



The Hessle Academy Freedom Of Information Policy

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Owner:

Executive Headteacher

The following is a guide in dealing with Freedom of Information (FOI) requests to The Hessle Academy (THA), who may be trading as Hessle High School and Sixth Form College, Penshurst Primary School or Hessle High School and Penshurst Primary School.

The guide contains details regarding the information that we should publish generally and how to respond to specific requests for information. It also contains details about when requests should be refused.

Appendix 1 details the information that THA needs to publish generally.

Appendix 2 contains a list of charges for the provision of information.

Appendix 3 contains the legal reasons an FOI may be refused.

Appendix 4 contains some draft letters that may be used.

Background to this Guide

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 ensures that public authorities publish information about their activities and that any member of the public can request information about the activities of a public authority. This ensures openness and accountability.

It does not cover data held about individuals. If a person wishes to make a request for data held about them then they need to make this request under the Data Protection Act 2018 by way of a subject access request. It also does not cover requests for Environmental Legislation as this is dealt with under the Environmental Information Regulations.

THA is a public body and, therefore, subject to this law.

What information is covered under the FOI legislation?

All recorded or written information held by THA including data sets on behalf of THA. A dataset is a collection of data gathered as part of the provision of services and undertaking of functions. These are normally held in electronic form. An FOI request does not apply to information not in written or recorded format. It does not apply to information held on behalf of another person or organisation. This means that a teacher or employee's private information is not covered.

Who can make a request?

Anyone can make a request. The person does not have to explain their reason for the request and requesters cannot be treated differently due to status, reasons for request or otherwise.

What are THAs main obligations?

Firstly, to make certain information public as per the information contained in Appendix 1. Secondly, THA is required to respond to all FOI requests and disclose information where appropriate as set out below.

Information that THA should publish as a matter of routine

What information should we publish?

THA are obliged to have a list of the documents that are published and a document which sets out the commitment to make certain classes of information available. This is known as a publication scheme. This publication scheme is at Appendix 1 and sets out THA obligations and the list of documents that have to be made available publicly. It also sets out the limitations to what has to be published.

Do we need to tell people that we publish this information?

Yes, THA does this by placing the document at Appendix 1 on its website and making the documentation listed on it available. THA must also confirm that it a) is committed to proactive publication b) provides the list of what is available c) lets people know that they can make FOI requests and d) provides contact details for that request. This is all part of the publication scheme.

Further, even if somebody asks for something, but does not specifically state that it is a Freedom of Information request, then you need to proactively inform them of the fact that you either publish the information or they have a right to make a request and how to do it.

Can we guarantee privacy for our employees, contractors, customers, etc.?

We must disclose information if requested unless it is subject to one of the exemptions below. We, therefore, cannot give a blanket guarantee of privacy for anyone who deals with THA. If asked you should make it clear to anyone who we deal with that we cannot guarantee complete confidentiality.

What if the information is copyrighted or subject to a licence?

The information must still be disclosed but with a notice explaining that the information is subject to copyright and should not be commercially exploited or used without the owner's permission.

If the information belongs to THA such as a dataset, then we must disclose, but with a licence permitting re use.

What do we do if somebody asks for something that appears on our list at Appendix 1?

The requester should be directed to the website if that information is published on the website. If not they should be sent the information directly. They could also request to see it in person. If the information is available using other procedures (such as by a link to another website) then the requester should be told of this. THA is mindful of responsibilities under equality and diversity so will need to send it in an appropriate format under the Equality Act 2010 or the Welsh Language Act if the requester requires it.

How often is the list reviewed and amended and by whom?

THA reviews the list of documents that is made available on an annual basis and the Board of Governors will approve amendments to the list if required.

What if somebody asks for something that is not on the list of documents that we routinely publish?

Then we consider this a separate Freedom of Information request and deal with this as set out below.

Making a Freedom of Information request**Who deals with Freedom of Information requests within THA?**

Within the organisation, all requests that appear to be Freedom of Information requests must immediately be passed to the Operations Manager.

What do we do when we receive a request for information?

