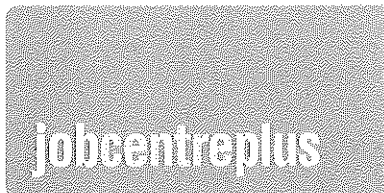


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Mr Martin Hossack
92 Granville Drive
Kingswinford
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DY6 8LW

Ref: MT/SH19Oct06
19 October 2006

Dear Mr Hossack,

Thank you for your letter of 4 October which was received on 10 October.

You have asked for information under the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts. You state in your letter that this is "... a separate request to that being dealt with by the Information Commissioner..."

However, in the Department's opinion, the information you are now asking for is on, or very similar to, the same subject matter as the earlier material which has not been provided to you and which forms the basis of your complaint to the Information Commissioner. The requests appear to be part of a grievance against the Department that you have pursued at very great length.

The Department has therefore decided that these requests should be treated as 'vexatious' under section 14(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In coming to this decision, the Department has consulted the Information Commissioner's Freedom of Information Act Awareness Guidance No 22 on Vexatious and Repeated Requests. The Commissioner's general approach is set out at section 2 where he recognises that there is a risk that some individuals may seek to abuse their rights "...with requests which are manifestly unreasonable and which would impose substantial burdens on the financial and human resources of public authorities. Such cases may arise in connection with a grievance or complaint which an individual is pursuing against the authority." The Department believes that this request of 4 October is unreasonable. The handling of previous correspondence from you in the same subject area has already imposed substantial burdens on the resources of the Department and cannot be sustained.