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RECORDS MANAGEMENT SECTION

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Dear Dr Williams

Freedom of information request

Thank you for your email of 16 January 2014 requesting a breakdown of the amount the University has spent on Elsevier journals in the last five years. I sincerely apologise for the delay in responding to your request, and I thank you for your patience. The delay has enabled me to supply you with a more complete response.

The University of Edinburgh is the largest university in Scotland and one of the UK's top rated research universities. It has over 32,000 students and over 8,000 full-time equivalent staff. In 2012/13 its turnover was over £737 million.

Elsevier journal purchases, 2009 to 2013

Over the last five years the University has purchased ScienceDirect and Cell Press subscriptions directly from Elsevier under licence. Our ScienceDirect subscription has comprised a number of elements: e-journals; print journals; content fee; freedom collection fee and additional costs associated with the merger of the University with the Roslin Institute, which had previously had its own ScienceDirect subscription.

We have also purchased a number of print only titles outwith these licenses not directly from Elsevier but through an agent.

Table 1 below provides details of the total amount the University has spent on Elsevier journals in each of the last five years, buying directly from Elsevier and also from an agent. Please note that the figures, therefore, do not represent the Elsevier contract value.

Table 1: University of Edinburgh's spend on Elsevier journals in each of the last 5 years, by product

Product	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
ScienceDirect:					
• e-journals	£463,144.57	£603,347.39	Withheld	Withheld	Withheld
• Print journals	£276,037.28	£126,255.19	Withheld	n/a	n/a
• Content fee	£41,205.28	£41,634.88	Withheld	Withheld	Withheld
• Freedom Collection fee	£15,106.18	£15,268.41	Withheld	Withheld	Withheld
• Additional costs associated with the merger of the University with the Roslin Institute, which had previously had its own ScienceDirect subscription	£10,651.16	£10,765.54	Withheld	n/a	n/a
Cell Press	£17,117.29	£18,831.17	Withheld	Withheld	Withheld
Ad hoc journal purchases	£24,616.55	£14,477.41	Withheld	Withheld	Withheld
Total	£847,878.31	£830,579.98	£845,551.87	£850,117.22	£845,307.08

Table notes:

- All figures exclude VAT
- Since 2012 ScienceDirect has been e-only

In each year we have purchased Elsevier products in a combination of Sterling and Euros, but all these transactions are recorded in the University accounts in Sterling. This means that some of the figures provided in table 1 include an element of conversion, which reflects the actual cost to the University of the purchase, as recorded in our accounts.

Withheld information

You will see that for 2011 to 2013 I have provided the total amount spent in each year, but not the breakdown. Unfortunately, although the University holds the breakdown you requested for these years, I cannot supply you with it.

The University subscribes to ScienceDirect and Cell Press through national licence agreements. The agreements were negotiated by NESLi2, a JISC Collections initiative, on behalf of higher and further education and research communities in the UK. Information about JISC Collections and the NESLi2 initiative is published on the JISC Collections website at <https://www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/nesli2/>.

The licence agreements specify that the subscription price and its breakdown are confidential until two years after the termination of the relevant agreement. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under section 36(2)(b). I have therefore withheld the prices and breakdowns covered by current confidentiality undertakings and also any information which could enable these to be deduced.

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Right to review

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may ask the University to conduct a review of this decision. To do this, please contact the University's Records Management Section in writing (including by fax, letter or email) or in some other recorded form (e.g. audio or video tape), describe the original request, explain your grounds for dissatisfaction, and include an address for correspondence. You have 40 working days from receipt of this letter to submit a review request. When the review process has been completed, if you are still dissatisfied, you may ask the Scottish Information Commissioner to intervene.

The address of the Records Management Section is Records Management Section, University of Edinburgh, Old College, South Bridge, Edinburgh, EH8 9YL, or recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely



Anne Grzybowski
Deputy Records Manager