Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 10 May 2021, reference K/21/228. Please accept our sincere apologies for the delay in responding to your request.

Your request read:

1 - Over your past 5 years, how many disabled students enrolled on all journalism related courses hosted by your institution? Please note that the term “disability” includes all legal and recognised forms of disability, including physical disabilities, mental health and specific learning disabilities (e.g. dyslexia, autism spectrum conditions, etc)
2 - Of that number, how many disabled students graduated with accreditation from either the NCTJ, the BTJC or the PPA?
3 - How many students, if any, had to withdraw from the programme over the past 5 years?
4 - Over the past 5 years, how many needed reasonable adjustments in order to complete their course?
5 - Out of all disabled students studying your courses, how many graduated both with and without accreditation over the past 5 years?
6 - How many disabled students, if any, took a shorthand component in order to complete their course over the past 5 years?
7 - If applicable, over the past 5 years, how many disabled students passed a 60wpm shorthand exam?
8 - If applicable, how many disabled students passed a 100wpm shorthand exam?

The University of Leeds holds some of this information. For your convenience we have responded to each of your questions in turn below.

1. **Over your past 5 years, how many disabled students enrolled on all journalism related courses hosted by your institution?**

A total of 28 new students with disabilities have enrolled on journalism-related courses over the past five years.

2. **Of that number, how many disabled students graduated with accreditation from either the NCTJ, the BTJC or the PPA?**

We do not record this information.
3. **How many students, if any, had to withdraw from the programme over the past 5 years?**

Fewer than five students with disabilities have withdrawn from journalism programmes over the timeframe of your request. We are withholding the exact number to protect the identities of students. We do so under section 40(2) of the FOI 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. Releasing information which would allow the identification of students (for instance, by their classmates who may already have some information which, when put together with the number of withdrawals, may allow the identification of those who withdrew), would be unfair to those students, would contravene their expectations and would there breach the data protection principles, thus engaging section 40(2).

4. **Over the past 5 years, how many needed reasonable adjustments in order to complete their course?**

We do not keep a central record of all adjustments made for disabled students. Some adjustments can be one-off, ad-hoc and/or informal, thus not requiring a record to be made. We encourage constant communication between all students and their module leaders, and as such it is likely that the vast majority of adjustments which are required are resolved on an informal basis.

If this part of your request relates to extenuating circumstances submissions (e.g. cases where students have formally requested additional time to complete coursework, due to a disability), this would exceed the appropriate limit set out at section 12(1) of the FOI Act. The University does not hold a central repository of all extenuating/mitigating circumstances forms submitted. These are held at an individual school level. In order to identify cases relevant to your request, and to isolate the information you are seeking (e.g. whether the student is studying journalist, and whether they have a disability), each individual form would need to be reviewed in turn. Mitigating circumstances forms can be completed by hand and as such this review would need to be conducted manually. Hundreds of mitigating circumstances requests are received by the School of Media and Communication each year. Even allowing a very conservative estimate of two minutes per request, we estimate that this would take over 30 hours to complete (minimum of 200 requests per year; two minutes per request; five years’ worth of data).

5. **Out of all disabled students studying your courses, how many graduated both with and without accreditation over the past 5 years?**

A total of 34 students with disabilities have graduated from journalism-related courses over the past five years. We do not record information regarding accreditation.

6. **How many disabled students, if any, took a shorthand component in order to complete their course over the past 5 years?**
7. If applicable, over the past 5 years, how many disabled students passed a 60wpm shorthand exam?
8. If applicable, how many disabled students passed a 100wpm shorthand exam?

We address these questions together. We do not use any shorthand related assessments as part of journalism courses, and as such do not hold any information in relation to these parts of your request.

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