

THE UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

A guide to charging fees

1. Introduction

This guide deals with the following questions:

1. What can we charge for the supply of information (Fol and Data Protection)?
2. Can we refuse to supply on cost grounds?

What we charge depends firstly on whether the information is covered by our Publication Scheme. Fees for information in our publication scheme can be set at any rate so long as it is consistent with University policy and practice.

Secondly, fees for information requested that is not covered by our publication scheme are governed by the following fees regulations.

The Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 No 3244)

2. A guide to the decision-making process

1. Estimate the cost of the following activities:
 - Determining whether the information is held
 - Locating and retrieval
 - Extracting the information and editing (but not including consideration as to whether the information required is exempt)

Staff time can be charged at £25.00 per person per hour (ppph)

2. Does the cost of (1) total more than £450? (that's about 2.5 day's work at £25.00 ppph)
3. If NO, we can only charge for:
 - Post,
 - Printing, and
 - Photocopying
4. If YES, **either** charge for costs listed in (1) and (3) **OR we can:**

5. Refuse to supply the information required. If refusing on this basis the applicant must be offered an alternative information option.

3. The right to access information needs to be balanced by the need of public authorities to carry out their core duties. For this reason, the Act allows for public authorities to decline to comply with certain requests for information on the grounds of cost where these would be particularly expensive, even if the applicant is willing to pay for the information.