If the request is verbal we will ask for it in writing. Upon receiving any written request, we will let the applicant know in writing whether we have the information, whether there is a fee to be charged and then send that information to them (unless we are refusing the request as set out below). Unless there is a need to refuse as set out below, a draft letter of acknowledgment is at Appendix 4. A draft letter providing the information is set out at Appendix 4.

THA is allowed 20 school days/60 working days from the date we receive the request to provide the information if we have it.

What if we do not understand the request or the request is too general/ set out unclearly?

If we do not understand the request or require clarification, we will write back by return to ask for clarification. We will offer advice and assistance if necessary or give the requester options.

For example: “You have asked for our risk assessment policy. We do not have a specific policy, but risk assessment policies are included in our Health and Safety at Work policy”. Please let us know if you would be interested in this document”

The 20 school days/60 working days run from the date THA has received the clarification from the requester.

Do we have to accept anonymous requests for information?

No

Do we have to accept requests if they are electronic or via Facebook, Twitter, etc.?

Yes, although there should be an address for correspondence or an email address. If one is not provided you need to request it.

Does the request have to mention the FOI Act?

No

What if we do not have any written information?

We will only disclose recorded (e.g. written) information so if our information is not recorded, then we will respond within the timescale and state that we hold no recorded information. We will ensure a proper and thorough search has been done. We will not create written information for the purpose of responding to any request.

If the information is information that should be held by THA, then a proper explanation will need to be

given as to why there is no written information. If we know the recorded information exists but is held elsewhere, we will direct the requester there.

We do not have to and should not create information to answer the request.

What if the information is inaccurate?

We must disclose what is recorded whether or not it is inaccurate. However, we will provide an explanation to the requester so that they are not misled. We cannot change the information unless it is changed as part of routine changes that would have been made anyway.

Refusing a Freedom of Information request

What if the request will take up too much time and resources?

If answering the request and drawing together all the information is an unreasonable burden on our resources we can refuse a request. To be burdensome it must cost THA more than £450 to deal with it. This is based on a calculation of £25 per hour for the person dealing with the request i.e. whether it will take more than 18 hours to deal with the request. This does not include time spent deciding whether an exemption applies. It includes time in determining a) whether the information is held b) locating the information c) retrieving the information and d) extracting the information.

We can also refuse it if the aggregate number of requests from one person or from one group of people working together in a 60 day period exceeds £450.

If we refuse on this basis we will say whether we hold the information or not (subject to the rules regarding exemptions below). We will also give an opportunity and some advice to help narrow down the search including stating what would be available within the time limits.

We do not get extra time to respond to the request just because it is burdensome.

We can still comply with the request if we wish by informing the requester of the charges and receiving payment for the same.

See Appendix 4 for a standard letter rejecting for this reason. Each letter must be tailored to the circumstances.

What if the requester is not genuine or trying to cause trouble by making repeated requests?

We will refuse if the request is vexatious. We will be careful not to discriminate and/or simply refuse a request because of the identity of the person requesting. When we decide to refuse under this category then we will look at the history and context of the request, previous contact, whether the request is disproportionate or causes an unjustifiable level of distress, disruption or irritation. We will distinguish between the identity of the requester and the request itself. Vexatious can also mean repeated, but if a reasonable period of time has elapsed, this will not amount to 'repeated'. We will state that we are not providing the information due to a vexatious request. We do not need to explain why.

We can send one response to cover them all and confirm that no further responses will be sent in relation to vexatious requests. We must still respond to genuine requests from that person so we have to consider it on a case by case basis.

See Appendix 4 for a standard letter rejecting for this reason. Each letter must be tailored to the circumstances.

What if the requester is making the same request again?

We can refuse if we have already responded to the request from that person. We will say that we are not

providing the information due to the fact the request has already been responded to and enclose a copy of the letter that originally responded to the request. We can confirm that no further responses will be sent in relation to repeated requests.

Are there any legal reasons why we can refuse requests?

Yes, if a request is listed as exempt (see Appendix 3) then these do not have to be disclosed. If the exemption is absolute then we can simply refuse to disclose. If the exemption is qualified then we must do a public interest test.

