Dear

Freedom of Information Response (Our Ref: K/21/365)

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (FOI) request dated 22 July 2021, reference K/21/365.

Your request read:

1. “The number of Provisional PhD students in the Management Division (Leeds University Business School) who failed their transfer exam, and hence failed to have their PhD status confirm in the years 2015 to 2021.

2. The number of PhD students in the Management Division (Leeds University Business School) who were requested to transfer from a PhD to an MPhil status in the years 2015 to 2021.

3. The number of PhD students in the Management Division (Leeds University Business School) who were requested to withdraw from the PhD program in the years 2015 to 2021.

4. The number of instances where Provision PhD students and PhD students reported inappropriate PhD supervisor behaviour in the Management Division (Leeds University Business School).

5. The procedure taken by the Management Division (Leeds University Business School) to address inappropriate PhD supervisor behaviour in the Management Division.”

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

1. The number of Provisional PhD students in the Management Division (Leeds University Business School) who failed their transfer exam, and hence failed to have their PhD status confirm in the years 2015 to 2021.

Fewer than five. We are withholding the exact number 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 failed exams, may allow the identification of those who failed), would be unfair to those students, would contravene their expectations and would there breach the data protection principles, thus engaging section 40(2).
2. The number of PhD students in the Management Division (Leeds University Business School) who were requested to transfer from a PhD to an MPhil status in the years 2015 to 2021.

Zero.

3. The number of PhD students in the Management Division (Leeds University Business School) who were requested to withdraw from the PhD program in the years 2015 to 2021.

Fewer than five. We are withholding the exact number under section 40(2) as outlined in response to question one above.

4. The number of instances where Provision PhD students and PhD students reported inappropriate PhD supervisor behaviour in the Management Division (Leeds University Business School).

No such complaints have been received in the Management Division during the timeframe of your request.

5. The procedure taken by the Management Division (Leeds University Business School) to address inappropriate PhD supervisor behaviour in the Management Division.

In instances where the grievance has come from a student, the Secretariat would review the complaint in line with the Student Complaints Procedure. Depending on the nature of the complaint and who else is involved (other students, academic staff, support staff, etc.), the Secretariat would then liaise with HR, who would consider which University policies are relevant to the matter, and to then establish whether there has been a policy breach. The most relevant policies are typically the Code of Conduct – Professional Behaviour and Relationships and The Dignity and Mutual Respect Policy. In cases a complaint is made against an academic or academic-related member of staff by a student or group of students, the employee’s conduct would be considered under Statute VII.

If the issues cannot be resolved informally, or where a matter raised in a complaint is too serious for informal resolution to be an option (i.e. misconduct or gross misconduct), HR would carry out a full and formal investigation, in accordance with the Statute and working closely with the Secretariat in cases where students and their studies are involved.

All staff and students are expected to behave in line with Section 3 of the Dignity and Mutual respect policy.

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