

## Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

### Decision notice

**Date:** 22 March 2018

**Public Authority:** Loughborough University  
**Address:** Epinal Way  
Loughborough  
LE11 3TU

### Decision (including any steps ordered)

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1. The complainant requested information about students who have accessed counselling services. The University has failed to respond to this request.
2. The Commissioner considers that the University breached section 10(1) FOIA in the handling of this request.
3. The Commissioner requires the public authority to take the following steps to ensure compliance with the legislation.
  - The University must provide the complainant with a response to this request in accordance with its obligations under FOIA.
4. The public authority must take these steps within 35 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of the Act and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

### Request and response

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5. On 8 November 2017 the complainant wrote to the University and requested information in the following terms:

*"Under the Freedom of Information Act, please could you provide me with the number of students who have accessed counselling services provided by the university for each of the past three academic years (2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17)."*

*If possible, please provide a breakdown by the type of issue the students are seeking help for."*

6. The University has failed to respond to this request.

### **Scope of the case**

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7. The complainant contacted the Commissioner on 5 February 2018 to complain about the way her request for information had been handled.
8. The Commissioner has considered whether the University has dealt with this request in accordance with its obligations under section 10(1) FOIA.

### **Reasons for decision**

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9. Section 10(1) provides that:

*"Subject to subsections (2) and (3), a public authority must comply with section 1(1) promptly and in any event not later than the twentieth working day following the date of receipt."*

10. Section 1(1) provides that:

*"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled –*

*(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and*

*(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him."*

11. The request was made on 8 November 2017 and a response has not yet been provided. The Commissioner therefore finds that the University breached section 10(1) in failing to respond within 20 working days.

## **Right of appeal**

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12. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from: First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)

GRC & GRP Tribunals,  
PO Box 9300,  
LEICESTER,  
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0300 1234504

Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: [GRC@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:GRC@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber](http://www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber)

13. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
14. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

**Signed.....**

**Gemma Garvey**  
**Senior Case Officer**

**Information Commissioner's Office**  
**Wycliffe House**  
**Water Lane**  
**Wilmslow**  
**Cheshire**  
**SK9 5AF**