What does prejudice mean in the context of exemptions?

When we decide what prejudice means, we mean causing harm with a real possibility of that harm occurring.

What is a public interest test?

The principle is that we must disclose unless there is a good reason not to so, the public interest in maintaining the exemption has to be greater than the public interest in the disclosure.

Do I have to confirm the information exists?

Not necessarily. We need to decide whether an exemption applies in the first place. We then need to consider whether harm will be caused if we confirm the existence of information. If it would then we must give a 'neither confirm nor deny' response.

How do you deal with a request where you think an absolute exemption may apply?

We write to the requestor and confirm a) which exemption applies and either b) that we cannot confirm or deny the existence of documentation or c) that we cannot disclose documents due to the exemption. If c) applies then we should confirm the information exists but we do not need to specify the exact documents.

How do you deal with a request where you think a qualified exemption may apply?

If we believe we may have to carry out a public interest test then we can write back and state we require a further 20 working days to consider this. We will confirm a) which exemption applies and b) when we expect to respond by.

We cannot take the time to decide if an exemption applies in the first place.

When we come to our decision we must let the requester know and confirm a) which exemption applies and either b) that we cannot confirm or deny the existence of documentation but the public interest test favours maintaining the exemption or c) that the information exists but public interest favours maintaining the exemption and that we will not disclose. We will need to explain our reasoning as far as we are able.

Do I need to tell the requester anything else if I refuse the request?

If we are refusing then we must give them details of any complaints procedure and the right to complain to the ICO with details. We must also explain under what provision of the ICO Act we are relying on to refuse the request and why.

Please see letter at Appendix 4 for rejecting an FOI request due to an exemption.

Can I send a redacted part of a document instead?

Yes, we can decide to send a redacted document with the exempt information blanked out. If we only withhold part of the document we will make sure the redacted parts are not reversible or see through. Also check if it is electronic that there is no hidden information attached in the properties or elsewhere.

The document must make sense. We should only redact what is necessary. We will keep copies of both the original and redacted forms in case of a complaint.

General issues

If exemptions do not apply and the information I have must be disclosed, how do I disclose it?

By printed copy, scanned on an email, by disk or arrange a viewing. If the requester has specified a preferred means this would be most appropriate.

If they have requested a dataset it must be sent in a reusable form with an appropriate licence.

Can I charge a fee?

Yes, to cover copying, printing and postage. See the charges in Appendix 2.

Do I have to send anything out until I receive the fee?

No, we can wait until we have been paid. We still have to comply with the time limit so should send out a request for the fees as soon as possible.

What if the fee is not paid?

We must wait three months from the date of the fee request and then we can consider the matter closed.

Can I limit who the requester can disclose the information to?

No, we must assume that what we disclose can be seen by any individual. If we do need to use discretion to disclose to a particular group then we can make it clear that we are disclosing to the requester only.

Should I do any checks before I send the information?

Double check that we have charged and received the correct fee. Double check that we are disclosing the correct information and if disclosing electronically that there is no hidden information attached that breaches another's data protection.

Do I have to do anything else once it is sent?

No, unless the requester complains and then the internal complaints system is triggered.

How do I deal with a complaint?

Somebody different to the person who dealt with the initial request at THA needs to deal with the complaint. This person will be the Executive Headteacher. The response to the complaint cannot take more than 20 working days. This person then makes a fresh decision based on all the available evidence (even if some evidence is only available after the original decision).

This person then must either decide to overturn the decision and disclose or issue a refusal notice and explain why. The complainant must be told of their right to complain to the ICO.

What happens if we still refuse to disclose the information?

The ICO will review the decision. The ICO can require formal disclosure and overturn any internal decisions. They cannot issue fines or award compensation.

We must ensure that we cooperate with the case officer at the ICO. We will also ensure that we keep all information in respect of the decision so that we can explain our decision to refuse to disclose thoroughly to the case officer. Even if the information is confidential it must still be passed to the case officer at the ICO and the ICO will not pass on confidential information to the complainant.

The ICO will issue a decision notice and we will need to action it within 35 calendar days. THA can appeal a decision if we do not agree with the ICO to the Tribunal.

