

Mr John Gilchrist
Freedom of Information Officer

15 September 2017

Ref: FOI/August 2017/ Agata Lambrechts

By email to aal513@york.ac.uk

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Dear Ms Lambrechts

Your request for information received on 23 August 2017 has been dealt with under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

I am carrying out a research project looking at accessibility of higher education opportunities for refugee and asylum-seeking young people (aged 18-24) residing in England and Poland. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am asking you to provide me with the following information:

1. Are you (as an institution) able to report on the number of your **current students** with one of the following immigration statuses:

- A) Refugee
- B) Asylum-seeker
- C) Humanitarian Protection

NB: If you are *not* collecting such information, please explain why such information is not collected in your institution.

2. Are you (as an institution) able to report on the number of **applicants** with one of the following immigration statuses:

- A) Refugee
- B) Asylum-seeker
- C) Humanitarian Protection

NB: If you are *not* collecting such information, please explain why such information is not collected in your institution.

3. Does your institution provide any support aimed specifically at refugee and/or asylum-seeking applicants and students, either as part of your Access Agreement, Widening Participation activities or other (e.g. outreach activities, dedicated webpages, targeted scholarships, additional language lessons, specialist counselling service etc.)? If you are providing such support can you specify

when was this put in place, how many people benefit from this form of support, and how is this publicised?

University Response

1. and 2. The University only records one of the three categories mentioned in the original request – Asylum seeker. We do collect information and supporting evidence in relation to current immigration position, but this evidence is documentary and is stored for individuals on our records management system. Information is collected for the purpose of establishing the appropriate residential category (and therefore fee status) of individual applicants/students, we do not need to report on the immigration status per se. Students who are currently seeking asylum have a special residential category (Home students for the purposes of fee charging, but Overseas students for the purposes of statutory returns) and can therefore be identified with a res cat of A.

So, in short we are able to report only on the number of students and applicants who are currently claiming asylum, using the residential category of A.

3. Please see below various responses from our Admissions Team and different areas of our Student Support Teams:

Head of Education Liaison and Outreach - *Middlesex University has a programme of outreach activity and widening participation frameworks available to under-represented groups of students. This is made available to a network of schools with high proportions of such students. The targeting includes data available areas of disadvantage such as, free school meals, special educational needs and English as second language. As numbers of refugees/asylum seekers within these schools are not publicly available we do not separate these students into a particular category. Additional projects are focused using Polar data specifically at Quintile 1 and 2 areas that are the most disadvantaged.*

Head of Student Support & Wellbeing - *We do not currently specifically target specialist counselling services for students who have refugee and/or asylum-seeker status.*

Head of Learning Enhancement Team - *We don't have any specific service/s for students with refugee and/or asylum-seeker status, no; when any student accesses us, we will look out for a variety of contextual information in their lives & stories which may be impacting on their studying situations and success, including this, and may give additional support etc. if it seems appropriate to do so and if the student wants it.*

Student Financial Support Manager - *A student who is in receipt of support from Student Finance England would be eligible to apply and may qualify for support if they can demonstrate that they are in financial difficulties. We do not currently target refugee or asylum seeker students but may offer some support from either the above or our overseas emergency fund if necessary. This would not be support that would be offered up front but during their studies.*

Interim Manager- Student Welfare Advice Team - *We do charge Asylum Seekers home fees as a concession, but given that they are now £9250 per year and likely to increase in year 2 and 3 the numbers are incredible low. Refugees and those with HP are funded by Student Finance England.*

If a student is known to Student Welfare we would assist them with making applications to Trusts and Charities. We would also sign post them to the support services available.

Interim Manager International Student Advice Team - *Applicants who have made asylum applications or who have been granted refugee status or humanitarian protection are entitled to study so would not be applying for a study visa - ISAT primarily provides advice on Tier 4 and short term study visa issues so would have a very limited role in advising such applicants. We*

would be able to provide clarification of the relevant regulations as they applied to particular situations and would signpost to more specialised services for anything actually related to the asylum claim itself.

We have occasionally provided support to students currently on Tier 4 under our sponsorship who are planning to make asylum claims, but this would primarily be limited to explaining how this might impact on their right to study and the kind of signposting referred to above.

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