

From: Freedom of Information

Sent: 20 August 2020 15:31

To:

Subject: Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/279)

Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/279)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 23 July 2020, reference K/20/279.

Your request read:

“Professor Hill has been accused of racism in a petition signed by over 500 students.

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/leeds-university-must-suspend-racist-professor>

Firstly, please would you inform me of the number of times the Professor Hill has been accused of racism, either as formal complaints or any informal accusations. I would be grateful if you could go back as far back as 2009 when he became chair of the Progress Committee.

If any investigations have been carried out, please provide details after excluding any personally identifiable information

Please would you also inform me of any other medical school committee's Professor Andrew Hill serves on

Finally please can you provide any documents or communication relating to the Leeds School of Medicines response to the petition”

Under section 40(5B)(a)(i) of the Freedom of Information Act, the University of Leeds neither confirms nor denies whether it holds the information you have requested. Section 40(5B)(a)(i) sets out that the duty to confirm or deny does not arise where such confirmation or denial would, in itself, contravene any of the data protection principles (in this case, principle (a); that information must be processed lawfully, fairly and transparently). Employees have legitimate and reasonable expectations that the university, as a responsible employer, will not disclose to the public whether disciplinary information about them exists. It is clear that confirmation or denial is likely to cause distress to the relevant individual(s). While we appreciate that there is a public interest in understanding that concerns regarding employees are appropriately investigated and responded to, we consider that this interest is met by the disciplinary procedures themselves. As such, confirmation or denial is unnecessary and would therefore be unlawful.

Whilst the University is not in a position to share personal information about a named individual we can confirm that the School of Medicine mirrors the University's commitment to equality and inclusion, taking any accusations of racism very

seriously, and investigating all complaints and allegations made using the appropriate University Policies and Procedures.

In addition, the School launched a new Vision in May 2019, developed following an all staff engagement exercise in which over 50% of our staff participated. The Vision includes a behavioural framework, compiled directly from the staff feedback, which maps onto the University's Values, and specifically references our commitment to inclusivity. Work continues to embed the framework, and has included the appointment of an Associate Dean for Equality and Inclusion and a commitment to deliver the *BMA Charter for Medical Schools to Prevent and Address Racial Harassment* (<https://www.bma.org.uk/media/2030/bma-med-school-charter-implementation.pdf>). The four pillars to the BMA Charter include supporting individuals to speak out and ensuring robust processes for reporting and handling complaints. A detailed implementation plan for delivery of the Charter will be developed in collaboration with students. We are in the process of establishing a Student Council for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, to commence early in the 2020/21 academic year, and which will include representatives from all programmes across the school, together with the School's Dean, Associate Dean for Student Education and Associate Dean for Equality and Inclusion. The Council will provide a forum for students to have open conversations with senior staff, and also act as a mechanism for the co-production of School EDI action plans. We are also setting up a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian pathway, supported by Freedom to Speak Up Student ambassadors. Similar to an existing system in the NHS, the Guardian pathway should support people to speak up about inappropriate behaviours and bullying/harassment including sexual or racial harassment when they feel that they are unable to do so by other routes.

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