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09 February 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI\_15-010)**

We have now considered your request of 15 January 2015 (amended on 20 and 21 January) for information relating to staff training. Thank you for your help in clarifying your requirements. Our response is on page 3 of this letter, together with a copy of your original and amended request.

However, as suggested in our earlier email correspondence, we confirm that the cost of finding and assembling 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, relates to a request in its entirety. 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.

We have however provided some general background information in our response on page 3, as well as an explanation of why the precise information you had asked for cannot be provided. We hope this will meet at least some of your requirements and would welcome any more specific questions as a new request under the Act.

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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](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

Ellen Paterson  
Information Policy and Compliance Manager  
University of East Anglia

## Response to Freedom of Information Act 2000 request (FOI\_15-010)

*I am writing as a concerned citizen to request some information regarding training<sup>1</sup> spend for University of East Anglia. As a taxpayer I am interested to know where the Council<sup>2</sup> are allocating funding towards training and whether this is being conducted efficiently.*

*1) How much do you spend on training per year?*

Clarification received 20 January: *Over the past three financial years how much have you spent on training? (by Year)*

Our response:

### ***[Information withheld pursuant to s.12(1), Freedom of Information Act]***

Much of our staff training is provided by our internal Centre for Staff and Educational Development (CSED)<sup>3</sup>. Training may also be provided by external providers where necessary and selection of external training is devolved to individual teams across the University.

The cost of external training is likely to be allocated to specific budget codes within our finance system, however these codes may also be used for other activities - for example conference attendance or events run by departments. We would also note that training may incur other costs, such as travel and accommodation, which may not be included in these budgets.

In order to extract the costs for external training alone we would need to review each transaction. There were approximately 8900 transactions over the three years requested and this activity would in itself exceed the 18 hour limit mentioned in the letter above. Cross-referencing training activities with travel and accommodation spending would add considerably to the time required to obtain the data.

We can confirm the total departmental budget for these finance codes for the current financial year is as follows: £1001372.

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*2) Please list the top three suppliers of training.*

Clarification received 20 January: *Please list the top three suppliers by use and spend? To which departments spends the most? (if applicable)*

Our response:

### ***[Information withheld pursuant to s.12(1), Freedom of Information Act]***

As stated above, we believe much of our staff training will be provided by CSED. However individual departments are free to arrange training with external providers, as appropriate to individual staff and departmental needs, and budget constraints.

Establishing which training providers were most frequently used across all departments would require either a review of all transactions against certain budget codes (see response to question 1) or consultation with each department / School head to establish which training providers had been used by their staff. Even if we were to consider training provided in just one year these activities would exceed the appropriate limit mentioned in our letter above.

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<sup>1</sup> clarified on 21 January as referring to staff training

<sup>2</sup> clarified on 20 January as referring to the University

<sup>3</sup> <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/csed>

With regard to the second part of this question, we believe that, if you wished to submit a new request, we could provide information on the departments who had spent most against the budget codes mentioned in our response to question 1.

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3) *How are the suppliers selected and against what criteria?*

Replaced on 20 January with: *How much of the training budget remains for this financial year for the departments? (reference to answers for question 2)*

Clarification received on 21 January: *referring to the top three departments who spend the most.*

Our response:

If you wished to submit a new request we believe we could provide information in response to this specific question.

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4) *How can we (the taxpayers) be sure that the most cost effective training provider was selected?*

Replaced on 20 January with: *Does the University hold any ongoing contracts with the top three suppliers? How are these managed? Is there a reassessment process in place when these are up for renewal?*

Our response:

***[Information withheld pursuant to s.12(1), Freedom of Information Act]***

See answer to question 2. Because we are not able to extract information relating to the top three suppliers within the time allowed, we cannot provide information on how the University may manage its relationship with these suppliers.

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5) *Who is responsible for purchasing Council's training (i.e. which departments and who are the decision makers)?*

Replaced on 20 January with: *How are the suppliers selected for the following types of training:*

- *Management\**
- *Training*
- *I.T Training*
- *Health & Safety Training*

\* Clarification received on 21 January: response to include all staff in a managerial role, members of our Executive Team and *'also staff members who are looking to become managers perhaps and would need training, also staff in a managerial role'*

Our response:

***[Information withheld pursuant to s.12(1), Freedom of Information Act]***

We would need to consult with individual staff members and line managers to establish whether recorded information was held on how suppliers were selected. For the reasons explained above and in our previous correspondence we feel this activity would exceed the time allowed.

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6) *At what points during the year does the Council make decisions to purchase training throughout the year?*

Replaced on 20 January with: *Who is responsible for the purchasing of the universities training for the staff? (Who are the decision makers?)*

Our response:

The University's budget holders will be responsible for approving spend for many goods and services, training included.

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7) *How much of the training budget remains for this financial year (ending 31st March 2015)?*

Replaced on 20 January with: *Throughout the year, are there certain points within that year that the university will purchase training?*

Our response:

No. training may be purchased at any time of year, budget permitting. CSED training is provided all year round – see link at footnote 3 for details.

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8) *Does the Council hold any contracts for the ongoing supply of training? How are these managed? Is there a reassessment process in place when these are up for renewal?*

Our response:

This question was not included in your amended request. See question 4 for our response to your related amended question.