

Freedom of Information Act Environmental Information Regulations

Advice note

Justifying redaction: does a public authority need to justify every redaction separately?

Redaction is the process of editing requested information to remove exempt or excepted material.

When a public authority decides to redact part of the requested information, it must justify each individual redaction by reference to a specific exemption or exception, explaining why it applies.

The Information Commissioner has applied this principle when investigating complaints made under the FOIA or the EIR and in Decision Notices.

Example:

In [FS50119029](#) the Commissioner considered how the House of Lords Appointments Commission had applied separate exemptions to parts of the requested information. The Commission had redacted some information, citing specific exemptions. Although the Information Commissioner considered each redaction again and came to a different conclusion in some instances, his Decision Notice implicitly endorsed the approach to supporting each redaction separately.

Helpful links:

- Please refer to our [Document Library](#) for guidance on individual exemptions and exceptions.
- Please refer to our guidance [Redacting and extracting information](#) which explains the costs a public authority may take into account in these circumstances.
- The National Archives has produced a [Redaction toolkit](#) which provides practical guidelines.