



University of  
**Reading**

University Secretary  
Keith Hodgson BA

**Governance Directorate**

Whiteknights House  
Whiteknights, PO Box 217  
Reading RG6 6AH

phone +44 (0)118 378 8112/3

fax +44 (0)118 987 4722

email [k.n.hodgson@reading.ac.uk](mailto:k.n.hodgson@reading.ac.uk)

Mr David Holland  
6 St Mary's Court  
Gayton  
**Northampton**  
**NN7 3HP**

30 January 2009

Dear Mr Holland

You wrote on 10 December 2008 to lodge a complaint in accordance with this University's Freedom of Information Policy and Procedures. A Complaints Panel has met to consider the complaint and I enclose a copy of its report.

Yours sincerely

K.N. Hodgson



THE QUEEN'S  
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES

2005

# Freedom of Information Policy and Procedures

## Report of a Complaints Committee

1. On receipt of a complaint from David Holland ('the complainant') dated 10 December 2008 lodged in accordance with the Freedom of Information Policy and Procedures of the University of Reading ('the University'), a Complaints Panel ('the Panel') was convened by the University Secretary and Director of Governance. In accordance with the requirement that the Panel be drawn from senior University officers and lay members, the complaint was considered by:

The Vice-President of the University Council, a lay member  
The Director of Student Services, a senior University officer  
The University Secretary and Director of Governance, a senior University officer.

2. In considering the complaint, the Panel had available to it the following documents:

A copy of the letter of complaint dated 10 December 2008

A document entitled *The University of Reading: Freedom of Information - Policy and Procedures*

A copy of an enquiry from the complainant dated 8 March 2008 to which it was contended there had been no reply

A copy of an enquiry from the complainant dated 5 May 2008 together with responses thereto from the responsible body within the University (Information Management and Policy Services) ('the responsible body')

A copy of a further enquiry from the complainant dated 10 June 2008 together with responses thereto from the responsible body

A copy of a further enquiry from the complainant dated 11 July 2008 together with responses thereto from the responsible body

A copy of a further enquiry from the complainant dated 26 August 2008 together with responses thereto from the responsible body

A copy of a further enquiry from the complainant dated 8 October 2008 together with responses thereto from the responsible body.

3. In addition to examining these documents, the Panel interviewed the Information Management and Policy Services Officer, being the representative of the responsible body who had handled the case, with a view to establishing whether or not – in the view of the Panel – the responsible body had acted in accordance with its published policies and procedures in regard to the three grounds for complaint as summarised by the complainant in the first paragraph of his letter of 10 December 2008, namely that:
  - (a) the complainant was not satisfied with the disclosures he had received;
  - (b) the complainant was not satisfied that the University had a satisfactory 'publication scheme' as required by law; and
  - (c) the complainant was not satisfied that the Information Services Directorate (*sic*) was permitted to carry out the searches of information necessary to fulfil his requests.
4. In regard to the first of these, the Panel was satisfied that all the information requested subsequent to the enquiry of 8 March 2008 had been provided in accordance with published policy and procedures save in those instances where a legitimate exemption had been applied. The Panel found the apparent lack of a response to the initial enquiry of 8 March 2008 to be regrettable but, having heard an account from the representative of the responsible body of the extensive training and awareness-raising programmes offered in the areas of Freedom of Information and Data Protection to members of the University, considered this to be an aberrant instance rather than the product of a systemic failure.
5. In regard to the second of these, the Panel was satisfied that the University now had in place a 'publication scheme' which was progressively making environmental information available to the public by electronic means, and that there existed a means for the regular review of progress in this area.
6. In regard to the third of these, the Panel heard an account from the representative of the responsible body of the procedures followed - and reviewed the standard 'collection texts' applied - in the gathering of data from individual members of the University in response to a request for information. These procedures had been applied rigorously to all the enquiries made in this case after 5 May 2008 and that panel discerned no evidence to suggest that it would have been appropriate to vary them.
7. The University's consideration of the complaint is thus completed and the complainant is reminded that, should he remain dissatisfied, he has recourse to the Information Commissioner as explained in the University's published policy and procedures.