Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/21/309)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 24 June 2021, reference K/21/309.

You originally wrote to the University of Leeds on 10 June 2021, and asked:

“please provide the number of complaints made by staff in professional services between 2019 and present as follows

Total complaints made
Total complaints grouped by the department the complaint relates to”

On 24 June 2021, you clarified your request as follows:

“the request is for all complaints relating to discrimination regardless on the type.”

The University of Leeds holds this information.

Between 2019 and the date of your clarification (24 June 2021), a total of 10 complaints related to discrimination have been made by staff who work in the Professional Services department.

Complaints have been made by members of staff in the following teams (listed in alphabetical order):

- IT
- Library
- Student Education Service

Due to the small number of complaints received in total, we consider that providing a per-team breakdown would risk the identification of complainants and other relevant parties. The scope of your request is limited to complaints received in a relatively short space of time, on the subject of discrimination, and which were made by members of staff working within a specific department. There are already, therefore, only a limited number of people who could have brought the complaints which fall within the scope of your request. We consider that to provide a breakdown of the number of complaints per department would increase the likelihood that complainants could be identified, and/or details of complaints could be revealed. For instance, it is feasible to assume that, if someone in a department has made a complaint, the existence of a complaint may be known to some people working in that department. If we were to confirm that only one complaint had been received by
that department, individuals would be able to conclude that the complaint of which they have some awareness was about discrimination. This infringes upon the confidential nature of the complaints process. We are therefore withholding this information 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. This would be unfair and would therefore breach their data protection rights.

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