Are there any criminal offences associated with the FOI Act?

Yes, if anybody alters, blocks, destroys or conceals information then THA can be subject to a fine. If we do not cooperate with the ICO then we can also be in contempt of court which can lead to fines or possible jail for a senior officer.

Nobody at THA is authorised to alter, block, destroy or conceal information and any such act will be treated as gross misconduct and treated very seriously.

APPENDIX 1

Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

This publication scheme commits THA to make information available to the public as part of its normal business activities. The information covered is included in the classes of information mentioned below, where this information is held by THA. Additional assistance is provided to the definition of these classes in sector specific guidance manuals issued by the ICO.

THA commits to:

- proactively publishing or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information, including environmental information, which is held by THA and falls within the classifications below.
- specifying the information which is held by the authority and falls within the classifications below.
- proactively publishing or otherwise make available as a matter of routine, information in line with the statements contained within this scheme.
- producing and publishing the methods by which the specific information is made routinely available so that it can be easily identified and accessed by members of the public.
- reviewing and updating on a regular basis the information THA makes available under this scheme.
- producing a schedule of any fees charged for access to information which is made proactively available.
- making this publication scheme available to the public.
- publishing any dataset held by THA that has been requested, and any updated versions it holds, unless THA is satisfied that it is not appropriate to do so; to publish the dataset, where reasonably practicable, in an electronic form that is capable of re-use; and, if any information in the dataset is a relevant copyright work and THA is the only owner, to make the information available for re-use under a specified licence. The term 'dataset' is defined in section 11(5) of the Freedom of Information Act. The terms 'relevant copyright work' and 'specified licence' are defined in section 19(8) of that Act.

Classes of information

The type of information we hold and that you may wish to request information about are as follows:

Who we are and what we do

Current information only relating to organisational information, structures, locations and contacts.

- Articles of Association.
- School Prospectus and curriculum.
- Details of the Governing Body.
- School session times and term dates.
- Location and contact details such as address telephone, email and website and key personnel.

What we spend and how we spend it

Financial information for the current and previous two financial years relating to projected and actual income and expenditure, tendering, procurement, contracts and financial audits.

- Annual budget plan and financial statements including details of the sources of funding and income provided to THA.
- Items of expenditure over £5,000 including costs, supplier and transaction information.
- Capital funding including information on major plans for capital expenditure and information on related building projects and other capital projects, private finance initiative and public-private partnership contracts.
- Financial audit reports.
- Procurement and contracts including details of procedures used and details of contracts that have gone through a formal tendering process.
- Pay policy and procedures regarding teacher's pay.
- Staff allowances and expenses including travel, subsistence and accommodation for senior staff.
- Staff pay and grading structures with salaries for senior staff and salary range for junior staff.
- Governors' allowances including a record of total payments made to individual governors.

What our priorities are and how we are doing

Strategy and performance information, plans, assessments and inspections. If this information is available via an external website then a link will be provided.

- Performance data supplied to the government.
- Latest Ofsted report.
- Performance management policy and procedures adopted by the governing body.
- THA's future plans.
- Policies and procedures regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children including child protection.

How we make decisions

Policy proposals and decisions, decision making processes, internal criteria and procedures, consultations for the current and the last three years.

- Admissions policy/decisions including THA's admission arrangements and procedures together with information about the right to appeal. Individual admission decisions will not be published but admission numbers or patterns will be published where held.
- Minutes of meetings of the governing body and its committees including minutes, agendas and papers unless any of the information is properly considered to be private (Part B).

Our policies and procedures

Current written protocols for delivering our functions and responsibilities.

- School policies and other documents.
- Records management and personal data policies.
- Equality and diversity policies.
- Policies and procedures for the recruitment of staff.
- Charging regimes and policies.

Lists and registers

Current information held in registers required by law and other lists and registers relating to the functions of THA.

- Curriculum circulars and statutory instruments.
- Disclosure logs.
- Asset register where available.
- Any other information we are legally required to hold in a publicly available register.

The services we offer

Any current advice and guidance, booklets and leaflets, transactions and media releases including a description of the services offered.

