total number of hardship loans given out (same period).

5. Please state the total amount (£) given out in hardship grants (or equivalent grants) to students between 1st August 2015 and 31st July 2017, and the total amount (£) given out in hardship loans (£) (same period).

[Clarified on 15 December to include both hardship grants and emergency loans for questions 2-6]

Our response is within the table below:

| Question | Fund | Total |
|---|----------------|------------------------------------|
| (2) Number of loan & grant applications | Hardship loan | 502 |
| | Emergency loan | 1190 |
| (3) Number of loan & grant refusals | Hardship loan | 107 |
| | Emergency loan | [Not held, s.1(1)(a), FOIA] |
| (4) Number of loans & grants awarded | Hardship loan | 286 |
| | Emergency loan | 1190 |
| (5) Amount awarded in loans and grants | Hardship loan | £376,578.55 |
| | Emergency loan | £117,851.00 |

6. Please provide a summary of the main reasons why hardship grant and loans were refused in that two year period.

The main reason why a hardship grant would be refused is simply that upon review of the evidence provided, the student income exceeded their outgoings, hence a shortfall was not found and it was not appropriate for a grant to be made.

In regards emergency loans, such funding is generally refused when the student owes the University money or where students are not current and registered at the University.