From: Freedom of Information
Sent: 30 July 2020 16:04
To:
Subject: Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/248)

Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/20/248)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 2 July 2020, reference K/20/248.

The subject line of your email read:

“Planning for a safer and more equitable future for every student in the School of Medicine 2020 (3)”

Your request read:

“I kindly request the results of this survey, and the results from survey 1 & 2

The email containing the survey included the following quote

"This survey was last run in January 2018. Based on student responses the School made a number of important changes, including using actors rather than students as live models in anatomy classes, training our staff on equality issues and how to support affected students, raising awareness of dignity and respect at student induction, and improving the process and outcomes for students reporting issues of sexism, racism, discrimination or harassment”

How has the School of Medicine improved the process and outcomes for students reporting issues of sexism, racism, discrimination or harassment?"

The University of Leeds holds this information. We have responded to each part of your request separately below.

Survey results
The results from the 2020, 2018 and 2015 surveys are set out in the attached PDF. Experiences of racism and race hate crimes were collected only in the 2020 survey to inform the implementation of the BMA Charter for medical schools to prevent and address racial harassment.

There were 577 responses to the 2020 survey, 410 to the 2018 survey and 523 to 2015 survey, but it is possible that there were some duplicate responses.

We are withholding the responses to open ended questions under section 40(2) of the FOI Act. This is in order to protect the identities and personal information of respondents, who were assured that their responses would be confidential. Disclosure would therefore be unfair and would breach their data protection rights.
Improvements
Following the first survey in 2015 we have:

- Improved dissemination of existing reporting and complaints structures through Course handbooks, information on placement, sessions at induction weeks, the School website and within each survey. Agreement with the question “I know how to make a complaint to the University about gender inequality, sexual harassment, offensive sexualised behaviour or sexual assault” has improved from 33.3% in 2015 to 40.4% in 2020 but we continue to find ways to ensure reporting processes are better known. This is the first time we have asked the question “I know how to make a complaint to the School about racism or racist hate crime” 40.2% of students responded yes in 2020.

- A presentation at an induction week in 2018 led to students approaching the Associate Dean for EDI offering to work with her to tackle harassment and discrimination on placement. Since then an informal group of students have supported this work and, for example, were instrumental in making changes to the 2020 survey to capture information on training needs and other forms of discrimination.

- The value of the survey anonymity is demonstrated by students using the survey as a safe space to report incidents or concerns. Although anonymous, we have been able to take action in some cases where sufficient information is provided, though we cannot feedback to the student who reported it. Sensitivity of this information, for example in terms of possible student identity means that we cannot openly report follow up to the wider student body.

- We have trained staff, including student support colleagues, to be first responders to reports of partner physical or sexual violence. This includes listening and validation, signposting to student support or counselling and external support for those experiencing this kind of violence, including voluntary sector organisations and the police. We do not record these encounters as they are not reports or complaints related to the School of Medicine. The surveys initially identified to us as something which can affect students as well as staff.

- Through reports to senior staff including the Associate Dean for EDI, and staff organising placements, we know that since we started the survey students are more likely to raise concerns about racism, sexism or other perceptions of discrimination they experience during teaching or on placement. This report may be to a tutor, placement organiser, IDEALS tutor or another lecturer/tutor. There is no central system for recording every single incident across all aspects of the courses run within the School. Incidents reported on placement are recorded by course leads and always followed up, but the sensitivity of this information and the need to protect student confidentiality means that we cannot openly report follow up.

We know that racism, sexism, misogyny, sexual and racial violence are unfortunately part of our society in the UK. Since starting the surveys in 2015 we are now aware that some students of the medical school are also affected. We have used this knowledge to work towards improving reporting and outcomes for our students and
working across medical schools to bring about change through the sector and the NHS. To our knowledge we are the first medical school in the UK to survey our students in this way; other medical schools are intending to use our survey to inform their processes and outcomes also. The School wants all our students to be safe and be treated with dignity and respect, but if they are not, that they feel confident to report to us so that we can take appropriate action. We therefore see a rise in reports as a positive sign that our processes are beginning to improve and along with them outcomes for individual students, but we are committed to work, which will prevent the need for such reports in the first place, including student and staff training and awareness raising.

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