

**Mr John Gilchrist**  
Freedom of Information Officer

26 March 2019

Ref: FOI/March 2019/ Eddie Spence

By email to [eddiespence97@gmail.com](mailto:eddiespence97@gmail.com)

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Dear Mr Spence

Your request for information received on 5 March 2019 has been dealt with under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

I'm writing to you to request information under the FOI Act 2000. Specifically I request the following.

- A) The number of students housed in private provided purpose built student accommodation (PBSA), provided by providers like Unite, IQ Student Accommodation and Liberty Living, for each of the last 8 academic years. This should be broken down by year, such that the figure for each year (e.g. 2012 = x number, 2013 = y number etc)
- b) The number of bed rented under 'nomination agreements' (where the university enters into a contract with a private PBSA provided to guarantee a room will be filled by one of its students at a given rent), for any and all academic years that are available, broken down by year where possible.
- c) Scanned copies of any documentation related to these 'nomination agreements'

### **University Response**

A) The University does not hold this information as students would book directly with the private providers.

B)  
2016 – 699  
2017 – 470  
2018 – 460

C) We consider the documentation related to these 'nomination agreements' to be exempt due to commercial sensitivity under s.43(2) of the FOIA.

This is due to the fact the requested documentation are private contracts between the various Unite Students entities and the University. These contracts were not subject to a public procurement exercise and are confidential as between the parties.

Disclosure of the documents will reveal a number of confidential items including, but not limited to:

- Revealing commercially sensitive information in the form of Unite Students' pricing and price increase structures;
- Disclosure of the Services to be provided by Unite Students to the University (and correspondingly to its students) revealing details of their detailed operations; and
- Setting out details of how the relationship between Unite and the University operates which is likely to differ as against other accommodation providers.

It is for this reason that we believe that disclosure of the Requested Documentation will have a significant prejudicial effect to their Commercial Interests.

I trust this satisfies your request sufficiently. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, you have the right to complain about the University's response to your request for information. If you have such a complaint, you may contact Mr David Maplas, Director of Student Affairs, Middlesex University, Hendon campus, London NW4 4BT, tel: 020 8411 5830, [d.malpas@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:d.malpas@mdx.ac.uk) within 40 days of the date of this letter for a review of the University's decision. If you remain unsatisfied with the outcome of that complaint, you may seek further recourse by lodging an appeal with the Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

**John Gilchrist**  
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