



University of East Anglia

Information Services Directorate

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[REDACTED]

30 October 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI\_15-212)**

We have now considered your request of 27 October 2015 for the following information:

*'I would like to request a detailed financial breakdown for service expenses incurred by the university over the past 5 financial years.'*

*I am looking for information for service contracts the university has signed up for. Specifically software licenses or providers for - example email providers, web hosting, anti-virus, word processors etc.*

*Specific information: the total financial cost, the cost per user/license/year as applicable, provider details, the software provided, contract length, contract/purchase details if applicable and anything else relevant.'*

Unfortunately, on this occasion we have determined 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 understand your request to be potentially very wide-ranging. Firstly, you mention 'service expenses', 'service contracts' and 'software licences or providers', all of which could be separate areas of expenditure. However we understand 'software licences and providers' to be the area of expenses you are specifically interested in, therefore we have based our response on the estimated time it would take to provide this particular information.

While much of this information will relate to University-wide licences held by our IT services, this is by no means the only department who would hold such information. For example, individual members of staff across the University may require licences for specific software and these costs would be managed within different team budgets. We would therefore need to look at the information held for all departments within our University-wide finance systems, to try and extract relevant information.

To locate the requested detail we would need to review both purchase orders and actual expenditure – information held in different parts of the finance system. It is likely that for some software licences we would also need to check other documents to extract all relevant information, as the types of contract detail you require will not be recorded within the finance system. This process may require consultation with multiple departments, depending on who held the software licence.

To further complicate matters, during the requested time period the University changed finance systems. We would need to check both systems to obtain information for all five years, and we are aware that it will be considerably more difficult to extract potentially relevant information from our older system.

It is not easy to establish the precise length of time it would take for us to determine if information is held, then locate, retrieve and extract that information. For example, even undertaking a sampling exercise for a limited period of time would be misleading as expenditure is not spread evenly across each financial year. However, due to the number of years involved and the wide-ranging nature of your request, we are confident the time required would be well in excess of 18 hours.

We are sorry we cannot provide the information you have requested, but would be happy to consider a more streamlined request in future. For example, if the request was limited to two years (meaning only one system would need to be queried) and was for specific type(s) of software, and/or related to a specific University department, we may well be able to provide a full response.

If you do wish to submit another request it may be helpful to check the UK Information Commissioner's guidance on submitting FOI requests:  
<https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/>

You may also be interested in the University's responses to previous IT-related FOI requests. See <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/information-services/strategy-planning-and-compliance/regulations-and-policies/information-regulations-and-policies/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log/it-and-provision-use>

Finally, 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