Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/21/161)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 29 March 2021, reference K/21/161. Please accept our sincere apologies for the delay in responding to your request.

Your request read:

“I would like to know:

1) How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) committed by students have been reported to the university since September 2016?
2) How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) committed by academic staff have been reported to the university since September 2016?
3) How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) committed by non-academic staff have been reported to the university since September 2016?
4) How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) were investigated internally by the university since September 2016?
5) How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) were investigated by the police since September 2016?
6) How many staff have left the university following investigations into claims of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) since September 2016?
7) How many students have left the university following investigations into claims of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) since September 2016?
8) How many students have signed NDA’s (non-disclosure agreements) with the university following investigations into sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) since September 2016?
9) How many academic staff have signed NDA’s (non-disclosure agreements) with the university following investigations into sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) since September 2016?
10) How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape), resulted in money being paid out to students by the university since September 2016? I would like the exact amount listed for each individual payout and an overall figure.
Sexual misconduct is used here as an umbrella term to cover any offence defined by the Sexual Offences Act 2003. I would like this information broken down year by year, separated between students, academic staff and non-academic staff. I would like this information in Excel format if possible.

The University of Leeds holds some of this information. We have responded to each of your questions in turn below. Due to the way we hold information, and the narrative answers required in response to some of your questions, it has not been possible to provide this information in Excel format.

1) **How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) committed by students have been reported to the university since September 2016?**

Accusations of sexual assault made against students are handled by the Student Cases Team. The information held by the Student Cases Team is limited to the academic year 2018/19 onwards. As such, we cannot provide any information in relation to student/student reports for the academic years 2016/17 or 2017/18. Between 2018/19, and 2020/21 (to 29 March 2021), a total of 33 reports have been made.

2) **How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) committed by academic staff have been reported to the university since September 2016?**

Accusations made against members of staff are handled by HR. Nine such allegations have been made.

3) **How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) committed by non-academic staff have been reported to the university since September 2016?**

Eight such allegations have been made.

4) **How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) were investigated internally by the university since September 2016?**

All reports made to the University are investigated as necessary.

5) **How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) were investigated by the police since September 2016?**

The University of Leeds does not refer complaints to the police. Individuals who make reports to the University will be offered appropriate signposting advice, which may include to the police, but it would be inappropriate for the University to take the decision to involve the police; this is a decision which appropriately and necessarily sits with the reporting individual.
6) How many staff have left the university following investigations into claims of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) since September 2016?

We understand this to refer to staff members who have been dismissed or resigned in connection with complaints into sexual misconduct. Three members of staff have left the University in this manner since September 2016.

7) How many students have left the university following investigations into claims of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) since September 2016?

As above, we understand this question to refer to students who have been permanently excluded or have withdrawn from study in connection with complaints into sexual misconduct, rather than students who have simply come to the end of their studies or have withdrawn for other reasons.

As set out in response to question one above, the information we hold in relation to complaints about students is limited to the academic year 2018/19 onwards. A total of three students have left the University in this manner since 2018/19.

8) How many students have signed NDA’s (non-disclosure agreements) with the university following investigations into sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) since September 2016?

9) How many academic staff have signed NDA’s (non-disclosure agreements) with the university following investigations into sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape) since September 2016?

We address these questions together. The University of Leeds does not use specific non-disclosure agreements. However, we do use settlement agreements in a variety of cases regarding staff, such as in voluntary severance. We do not use settlement agreements in student-related matters.

We do not record whether someone who has signed a settlement agreement has previously raised concerns regarding sexual misconduct, or been the subject of such a complaint.

However, as the University does not currently, nor has it previously, used confidentiality clauses within settlement agreements as ‘gagging clauses’ to prevent public interest disclosures as defined by law, we consider it extremely unlikely that there have been any cases which fall within the scope of your request.

We can also advise that as part of the settlement process, individuals are required to obtain independent legal advice. As such, if an individual had concerns which they had not raised previously with the University, we would expect their legal advisor(s) to provide them with appropriate advice and guidance on how the settlement
agreement may impact on any intention to pursue any other avenues (such as criminal proceedings).

10) How many complaints of sexual misconduct (sexual harassment, sexual assault or rape), resulted in money being paid out to students by the university since September 2016? I would like the exact amount listed for each individual payout and an overall figure.

We have made one payment of £1000 as a goodwill gesture (relating to the handling, not the substance, of a particular case).

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