



University of East Anglia

Information Services Directorate

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[REDACTED]  
  
25 October 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI\_17-241)**

We have now considered your request of 04 October 2017 for the following information:

*I am trying to understand the number of suppliers the University purchases from so please can you send me a list of all suppliers you purchase goods or services from and the annual value you bought from them in your last financial year.*

Unfortunately, on this occasion it is not possible to provide any of the requested information.

The requested information comprises records of over 3000 separate suppliers. Whilst the annual expenditure with any particular supplier may not be commercially sensitive or prejudicial to their commercial interests if released, we cannot determine this without contacting the supplier, and we cannot apply the appropriate exemption for commercially sensitive information on their behalf without receiving direct evidence from them.

We believe that the work to contact over 3000 suppliers would place an unreasonable burden on this organisation. Even if only 5 minutes were spent per supplier, we would have to spend over 250 hours processing this request. Whilst the information which may be subject to an exemption can be easily isolated, there is so much of it that to determine whether any exemption applies would place an unreasonable burden on UEA.

We have therefore concluded that this request is vexatious and, pursuant to s.14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), we are under no obligation to comply with this request.

We understand that you certainly had no intention of submitting a vexatious request nor are there any reasons, other than the burden on the organisation, for us to find this request vexatious. Were you to accept a list of figures, for example, absent the supplier name, there would be no need for us to determine if an exemption applied, our burden would lessen substantially, and we would be able and happy to fulfil such a request.

We are sorry we have not been able to respond to your request on this occasion. If you would like further information on how we have arrived at this decision, please see the [Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\) guidance](#)<sup>1</sup> regarding vexatious requests.

You have the right of appeal against this decision. If you wish to appeal, please set out in writing your grounds of appeal and send to me at the address noted in the heading to this letter.

You must appeal our decision 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](https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us), or by telephone on 0303 123 1113.

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

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1198/dealing-with-vexatious-requests.pdf>