

From: Freedom of Information

Sent: 09 October 2020 15:58

To:

Subject: Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/335)

Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/335)

Thank you for your clarified Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 18 September 2020, reference K/20/335.

You originally wrote to us on 1 September 2020, as follows;

“Please provide me an excel sheet with the following information for each of the latest 2 admission cycle for the Physician Associate Studies course:

* A-level subject grades

* Bachelors Degree grade

* Home / International (non-EU)

* Interviewed / Not interviewed

* Made an offer / Not made an offer

* Enrolled / Applicant declined offer / Applicant did not meet offer

And the total number of applicants who applied and total number given offers.

The latest 2 admission cycle - 2019/20 and 2018/2019.

If you do not have 2019/20, then please provide for 2018/19 and 2017/18.”

You clarified your request on 18 September 2020, as follows;

- “ ‘A-level subject grades’ - for those who applied to the course and had taken A-level grades, I would like to know which grades the applicant held at the time of application.
- ‘Bachelors Degree grade’ - for those who applied to the course and have a bachelors degree, I would like to know what grade they had received at the time of application.
- ‘Home/International (non-EU) - seeking information in relation to the number of applicants in each category - however, as you have stated you do not accept international students onto this course, this point can be disregarded.”

The University of Leeds may hold some information relevant to your request. However, we consider that to respond to your request as it is currently framed would exceed the cost limit as set out in Section 12(1) of the FOI Act. Section 12(1) states that a public authority can refuse a request if complying with it would exceed the appropriate limit of £450. For the purposes of FOI, time spent on the permitted activities is calculated at the flat rate of £25 per person, per hour. The appropriate limit therefore represents the estimated cost of one person spending 18 hours to determine whether the information is held, and to locate, retrieve and extract the information.

We have outlined the reasons for invoking Section 12(1) below.

The system used to manage applications does not have a specific field within which A-Level grades and/or bachelor's degree results should be recorded. As such, in order to first establish whether an application contained this information, and then to extract it from the application information, a member of staff would need to review each application in turn. There is no set structure which applications must adhere to, and as such there is no single 'relevant section' which can be reviewed (which would be much faster). Instead, the application must be reviewed in full. We estimate that it would take an average of five minutes to review each application. In practice, some applications may be reviewed more quickly (for instance applications which contain only scant detail), while others will take significantly longer. In 2019/20, a total of 221 applications were received. At an average of five minutes per application, we therefore estimate that it would take in excess of 18 hours and 25 minutes to review 2019/20 applications alone. A total of 189 applications were received in 2020/21, requiring a further 15 hours and 45 minutes. This, therefore, exceeds the appropriate limit of 18 hours set out at section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Under our section 16 duty to advise and assist applicants, we are required to provide guidance to those whose requests have been refused under section 12(1) in order to assist them in refining their request, reducing the amount of time required. In this case if you were to remove the parts of your request which seek information regarding A-level and/or degree grades, it is likely that we would be able to provide a response within the appropriate limit.

Please also note that the coronavirus pandemic continues to impact organisations such as universities in a range of ways. Most staff continue to work from home, and it remains necessary for us to prioritise the education of our students, and the health and wellbeing of all members of the university community when considering resource allocation. As such, even where a refined request does not exceed the appropriate limit set out at section 12(1), it may be necessary for us to consider refusing requests which unduly burden the responsible team(s) under [section 14\(1\)](#) of the FOI Act. We therefore advise that any resubmitted request should be specific and limited to the information most relevant to you, in order to reduce the risk of the request being refused.

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