



University of East Anglia

Information Compliance (ITCS)

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06 February 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI_19-020)

We have now considered your request of 17 January 2019 for the following information:

'Can you please provide details of how much was spent on alcohol by the University in the past five academic years (2013/14, 14/15, 15/16, 16/17, 17/18) including a break-down of how much was spent on wine, spirits, beer, sparkling wine and champagne. Could you also break this down further to include the brand of alcohol and its total costs, e.g. Carlsberg, Smirnoff, Pimms. I would also be appreciative if you provide the amount of alcohol charged to the Vice-Chancellor's University credit card. Finally, could you tell me at which University functions this alcohol was served at (including number of invited guests) or the purpose for which it was bought.

To be clear, this request is not in relation to alcohol purchased for any University shops or restaurants. Please exclude alcohol bought to be sold at shops, restaurants or cafes from your data. As well as this, I would like data to be split into each academic year, opposed to data being aggregated across the five years.'

Unfortunately, on this occasion it is not possible to provide any of the requested information. We have determined that the cost of finding and assembling some of the requested information will exceed the 'appropriate limit' as defined by section 12 of the Act and the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004/3244.

'The 'appropriate limit' of £450, which equates to 18 hours' work, can relate to one request in its entirety or to a series of linked requests. If the University cannot locate, retrieve and extract some or all of the requested information within the 18 hours we are not obliged to retrieve any of the requested information.

A wide variety of departments within UEA run events where alcohol is distributed at no charge and these departments can purchase alcohol in a number of ways. UEA does not have a consistent or standard supplier of alcohol; it can be purchased by purchase card, via our catering department or by way of invoiced online purchase. As a result, relevant information may be held in a large number of invoices and other records held by the University.

In many cases, the purchase of alcohol is combined with other expenditures. To identify all individual purchases of alcohol would require manual searches of thousands of invoices over the requested time period, which would result in a total expenditure of effort and time which is clearly in excess of the appropriate limit.

Even where the cost incurred is 100% alcohol related, we would need to undertake a search of individual invoices to determine that this is the case, and once again, this work would be in excess of the appropriate limit.

To assist you in formulating a request to which we can respond, we could provide any one of the following sets of information:

- Total cost of alcohol provided by our catering department to other departments within UEA for the last academic year
- Total expenditure by UEA under our finance system code 'Beers, Wines, Spirits, Alcoholic drinks' (This figure would include costs of some of the alcohol provided by catering to the rest of UEA).
- Total amount spent with specific suppliers (e.g. Majestic Wines)

We are sorry we cannot provide the data you requested, but trust this letter explains our position. If you are unhappy with our response, 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 40 working 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 quote our reference given at the head of this letter in all correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Dave Palmer
Information Compliance Manager
University of East Anglia