

From: Freedom of Information
Sent: 27 August 2020 16:02
To:
Subject: Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/296)

Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/296)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 4 August 2020, reference K/20/296.

Your request read:

*Please supply information on all students who began courses in the academic years we have asked for, **regardless** of which month your university's academic year begins. If a student has stepped off from their studies, or otherwise taken a break, in the academic year we have asked for completion rates for, **please count this as a non-completion.***

Nursing student questions: PLEASE NOTE THE REQUEST FOR ALL FIELDS OF NURSING TO BE INCLUDED, AS DETAILED AT QUESTION 4.

1. How many undergraduate students began three-year pre-registration nursing degree courses [in any field of nursing] at your university in the academic year 2016/17?
2. How many undergraduate students *completed* this three-year pre-registration nursing degree course [of any field of nursing] at your university [in 2019]?
3. If applicable - How many undergraduate students began four-year pre-registration nursing degree courses [in any field of nursing] at your university in the academic year 2015/16?
4. If applicable - How many undergraduate students *completed* this four-year pre-registration nursing degree course [of any field of nursing] at your university [in 2019]?
5. As well as providing an overall total of nursing students who began and completed these courses, ***please also supply the same information on starters and completers but broken down into nursing field of study, eg; 'Mental Health Nursing' students; 'Adult Nursing' students; 'Learning Disability Nursing' students; 'Children's Nursing' students.***

EXAMPLE OF THE BREAKDOWN OF INFORMATION I AM LOOKING FOR:

	How many students started three-year pre-	How many completed these three-	How many students started four-	How many completed these three-
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	reg nursing degrees in 2016?	year courses in 2019?	year nursing degrees in 2015?	year courses in 2019?
Total	190	145	20	19
Mental health nursing	35	25	N/A	N/A
Learning Disability Nursing	25	20	N/A	N/A
Children's nursing	60	50	N/A	N/A
Adult nursing	70	50	20	19

5. ***If applicable to your institution***, please tell us how many students began nursing degree apprenticeships in 2019-20?
6. How many of these students are still registered on the course?

The University of Leeds holds this information, some of which is disclosed in the attached spreadsheet.

With regard to questions five and six of your request, we consider that the exact number of students is exempt under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 43(2) sets out that information is exempt from disclosure if its release would or would be likely to reveal commercially sensitive information. In this case, due to the competitive nature of degree apprenticeship, we consider that to reveal the exact number of registered apprentices would reveal to competitor organisations our current capacity and could reveal the identities of our Employer Partners. This information could be used to:

- gain a competitive advantage in tender exercises;
- undercut the University in charges for apprenticeship training (when not acquired through a tender process);
- target our Employer partners for business and;
- reveal our Employer Partners employee (apprentice) numbers.

Releasing this information would therefore be likely to jeopardise the trust between our Employer Partners and the University, in turn severely undermining our ability to work with them, as key partners, in future. This would impact future provision of degree apprenticeships. This clearly demonstrates the prejudice which would be likely to occur should this information be released.

Section 43(2) is a qualified exemption, which means we are required to consider the public interest for and against the disclosure of the information. We recognise that

there is some public interest in understanding the popularity of these courses. It is important to demonstrate that courses are meeting the needs of apprentices and industry, and this need can in part be met by revealing how many apprentices are taking the courses. However, we also consider that there is a very strong public interest in ensuring that we can continue to provide degree apprenticeships. It is therefore in the public interest to ensure that any information which would be likely to jeopardise the financial viability of these courses is protected from disclosure. On balance, it is our conclusion that the public interest is in favour of protecting the information.

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