

From: Freedom of Information

Sent: 05 November 2020 16:19

To:

Subject: Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/394)

Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/394)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 8 October 2020, reference K/20/394.

Your request read:

“Please provide me with any information the university has on why, if this is the current situation, it requires:

i) two members of staff to assess information contained in application forms in order to make a decision as to whether the application is sufficiently strong to progress to the next recruitment stage, which is interviews, or be rejected,

ii) three members of staff to assess applicants at interview in order to make a decision as to whether the application is sufficiently strong to progress to the next recruitment stage, which is references, or be rejected,

ii) but only one member of staff, the recruiting manager, to assess information contained in references in order to make a decision about whether the application is sufficiently strong to progress to the next recruitment stage, which is an unconditional contract, or be rejected.

as this appears to be a serious weakness in the mitigation of the risk of a consciously or unconsciously biased decision being made at the references stage.

Alternatively please provide information on the current situation as regards the above number of staff making decisions at each of the above recruitment stages, and why this number of staff was selected for each stage.”

The University of Leeds holds some information relevant to your request.

Our current recruitment guidance is available on [our website](#).

The guidance (on page 25) outlines that shortlisting must be undertaken by at least two suitable people, independently in the first instance, who then come together to agree a final shortlist. This is to ensure decisions are not made based on a sole opinion.

Interview panels should have a minimum of two people, again to ensure that appointments are not made based on a sole opinion. The full details of interview panel makeup can be found on pages 36-37 of the recruitment guidance.

The guidance (on page 32) outlines that references should not be used as a means of initial selection and should be used to 'back-up' a decision which has already been made. Our recommended practice therefore is to try to obtain references after an offer of employment is made. This process is managed by the University Human Resources Department.

We take the withdrawal of any offer of employment seriously, ensuring the process followed is appropriate. This process would be managed by the University Human Resources Department in conjunction with the recruiting department and therefore the decision to withdraw an offer of employment is not made by one person.

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