

From: Freedom of Information

Sent: 06 November 2020 16:16

To:

Subject: Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/415)

Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/415)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 19 October 2020, reference K/20/415.

Your request read:

“1a) How many undergraduate students have you had in total in your medical school during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

b) How many BAME undergraduate students have you had in total in your medical school during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

c) How many members of academic teaching staff have you have in total in your medical school during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

d) How many members of BAME academic teaching staff have you had in total in your medical school during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

2a) How many undergraduate medical students in total had to resit exams and assessments during the following academic years:

- iv) 2017/2018
- v) 2018/2019
- vi) 2019/2020

2b) How many BAME undergraduate medical students in total had to resit exams and assessments during the following academic years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

2c) How many undergraduate medical students in total had to repeat a year of study during the following academic years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

2d) How many BAME undergraduate medical students in total had to repeat a year of study during the following academic years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

3a) How many undergraduate medical students in total failed exams and assessments during the following academic years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

3b) How many BAME undergraduate medical students in total failed exams and assessments during the following academic years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

3c) How many undergraduate medical students in total failed their entire course during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

3d) How many BAME undergraduate medical students in total failed their entire course during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

4a) How many undergraduate medical students in total were referred to disciplinary and/or conduct committees during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

4b) How many BAME undergraduate medical students in total were referred to disciplinary and/or conduct committees during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

5a) How many complaints relating to discrimination were made to the medical school/university by undergraduate medical students during the following years:

- i) 2017/2018
- ii) 2018/2019
- iii) 2019/2020

b) How many of the complaints relating to discrimination made by undergraduate medical students between 2017-2020 were upheld?

c) How many complaints relating to discrimination were made to the medical school/university by BAME undergraduate medical students during the following years:

i) 2017/2018

ii) 2018/2019

iii) 2019/2020

d) How many of the complaints relating to discrimination made by BAME undergraduate medical students between 2017-2020 were upheld?"

You wrote to us again on 23 October 2020, as follows:

"I just wanted to clarify that Q5a-d of my request relate to racial discrimination only."

The University of Leeds holds 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.

There is no business need for us to specifically record the ethnicity of students alongside information regarding module results, complaints, referrals to disciplinary committees etc. (referred to from this point on as 'relevant events'). The ethnicity of the student in these matters does not change how we handle the case. To do so would in fact be a disproportionate use of personal data and would therefore be inappropriate. Although your request is specific to undergraduate medical students, records associated with relevant events will be held in a variety of places across the University, meaning there is no single location we could search for relevant information.

As such, the only means of establishing the information you have requested would be to review all relevant events and record the name and/or student identity number of each relevant student. Each search would need to be repeated for each of the academic years relevant to your request. The resultant list could then be cross referenced with individual student records in order to isolate undergraduate medical students, and to identify the ethnicity of each relevant student.

It is not possible to provide an overall estimate of how many relevant events would be identified. However, we have set out below an estimate of how long it would take to locate the information you have requested in relation to a sub-set of complaints only.

Our Student Cases Team (SCT) handles formal complaints made by students at the University level. Complaints to the SCT can be made by all students, and as such it

would be necessary to review each record in turn in order to establish: what the subject of the complaint was; whether the complainant is (or was) an undergraduate studying medicine; whether the complaint was upheld, and; the ethnicity of the student. As outlined above, it is unlikely that ethnicity data will be specifically recorded alongside the complaint information (except where it is directly relevant to the substance of the complaint), and as such this information would need to be obtained separately.

Complaints made by students are categorised by subject. The categories we report on are as follows:

- Academic provision
- Quality of supervision and teaching
- Failure to meet obligations
- Deficiencies in standards of service
- Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation

Complaints in relation to “racial discrimination” are likely to fall under the category of “Discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation”. It is also possible that such complaints may span multiple categories.

This categorisation occurs as part of our work to produce SCT annual reports. As such, complaints are not so categorised until the relevant report is produced. We do not yet hold collated information in relation to complaints made by students in the 2018/19 or 2019/20 academic years. Extensive manual effort would therefore be required in order to identify the complaints relevant to your request. The SCT has received approximately 200 complaints during 2019/20. Some cases will be straightforward and thus easily categorised, while others will be very complex with high volumes of associated material. We therefore estimate that it would take an average of ten minutes to review and categorise each complaint. To locate relevant information held by the SCT for 2019/20 alone would therefore take over 2000 minutes or 33 hours to complete.

It is important to note that information held by the SCT is more readily available than complaints information held across the School or Faculty. This is because the processing of student complaints is one of the main functions of the SCT. However, we also note that the SCT is likely to hold more complaints information than the School or Faculty (again as this is one of their main functions). On balance, we therefore estimate that it would take the School and Faculty at least as much time again (i.e. 33 hours) to locate information they hold which is relevant to your request.

We are therefore satisfied that to respond to your request as it is currently framed would take far in excess of the 18-hour appropriate limit.

Under our section 16 duty to advise and assist, we hope that the following information is helpful to you, should you wish to submit a refined request.

The information you have requested at question one is straightforward and could be provided within the 18-hour appropriate limit. We could also answer your remaining questions if no breakdown by ethnicity was required. However, we recognise that

this would be unlikely to meet the aims of your request. As such, you may wish to consider limiting your request to one area of student life (i.e. only disciplinary matters, or only resits etc.). If you choose to pursue information about complaints, we recommend that also substantially reduce the timeframe (e.g. to months rather than years).

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