

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY



Our Ref: MGLA190516-1807

12 July 2016

Dear 

Reference numbers: MGLA200516-2280 and MGLA190516-1807

Thank you for your request for information which the GLA received on 19 May 2016. Your request has been dealt with under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request was in two parts. The first part requested;

"The Fashion Retail Academy applied for match funding to the London LEP (GLA administered) in February 2015 and was awarded £544,000 in June 2015 towards the complete refurbishment and upgrade of the Academy premises and IT.

Please disclose the application submitted by the academy and the subsequent contract awarded to the academy when it secured funding.

Please also disclose all correspondence between the GLA and the academy in 2015 regarding the funding."

The funding application process involves submission by the applicant of a great deal of information to provide organisational assurance. For the purpose of clarity, we have interpreted your request as relating to the issue of funding and have therefore understood its scope to extend to all the funding related application appendices (but for expediency not those on other matters e.g. technical floor plans, equal opportunities statement, building survey results, lighting layout designs etc. which I have treated as out of scope

Please find attached the information disclosed in response to your request. I hope this approach is acceptable and in keeping with your wishes in making your request but please get in touch should you wish to discuss this further following review of the attached.

A part of the information requested within scope of your request is being withheld as it falls under section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act covering commercial information as if disclosed it would advantage the Academy's competitors. We have also redacted names of staff and third parties under the exemption under section 40 covering personal information as they would not expect their details to be placed into the public domain and can therefore not be considered to have consented. The attached annex to this letter sets out the exemptions and explains why we think they apply, as well as our public interest thinking relating to exemption 43.

The second request was;

"The academy received £544,000 in June 2015 in match funding from the London LEP, administered by the GLA. A review of the academy's internal controls found that there "were some control weaknesses for part of the 2013-14 year but none were in relation to the government funding bodies grants". In the following year's accounts, the academy said the weaknesses had been remedied.

Was the GLA aware of these control weaknesses and if so what assurances, if any, did the GLA require from the academy when awarding the funding?"

Please refer to my email dated 14 June 2016 for our response.

Thank you for your interest in the work of the GLA. Having reviewed the attached I hope you will agree that we have sought to be as open as possible in dealing with your request so as balance avoiding harm to the Academy's commercial position but at the same time allowing sufficient scrutiny of the award process as to allow and satisfy the need for appropriate oversight. If you have any further questions relating to this matter, please contact me, quoting the reference at the top of this email.

Yours sincerely

If you are unhappy with the way the GLA has handled your request, you may complain using the GLA's FOI complaints and internal review procedure, available at <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/greater-london-authority-gla/sharing-our-information/freedom-information>