



28 February 2020

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SECTION

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Ryan Jarvis

Sent by email: request-640656-903a60c4@whatdotheyknow.com

The University of Edinburgh
Old College
South Bridge
Edinburgh EH8 9YL

Direct Dial 0131 651 4099
Switchboard 0131 650 1000

Email recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk

Dear Mr Jarvis

Freedom of information request

Thank you for your email of 1 February 2020 requesting information about subscriptions.

The University of Edinburgh is a global university, rooted in Scotland. We are globally recognised for our research, development and innovation and we have provided world-class teaching to our students for more than 425 years. We are the largest university in Scotland and in 2018/19 our annual revenue was £1.1 billion, of which £286 million was research income. We have over 43,000 students and almost 16,000 staff. We are a founding member of the UK's Russell Group of leading research universities and a member of the League of European Research Universities.

Subscriptions to WestLaw and LexisNexis

You asked if the University subscribes to WestLaw and LexisNexis. You also asked for the cost of each subscription over a period of either one, three or five years. You asked for the number of users who can access these subscriptions, and the packages the University has access to under the contracts. Finally, you asked for a copy of the most recent invoice or purchase order confirming the amount paid by the University for these subscriptions.

I can confirm that the University subscribes to both WestLaw and Lexis/Nexis content. However, I cannot provide you with the other information you requested. This is because, although the University holds this information, it is covered by the confidentiality clause in our licence agreements with WestLaw and LexisNexis. We contacted both companies to seek their views on disclosure of this information, but they did not consent to its disclosure. Therefore disclosure would constitute an actionable breach of confidence and would also be likely to substantially prejudice the commercial interests of the suppliers by giving an unfair advantage to their competitors. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under sections 36(2) and 33(1)(b).

The second of these exemptions is subject to the public interest test. There is a strong public interest in openness and transparency, particularly in how public authorities spend

public money. The public interest is also served by encouraging the wider involvement of the private sector in public procurement to increase competition. Value for money can best be obtained where there is a healthy competitive environment, coupled with mutual trust and respect between private and public sectors. Disclosure of commercially sensitive information would damage competition, for example by discouraging companies from dealing with the University.

In this case, the University considers the public interest in withholding this information outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Right to review

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may ask the University to conduct a review of this decision by contacting the University's Records Management Section in writing (e.g. by letter or email) or in some other recorded form (e.g. audio or video tape). You should 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. The contact details for the Records Management Section are at the top of this letter. When the review process has been completed, if you are still dissatisfied, you may use the [Scottish Information Commissioner's guidance on making an appeal](#) to make an appeal to the Commissioner. If you do not have access to the Internet, please let me know and I will provide a copy of the relevant web pages.

Privacy notice for information request applicants

[The University of Edinburgh's request privacy notice](#), which describes how we use the information you have supplied about yourself and your request, is published on the University website.

Yours sincerely

Dean McAdam

Information Compliance Officer

If you require this letter in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact the Records Management Section on 0131 651 4099 or email recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk