

**From:** Freedom of Information

**Sent:** 17 August 2020 15:56

**To:**

**Subject:** Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/286)

Dear

### **Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/286)**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 27 July 2020, reference K/20/286.

Your request read:

“How many official complaints of racism or racial harassment were lodged to the university by i) staff members and ii) students - for each of the following three academic years: a) 2017/2018 b) 2018/2019 c) 2019/2020?”

How many of the official complaints of racism or racial harassment that were lodged to the university were upheld, for complaints made by i) staff members and ii) students - for each of the three following academic years: a) 2017/2018 b) 2018/2019 c) 2019/2020?

Do you have an official, separate procedure to deal with incidents of racism or racial harassment? If so, could you please outline details of this.”

The University of Leeds holds this information.

We do not have a separate procedure for complaints of racism or racial harassment. Any such matters are handled via our normal processes. However, in addition to the normal complaints process, staff and students can also report hate crimes (including racism), sexual assault and online harassment via [our online reporting tool](#). Users of the tool can do so anonymously, and as such reports made via this method cannot be processed as complaints (as no contact information is given, we cannot engage directly with the complainant). The aim of the tool is to provide appropriate support and signposting to individuals who want to ensure that there is a record of the incident, but do not wish to commence formal complaint proceedings.

We do not yet hold information in relation to complaints made by students in the 2019/20 academic year. Complaints made by students are categorised by subject. Complaints of racism or racial harassment would fall under the category of “Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation”. This categorisation occurs as part of our work to produce Student Cases Team annual reports. As such, complaints are not so categorised until such time as the relevant report is produced. We have not yet produced a report for the 2019/20 academic year, which has only just finished. As such extensive manual effort would be required in order to identify the complaints relevant to your request for this most recent year. We have received approximately 200 complaints during 2019/20. Even if we use a conservative estimate of ten minutes to review and categorise each complaint (taking into account that some cases will be straightforward and thus easily categorised, while others will

be very complex with high volumes of associated material), this would take over 2000 minutes or 33 hours to complete.

As such, to respond to your request as is it currently framed would vastly exceed the appropriate limit set out at section 12(1) of the FOI Act. However, if you were to resubmit your request without reference to the 2019/20 academic year (students only), we consider it likely that we will be able to provide a response within the 18-hour appropriate limit.

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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