



Information Services Directorate

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[REDACTED]

11 February 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information Request (Our Ref: FOI_15-014)

We have now considered your request of 19 January 2015 for information relating to cost of staff trips abroad for the calendar years 2012-14. We regret that on this occasion it is not possible to respond.

We are unable to respond due to the fact that the time/effort required to locate and recover the information would be in excess of 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 note that you offered the option of providing a more limited set of data in response to your request, however we were not able to do so, for the reasons explained below.

In this particular case, the information required on our internal expense claim forms does not mandate the provision of, nor distinguish the location of any travel. Therefore, in order to determine whether travel abroad has occurred, each and every travel claim would need to be reviewed. Additionally, it would be very difficult and time-intensive to determine if two or more expenses forms related to the same trip and to determine if more than one person went on the same trip.

It should be also noted that expense claim forms are only one method by which expenses incurred on business travel are paid for and recorded. Expense claim forms would not include the ad-hoc payments for the years requested (consisting of approximately 25 archive boxes of paper forms per annum), nor purchase card statements for approximately 200 issued cards, held in pdf format.

We have calculated that 100 to 130 expenses claims forms are received each week. Therefore we estimate 5,000 to 6,500 are received per year, based on 50 weeks. Checking each form and recording the information would take approximately 5 minutes per form.

Therefore, taking the lower estimate of 5,000 forms, a 5 minutes per form, we would require 25,000 minutes, or 416 hours to locate and extract the information for one year alone.

Please note that this calculation is for expense claim forms alone and does not take into account the time it would take to check the above-noted ad-hoc claims and purchase card statements. The expenditure description on the purchase card statements is limited and not always easy to establish the type of expenditure, therefore to ensure an accurate figure each claim form would require verifying with the card holder.

It may well be possible for us, however, to provide a response to a request that is more restrictive in scope in the number of individuals it covers. We have indeed provided such information in response to a prior request.¹

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 whose [contact details](#)² can be found on their website.

Please quote our reference given at the head of this letter in all correspondence.

Yours sincerely

David Palmer
Information Policy and Compliance Manager
University of East Anglia

¹ https://ired.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/6940785/FOI_14-104.pdf/fbb6d26c-8560-4dd7-991c-92ea983ee117 and accompanying appendix: https://ired.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/6940785/FOI_14-104+Appendix+A.xlsx/10a73d26-5997-4cc7-863d-32f8d2f54ebc

² https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us