



## Freedom of Information Policy

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<b>Related Policies &amp; Procedures</b>	<a href="#">Records Management Policy</a> <a href="#">Information Management and Security Policy</a> <a href="#">Data Protection Policy</a>

### 1. SCOPE

- 1.1 This policy applies to any person who wishes to request access to information held by LSHTM, subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 1.2 This policy also applies to those at LSHTM who are responsible for responding to such requests, and for LSHTM's Publication Scheme.

### 2. PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the "Act") applies to all recorded information held by LSHTM, regardless of format, storage medium and age.
- 2.2 The Act gives the public a general right of access to information held by public authorities, subject to certain conditions and exemptions. There is no limitation on who may request access to the information, or for what purpose.
- 2.3 LSHTM is committed to the principle of public access to official information where possible and within the framework provided by the Act.

### 3. POLICY

- 3.1 The Act places the following requirements on LSHTM:
- 3.1.1 Information which is routinely published by LSHTM is made available in accordance with LSHTM's Publication Scheme;



3.1.2 Information which is not covered by the Publication Scheme is made available to enquirers on request, within 20 working days, unless a valid exemption or limit applies;

3.1.3 Exemptions under the Act and Regulations are applied appropriately, and in accordance with the legislation;

3.1.4 A fair and efficient internal review system is administered; and

3.1.5 A properly structured approach to managing records is in place to ensure that essential records of LSHTM's activities are maintained in appropriate detail.

3.2 LSHTM has a legal responsibility to comply with the Act and is accountable to the Information Commissioner. The Senior Leadership Team member with overall responsibility for this policy is the Secretary & Registrar. Whilst the Freedom of Information team responds on a day-to-day basis to requests for information, the Director of LSHTM has the final decision on the disclosure of information.

3.3 LSHTM's Freedom of Information team is responsible for the day-to-day management of compliance with the Act. This includes: developing procedures, guidance and standards of good practice; their promotion to staff through training and outreach; the maintenance and periodic review of the Freedom of Information Publication Scheme; the co-ordination of responses to more difficult or complex information requests; and the provision of advice and assistance on Freedom of Information issues.

3.4 All staff have a responsibility to respond to requests for information in accordance with the Act and to provide the Freedom of Information team with all the necessary advice and assistance when requested to do so for the purpose of responding to requests for information. There are criminal penalties (including a fine of up to £5000) for any staff member concealing, amending or destroying information which has been subject to a Freedom of Information request.

## 4. PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO REQUESTS

4.1 Freedom of Information requests made by requestors and/or received by LSHTM should be addressed to [foi@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:foi@lshtm.ac.uk).

4.2 Once received, the FOI team will log and acknowledge the request with the requestor, confirming that a response is due within 20 working days.

4.3 The FOI team will seek the requested information from the relevant data holders and respond to the requestor within 20 working days.

4.4 The FOI team will aim to respond in good time before the 20 working day limit, where it appears that a valid exemption is likely to apply to the request for information, and/or where other circumstances may prevent the release of the information (e.g. the request is misaddressed, and/or LSHTM does not hold the information requested).



4.5 Some of the grounds for exemption from providing information to a requestor require the public authority to apply the public interest test. If the FOI team considers that more time may lawfully be needed to apply the public interest test, this will be communicated to the requestor within the initial 20 working day limit, and the final response will follow within a further 20 working days.

4.6 The response will give the requestor details of what they can do if they are unhappy with the outcome of the request, including information about LSHTM's internal review process, and how to get in touch with the Information Commissioner's Office.

## 5. FURTHER GUIDANCE AND MATERIALS

5.1 LSHTM staff can access guidance and other materials on the [FOI intranet pages](#).

5.2 LSHTM also publishes [information about its approach to Freedom of Information](#), including its [publication scheme](#).

5.3 The Information Commissioner's Office is a useful source of information on Freedom of Information requests. Its website is [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

## 6. CONTACT INFORMATION

6.1 The team responsible for FOI compliance can be reached on:

6.1.1 [foi@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:foi@lshtm.ac.uk); and/or

6.1.2 020 7927 2310