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[REDACTED]

15 April 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 – INFORMATION REQUEST
(Our ref: FOI_14-061)**

We have now considered your request of 18 March 2014 for information regarding streaming of first year undergraduate students at this University and our response is provided on pages 3-4 of this letter. I trust this will be to your satisfaction.

However, it is not possible to provide all the requested information. Pursuant to your rights under section 1(1)(a) of Freedom of Information Act 2000 to be informed whether information is held, we confirm that the University does hold not some of the requested information. Further details are provided on page 4 of this letter.

Furthermore, we have determined that the cost of finding and assembling some of the requested information – specifically the reasons why streaming was introduced for certain courses and the dates that streaming was introduced – 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. An explanation on how we have arrived at this decision can be found on page 4.

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. However, on this occasion we are happy to provide some information in response to the remainder of your request.

Please note that any material released over which UEA has copyright is released subject to the understanding that you will comply with all relevant copyright rules regarding reproduction and/or transmission of the information released.

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 above address.

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 at:

Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House

Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Telephone: 0303 123 1113
Website: <http://www.ico.org.uk/>

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

Response to Freedom of Information Act 2000 request (FOI_14-061)

This FOI is about streaming/setting of first year undergraduate honours degree students ie dividing students in to different teaching groups on the basis of previous educational experience or levels of knowledge and/or attainment.

Does the university stream/set students (see definition above) in any of the following subject areas

- 1. Maths*
- 2. Physics*
- 3. Engineering*
- 4. Chemistry*
- 5. Accountancy*
- 6. Foreign languages*

The University does not stream/set students in the subject areas of physics, engineering, or accounting. There is streaming in regards the subject areas of mathematics, chemistry and foreign languages.

Please note that we have defined "...first year undergraduate honours degree students..." as meaning those students actually registered in their 'Year 1' of study at the University. We have therefore excluded Foundation Year students who are effectively within 'Year Zero' as we do not interpret these to be 'first year undergraduate ... degree students' as you have requested.

It should also be noted that we have interpreted 'streaming/setting' in this context to mean the assignment of students to specific modules in their first year of study on basis of the criteria you set out in your request. We do not interpret 'streaming/setting' more widely as using an assessment of the educational experience of students to make broad distinctions on the educational course or path of different students. The concept of streaming in general has been known and discussed for many years but we have interpreted the introduction of streaming as being the introduction of a module whose entrants are determined by the criteria you set out above.

If so, please give the following details for each subject area

A. How many streams/groups are there?

The requested information is within the attached document entitled Appendix A_Data file.xlsx

B. How are students allocated to groups? For instance, are they tested at the start of the year - what kind of test is used? Are A-level grades used (please give details eg one group has students with A/B grades, second group has C/D grades. Are students self-selecting?

The requested information is within the attached document entitled Appendix A_Data file.xlsx

C. When was streaming introduced?

Some of the requested information is within the attached document entitled Appendix A_Data file.xlsx

[Information not held - s.1(1)(a), Freedom of Information Act]

In a number of instances where streaming has been ongoing for some time, we no longer hold any information that would indicate when streaming was introduced.

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

Whilst we are fully aware that discussions have taken place in past regarding the introduction of streaming within the Faculty of Science, it is not possible to categorically identify the date that streaming was introduced nor to state whether the reasons for the introduction of streaming were or were not, recorded in minutes, reports, memos etc. In order to do this, all such documents would need to be searched to find the documents you request. Possible available records would include minutes of School Boards, Faculty Learning and Teaching Quality Committee minutes, module review forms, and Teaching Committee minutes.

To review the records for the relevant Schools within the Faculty of Science would involve reviewing the records of two School boards per year (6 meetings across SCI for the relevant Schools), the records of Teaching Committees (twice a semester in some Schools) and those of the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee (FLTC) (approximately 5 per annum). This would result in a review, per annum, of 6 School Board minutes, 12 Teaching Committee minutes, and 5 FLTC minutes, or 23 documents per annum, not accounting for the module review forms.

As some Schools have reported that this information was created a significant number of years ago this would result in the need to search at least 10 year's worth of records. This produces a minimum of 230 documents to review. Given it would take a minimum of 5 minutes per document to locate and extract the requested information, this would result in work over the appropriate limit of 18 hour's work itself, let alone in combination with the time already taken to locate and extract other requested information

- D. *Why was streaming introduced? Please provide minutes of meetings, reports, memos etc relating to the introduction of streaming.*

Information pertaining to the introduction of streaming within the School of Economics is within the attached document entitled Appendix B_ECO streaming introduction.pdf

[Information not held - s.1(1)(a), Freedom of Information Act]

In some instances, we do not hold recorded information regarding the reasons why streaming was initially introduced. In many instances where streaming has been ongoing for some time, we no longer hold any information that would indicate the reasons for which streaming was introduced.

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

Please note the response to question C above.