

Mr John Gilchrist
Freedom of Information Officer

25 September 2017

Ref: FOI/September 2017/ Julie Henry

By email to juliehenry123@gmail.com

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Dear Ms Henry

Your request for information received on 5 September 2017 has been dealt with under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

This FOI relates to extenuating/mitigating/exceptional circumstances requests/claims. I appreciate that universities have different methods of collecting the data so the information can be provided for the institution as a whole, or for the two departments/schools that have the biggest cohort of undergraduate students (please specify)
If figures are only recorded for requests granted (rather than requests made), please just provide those figures.

Please provide the below institution-wide figures or figures for the two most populous department/schools

1. The number of undergraduate requests for extenuating/mitigating/exceptional circumstances made in 2016/17 (or the most recent year that figures are available for - please specify)
2. The number of requests that were granted in that year
3. The number of undergraduate requests for extenuating/mitigating/exceptional circumstances in 2005/6.
4. The number of requests that were granted in that year.
5. The number of **first year** undergraduate requests for extenuating/mitigating/exceptional circumstances granted in 2016/17 (or the most recent year figures are available for)
6. The number of **second year** undergraduate requests for extenuating/mitigating/exceptional circumstances granted in 2016/17 (or most recent year...)
7. The number of **final year** requests for extenuating/mitigating circumstances granted in 2016/17 (or the most recent year...)

University Response

In terms of 1. The number of requests made for extenuating circumstances for 2016/17 was 887 across the whole institution.

Our current system for managing extenuating circumstances simply reports on the number of requests received and it cannot indicate how many of those requests were accepted. It also cannot break down these requests between 1st, 2nd and final year undergraduate students.

To actually provide this information, we are writing to advise you that it has been necessary to refuse this part of the request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

We estimate that compliance with your request would exceed the appropriate costs limit established by section 12 of the Freedom of information Act 2000; this is currently set at £450 (or 18 hours work) by virtue of the [1] Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. Our estimate has considered the time it would take to determine whether we hold the information and then to locate, retrieve and extract it. We estimate that to determine whether we hold the requested information, and then to locate, retrieve, and extract that information would take longer than 18 hours to complete.

This is mainly due to the fact that we would need to manually check each of the 887 requests against the relevant individuals student file to confirm if the request was accepted, and if the student in question was a 1st, 2nd or final year undergraduate student. This would likely take 2 minutes per student. That is 29 hours to complete at a conservative estimate, so above the 18 hour threshold. So in accordance with Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, (the Act), this letter acts as a Refusal Notice.

In terms of the data requested for 2005/6 we are not required to keep this in line with our retention requirements so we do not hold the data you have requested.

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 Mrs Teresa Kelly, Clerk to the Board of Governors, Middlesex University, Hendon campus, London NW4 4BT, tel: 020 8411 6018, t.kelly@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
Freedom of Information Officer