Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/21/249)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 24 May 2021, reference K/21/249. Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding to your request.

Your request read:

“Please could you give me the information below covering the past 10 years under the Freedom of Information Act.

1. How many undergraduate students have been unable to take up places because of failed ATAS clearance. The year they failed, the course applied for and their nationality.
2. How many post-graduate students have been unable to take up their study because of failed ATAS clearance. The year they failed, research subject and their nationality.
3. How many academics have had job offers/teaching posts rescinded because of failed ATAS clearances. They year they failed, their subject area and nationality.”

The University of Leeds holds some of this information.

ATAS clearance is not required for any undergraduate courses, and as such we do not hold any information in relation to your first question.

In relation to your second question, we only hold information dating back to the 2017/2018 academic year. Within this time a total of 12 postgraduate students have applied for postgraduate courses but not received the necessary ATAS clearances. Of these, three occurred in 2017/18; four in 2019/20; four in 2020/21 and two in the current academic year, 2021/22. The nationalities of these students are as follows:

- Two Chinese
- Four Iranian
- Six Pakistani

The subjects applied for were as follows:

- Master on Tribology of Surfaces and Interfaces (three applications)
- Postgraduate Research - Electronic and Electrical Engineering
- MSc Material Science and Engineering
- MSc Advanced Mechanical Engineering
- PhD Computing
- Provisional PhD Civil Engineering
- Provisional PhD Mechanical Engineering (four applications).
We are withholding the linked information (i.e., linking the nationality of the student with the year they applied and the subject they applied for) under section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 40(2) sets out that information is exempt from disclosure if it is the personal data of someone other than the person making the request, and disclosure would: contravene the data protection principles; contravene an objection to processing; or if the data is exempt from the right of subject access. We consider that the release of this information would be likely to lead to the identification of individuals, and would therefore reveal sensitive information regarding their ethnicity, and ACAS application. This would be unfair and would therefore breach their data protection rights.

In relation to your third question, no staff members have had offers rescinded on account of failing to secure ATAS clearance.

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.

Yours sincerely

Chloe Wilkins  
Freedom of Information Officer

Secretariat  
University of Leeds