

Your Details:

Title: Mr

First name: John

Last name: Hamill

How would you prefer to be contacted? Email

Your Application:

Name of the public authority:

Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board

What aspects of the decision are you unhappy with?

I would like to appeal an estimate of fees. On 12th October 2021 I sent an identical Fol request to every ETB in the country, including MSLETB. I have attached the document "2021-10-12 Fol Request", which includes the full text of my Fol request towards MSLETB. I was seeking invites to attend RE in-service days received by email during calendar year 2016.

For a small minority of the ETBs, I reduced the scope of the request in order to limit the number of their schools included. For an even smaller minority of the ETBs, I also limited the search by providing a few search terms to use. In the case of MSLETB, I limited the scope more tightly than for any other ETB in the country. Nevertheless, every other ETB in the country completed my request (finding few if any records) while MSLETB estimates that their search will cost €500. I have attached a table comparing the cost estimates for this identical Fol request, across every ETB in the country. It can be seen that all other ETBs responded to the request at no cost, with a limited number of scope reductions required. However, whereas the scope reductions for MSETB were more severe than for any other ETB, the estimate for the MSLETB search remains €500 while no other ETB charged anything at all.

I have also attached the following example responses to identical Fol requests towards other ETBs: On 5th November 2021, LCETB completed my Fol request at no cost. They conducted the search across 24 schools without limiting the search terms used in any way, finding zero records. On 9th November 2021, Tipperary ETB completed my Fol request at no cost. They conducted the search across 18 schools without limiting the search terms

used in any way, finding zero records. On 11th November 2021, CDETB completed my FoI request at no cost. They conducted the search across 29 schools using 6 search terms, finding 2 records. On 12th November 2021, KCETB completed my FoI request at no cost. They conducted the search across 14 schools without limiting the search terms used in any way, finding 1 record. On 16th November 2021, KWETB completed my FoI request at no cost. They conducted the search across 31 schools without limiting the search terms used in any way, finding 0 records. Despite the fact that I had limited my MSLETB request to 5 schools and 5 search terms, their estimated cost remained €500. These details are contained in the document “2021-11-11 MSLETB FoI Fees.pdf” that I have attached.

I appealed this decision on 11th November 2021, and in that appeal I listed the responses from the other ETBs. I also suggested that MSLETB should contact some of the other ETBs that I listed in order to observe how massively out of step their estimate was. I have attached that appeal in file “2021-11-11 Appeal of Fees” that I have attached. The result of my appeal was that MSLETB upheld their original estimate. I have attached these details in the file “2021-12-02 Appeal Declined” that I have attached.

Reference number - optional: M21/1210/JH

Fee Details:

Application type: Appeal decision of the FOI body to charge a fee.

Fee: No Fee

<2021-10-12 FoI Request.pdf>
<ETB FoI Results.pdf>
<2021-11-05 LCETB FoI Response.pdf>
<2021-11-09 Tipperary ETB FoI.pdf>
<2021-11-10 CDETB FoI Response.pdf>
<2021-11-11 Appeal of Fees.pdf>
<2021-11-11 MSLETB FoI Fees.pdf>
<2021-11-12 KCETB FoI Response.pdf>
<2021-11-16 KWETB FoI Response.pdf>
<2021-12-02 Appeal Declined.pdf>