

From: Freedom of Information

Sent: 29 May 2020 15:39

To:

Subject: Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/183)

Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/183)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 30 April 2020, reference K/20/183.

Your request read:

“Please complete this questionnaire and insert an **X for either YES or NO**. All questions refer to ‘students’ that are defined here as full-time undergraduate students in the current 2019/2020 academic year and those who will enrol as new or returning full-time undergraduate students in the 2020/2021 academic year only.

‘COVID-19 lockdown’ refers to the period after the date your university cancelled on-campus classes and examinations. It is assumed all universities have done this.”

QUESTIONS	YES	NO
Please state your official university name: and UKPRN (UK Provider Reference Number):		
1. Does your university gather information about the number of hours your students spend in paid employment (including evenings and weekends) during term-time?		
a) If YES, do you have this information on individual students?		
b) or is this carried out by a representative survey of students?		
2. Does your university gather information that links the number of hours students spend in term-time paid employment to attainment?		
a) If YES, do you have information on individual students?		
b) or is this carried out by a representative survey of students?		
3. Has your university gathered information about student paid employment since the COVID-19 lockdown?		
a) If YES, do you have information about individual students who are in financial difficulty due to loss of income from their employment?		
b) or is this information gathered from a representative survey?		
4. Does your university have a student hardship fund?		
a) If YES, has there been an increase in the number of students, above the number normally expected, requesting hardship support since the COVID-19 lockdown?		

5. Has your university increased student hardship fund provision, or instigated specific new hardship fund provision, since the COVID-19 lockdown?		
6. Has your university made plans, or is in the process of making plans, to increase financial support for students in hardship during the coming 2020/2021 academic year?		
7. Has your university taken any other measures in this academic year to assist students in hardship since the COVID-19 lockdown?		
If YES, please indicate which of these measures have been taken		
a) Suspension of accommodation rent payments for those still on campus.		
b) Suspension of accommodation rent payments for those who have returned home.		
c) Offered IT and/or computer/laptop support for students in hardship.		
Please indicate below what other measures you have taken, or plan to take, to assist students in hardship since the COVID-19 lockdown.		
Comments here:		

The University of Leeds holds some of this information. For your convenience we have responded to each of your questions in turn below.

1. Please state your official university name:

University of Leeds

2. and UKPRN (UK Provider Reference Number):

10007795

3. Does your university gather information about the number of hours your students spend in paid employment (including evenings and weekends) during term-time?

- a) If YES, do you have this information on individual students?
- b) or is this carried out by a representative survey of students?

The University of Leeds does not gather information of this nature.

4. Does your university gather information that links the number of hours students spend in term-time paid employment to attainment?

- c) **If YES, do you have information on individual students?**
- d) **or is this carried out by a representative survey of students?**

The University of Leeds does not gather information of this nature.

5. Has your university gathered information about student paid employment since the COVID-19 lockdown?

- e) **If YES, do you have information about individual students who are in financial difficulty due to loss of income from their employment?**
- f) **or is this information gathered from a representative survey?**

The University of Leeds does not gather this information. If students are facing financial difficulties, they can apply to one of our hardship funds (see below).

6. Does your university have a student hardship fund?

- g) **If YES, has there been an increase in the number of students, above the number normally expected, requesting hardship support since the COVID-19 lockdown?**

The University of Leeds operates two hardship funds. The [Leeds Hardship Fund](#) (for students who fit the residency criteria for the undergraduate Maintenance Loan from the Student Loans Company) and the [International Leeds Hardship Fund](#) (for students who are ineligible for UK student maintenance funding on residency grounds).

The number of applications to these funds varies from year to year; reflecting the level of student need at the time. As such, there is no “normal” level of expected requests. However, we can advise that we have received more hardship applications this year, compared to the equivalent period last year.

- 7. Has your university increased student hardship fund provision, or instigated specific new hardship fund provision, since the COVID-19 lockdown?**
- 8. Has your university made plans, or is in the process of making plans, to increase financial support for students in hardship during the coming 2020/2021 academic year?**

We address these questions together.

Yes, we do have an increased amount of hardship funding in light of COVID-19.

The University has been working with its closest partners – including Leeds University Union and its global alumni community – to support those most in need during the coronavirus crisis. Details of the support available to students into 2020/21 is available on [our website](#).

- 9. Has your university taken any other measures in this academic year to assist students in hardship since the COVID-19 lockdown?**
- a. If YES, please indicate which of these measures have been taken**
 - i. Suspension of accommodation rent payments for those still on campus.**
 - ii. Suspension of accommodation rent payments for those who have returned home.**

University of Leeds accommodation remains open, and students are able to stay in their accommodation for the remainder of the academic year. However, we understand that the current uncertainty is unsettling for students, and as such we wrote to students in University of Leeds accommodation at the end of March to advise that those wishing to cancel their accommodation contracts for term three could do so, and receive a refund of their rent for the cancelled term. To do so, students were required to notify the University by 3 April 2020.

We have published a list of Student FAQs on our dedicated [Coronavirus information webpages](#), including [accommodation-specific FAQs](#).

- b. Offered IT and/or computer/laptop support for students in hardship.**

[Online learning advice for students](#) has been published on our website. Students requiring specific software or other support should liaise directly with their School.

Students who have hardship needs relating to accessing laptops/technical equipment can request support via their academic school. There is a coordinated process which enables students to be loaned the relevant equipment, typically a laptop, from IT services.

More general [hardship funding](#) is available via an online process.

- 10. Please indicate below what other measures you have taken, or plan to take, to assist students in hardship since the COVID-19 lockdown.**

We have published a wide range of information and FAQs aimed at current and prospective students on our [dedicated webpages](#).

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any questions about this email, however, please do not hesitate to contact us on foi@leeds.ac.uk

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you can request an Internal Review. Requests for Internal Review should be made in writing using the following contact information:

Post: Mr D Wardle
Deputy Secretary
The University of Leeds
Leeds

LS2 9JT

Email: foi@leeds.ac.uk

Requests for Internal Review should be submitted within 40 working days of receiving the University's response to your request. Further information about how the University manages Freedom of Information requests and about our complaints procedure is also available on our website (www.leeds.ac.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review/complaints procedure provided by the University. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Kind regards

Chloe Wilkins

Freedom of Information Officer

Secretariat

University of Leeds