- Extra-curricular activities.
- Out of school clubs.
- School publications.
- Leaflets, booklets and newsletters.

The classes of information listed above will not generally include:

- Information not held by THA.
- Information, the disclosure of which is prevented by law, or exempt under the Freedom of Information Act, or is otherwise properly considered to be protected from disclosure.
- Information that is readily and publicly available elsewhere.
- Information in draft form.
- Information that is no longer readily available as it is contained in files that have been placed in archive storage, or is difficult to access for similar reasons.
- Information that is impractical or resource intensive to prepare for routine release.

How is the information made available?

THA will make the information published under this scheme available on a website. Where it is impracticable to make information available on a website or when an individual does not wish to access the information by the website, THA will accept written requests for information and a hard copy of the information will be provided subject to a charge.

The written request must be made to the Executive Headteacher.

In exceptional circumstances some information may be available only by viewing in person. A written request must be made to the contact details given above. An appointment to view the information will be arranged within a reasonable timescale.

Information will be provided in the language in which it is held or in such other language that is legally required.

Obligations under disability and discrimination legislation and any other legislation to provide information in other forms and formats will be adhered to when providing information in accordance with this scheme.

Charges which may be made for information published under this scheme

The purpose of this scheme is to make the maximum amount of information readily available at minimum inconvenience and cost to the public. Charges made by the authority for routinely published material will be justified and transparent and kept to a minimum.

The charges are set out in Appendix 2

Charges may be made for information subject to a charging regime specified by Parliament. Charges may be made for actual disbursements incurred such as:

- photocopying
- postage and packaging
- the costs directly incurred as a result of viewing information

Charges may also be made for information provided under this scheme where they are legally authorised, they are in all the circumstances, including the general principles of the right of access to information held by public authorities, justified and are in accordance with a published schedule or schedules of fees which is readily available to the public.

Charges may also be made for making datasets (or parts of datasets) that are relevant copyright works available for re-use. These charges will be in accordance with either regulations made under section 11B of the Freedom of Information Act or other enactments.

If a charge is to be made, confirmation of the payment due will be given before the information is provided. Payment may be requested prior to provision of the information.

Written requests for other information not published under this scheme

Information held by THA that is not published under this scheme can be requested in writing, when its provision will be considered in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

APPENDIX 2

Schedule of fees

These are the charges made by THA in respect of requests for copies of publications or FOI requests.

- **Website** Access is free of charge unless otherwise stated.
- **Email/Attachments** Access if free of charge unless otherwise stated.
- **Website printouts** Not provided.
- **Photocopies**
Minimum of £1.00 for up to 10 sides of A4. Further pages are 10p per single side of A4.

Minimum of £1.50 for up to 5 sides of A3. Further pages are 30p per single side of A3.
- **Postage**
All correspondence will be sent by standard second class post where possible.

For postage in excess of £1.50, charge will be passed on to the requester.
- **Administration fees**
For requests that take over 18 hours of staff time, a charge of £25 per hour will be made. This will be agreed and paid by the requester before the work is carried out. THA reserve the right to refuse such a request on the grounds of excess administrative burden.

APPENDIX 3

Exemptions (as they apply to THA) Absolute exemptions

- Section 21 Information reasonably accessible by other means. Section 32 Information contained in court records.
- Section 40 Personal information where the applicant is the subject of personal information and in certain circumstances where the applicant is a third party.
- Section 44 Information covered by prohibitions on disclosure where disclosure of information is covered by other laws.

Qualified exemptions

The sections which have qualified exemptions and so require a public interest test to be carried out are:

- Section 22 Information intended for future publication.
- Section 30 Investigations and proceedings by public authorities. Section 31 Law Enforcement.
- Section 33 Audit Functions.
- Section 36 Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs. Section 38 Health and Safety.
- Section 39 Environmental Information. Section 40 Personal Information.
- Section 41 Information provided in confidence. Section 42 Legal and Professional Privilege.
- Section 43 Commercial Interests

APPENDIX 4

Example draft letters – *which may not be issued in every case Letter acknowledging request and requesting fee

Dear [NAME]

Thank you for your letter dated [DATE] where you requested the following information:

- [DETAILS OF THE REQUEST]

I confirm that a fee is payable for the provision of the information. I confirm that the fee is [SET OUT FEE AND HOW IT HAS BEEN CALCULATED].

You are required to pay before I proceed to deal with your request.

You will receive the information requested within 60 working days/20 school days unless the school does not hold the information or disclosure of the information is exempt. I will write to you to confirm if this is the case.

If you have any requirements regarding how the information should be supplied please let me know (for example if you require it in large print). If you would like to receive the information electronically please provide your email address.

If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact me. Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Further information about your rights is also available from the Information Commissioner at: Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Letter providing the information requested

Dear [NAME]

Thank you for your letter dated [DATE] where you requested the following information:

- [DETAILS OF THE REQUEST]

Your request for information has now been considered and the information requested is enclosed in the format you requested.

or

As you have asked to view the records in which the information is contained please telephone me to make the necessary arrangements.

Information you receive may be protected by the copyright of the person or organisation from which the information originated. You must ensure that you gain their permission before reproducing any third party information.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. You need to set out your complaint in writing and send it to the address below:

[CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS]

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not happy with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at the address below:

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Letter refusing on the grounds of cost

Dear [NAME]

Thank you for your letter dated [DATE] where you requested the following information:

- [DETAILS OF THE REQUEST]

Your request was received on [DATE] and is being dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We have carried out a preliminary assessment and have estimated that it will cost more than the 'appropriate limit' to comply with your request.

The FOI Act s12 permits THA to refuse your request for information where the cost of dealing with your request exceeds £450 or the equivalent of 18 hours work for THA.

We can therefore either comply with this request if you pay the fee of [FEE] which is the estimated cost of processing your request and is calculated in accordance with our charges as attached. We are unable to continue processing your request until the fee is paid. If we do not receive payment within the next 21 working days then we will consider that you no longer wish to make the request and will close this matter.

Alternatively, you may wish to refine your request and limit the information that you require. We consider that we are able to provide the following information to you within the time scale and appropriate limit:

- [SET OUT THE INFORMATION WHICH CAN BE PROVIDED]

Any further request we receive from you will be treated as a new request and the timescale to respond will commence from the date of the new request.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. You need to set out your complaint in writing and send it to the address below:

[CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS]

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not happy with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at the address below:

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

Letter refusing on the grounds of a vexatious request

Dear [NAME]

Thank you for your letter dated [DATE] where you requested the following information:

- [DETAILS OF REQUEST]

Your request was received on [DATE] and is being dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The FOI Act s14 permits THA to refuse your request for information where the request is vexatious.

The reasons that we have decided that your request is vexatious is [REASONS].

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. You need to set out your complaint in writing and send it to the address below:

[CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS]

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not happy with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at the address below:

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

Letter refusing on the grounds of an absolute exemption

Dear [NAME]

Thank you for your letter dated [DATE] where you requested the following information:

- [DETAILS OF REQUEST]

Your request was received on [DATE] and is being dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We can confirm that an exemption applies in respect of this request which is [EXEMPTION]

We can neither confirm nor deny the existence of this information

OR

The information is being withheld. The exemption applies because [LIST REASONS IN SO FAR AS IT DOES NOT DISCLOSE THE INFORMATION]

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. You need to set out your complaint in writing and send it to the address below:

[CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS]

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not happy with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at the address below:

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

Letter refusing on the grounds of a qualified exemption

Dear [NAME]

Thank you for your letter dated [DATE] where you requested the following information:

- [DETAILS OF REQUEST]

Your request was received on [DATE] and is being dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We can confirm that an exemption applies in respect of this request which is [EXEMPTION]

We can neither confirm nor deny the existence of this information

OR

We consider that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information and therefore the information is being withheld. The reasons for this are as follows [LIST REASONS IN SO FAR AS IT DOES NOT DISCLOSE THE INFORMATION]

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. You need to set out your complaint in writing and send it to the address below:

[CONTACT NAME AND ADDRESS]

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not happy with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioner at the address below:

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely