

[REDACTED]

05 April 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information Act 2000– Information request (ref: FOI_19-032)

We have now considered your request of 29 January 2019 for information relating to mental health counsellors employed by the University and your email dated 30 January clarifying data provided for each academic year as a total would be acceptable.

Our response is on pages 3-4 of this letter, together with a copy of your request. This response letter supersedes our previous letter to you dated 26 February 2019 and contains a response to questions 2 to 5 of your request which we were unable to provide at the time.

On this occasion it is not possible to provide some of the requested information. In line with your rights under section 1(1)(a) of the Act to be informed whether information is held, we confirm that the University does not hold some of the information relevant to question 3 of your request. Further information is on page 2 of this letter.

Additionally, we have determined that the cost of finding and assembling some of the requested information will exceed the 'appropriate limit' as defined by section 12 of the Act and the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004/3244. It is our usual practice that, should the cost of finding and assembling the requested information exceed the 'appropriate limit', we are legally entitled to refuse the request in its entirety. In this case, we note that to locate the information sought in question 5 of your request alone would put us in excess of this limit. However, as we have previously provided a partial response to your request and due to the delay in us to responding to you, we will on this occasion provide a response to questions 1-4.

'The 'appropriate limit' of £450, which equates to 18 hours' work, can relate to one request in its entirety or to a series of linked requests. If the University cannot locate, retrieve and extract some or all of the requested information within the 18 hours we are not obliged to retrieve any of the requested information.

In relation to question 5, written notes for each student who has an appointment with mental health services or counselling services are retained by Student Support Services (SSS). SSS has 1,626 files relating to individual students and appointments held within academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19 and we would have to manually

examine each file to determine whether a student has been referred or not. This work would require a minimum of one minute to look through all 1,626 files resulting in at least 27 hours of work which is clearly in excess of the limit of 18 hours.

We hope this information will meet your requirements, however if you are not satisfied you have the right to appeal. If you wish to appeal, please set out in writing your reasons and send to the above address. You must appeal within 40 working days of the date of this letter. In line with section 5.3 of the UK Government's Freedom of Information Act Code of Practice, we are not obliged to accept internal reviews after this date.

You also have a subsequent right of appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office. Further information is available on their website:

https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us, or by telephone on 0303 123 1113.

Please note that any material over which UEA has copyright is released on the understanding that you will comply with all relevant copyright rules regarding reproduction and/or transmission of the information provided.

Please quote our reference given at the head of this letter in all correspondence.

Yours sincerely

Kirsty McDonald
Information Compliance Assistant
University of East Anglia

Response to Freedom of Information Act 2000 request (FOI_19-032)

1) Please could you tell me how many mental health counsellors your university had in employment across all of its colleges and campuses at the start of each semester for the 2017-2018 academic year, and for the first semester of the 2018-2019 academic year - broken down by:

The total number of mental health counsellors in employment each semester

The number of mental health counsellors in employment on a full-time basis (working 35 hours or more per week) each semester

The number of mental health counsellors in employment to work two working days or fewer per week each semester

Our response is in the table below.

	2018/19	2017/18
<i>Total no. of counsellors</i>	2.8 FTE	2.8 FTE
<i>No. of FTE counsellors</i>	1.3 FTE	1.3 FTE
<i>No. of counsellors working two days or fewer per week</i>	0.7 FTE	0.7 FTE

2) For the 2017-2018 academic year, and for the first semester of the 2018-2019 academic year, please could you tell me how many students across all of your colleges and campuses formally requested an appointment for mental health counselling at your university at least once - broken down by:

The number of student requests each semester of each academic year

During academic year 2017/18, 939 students had requested an appointment.

During academic year 2018/19, as of the date of this letter, 687 students have requested an appointment.

3) For the 2017-2018 academic year, and for the first semester of the 2018-2019 academic year, please could you tell me how many students across all of your colleges and campuses were treated by your university's mental health counsellors at least once - broken down by:

The number of students each semester of each academic year

If available, the number of students counselled for depression

If available, the number of students counselled for anxiety

Our response is in the table below

	2018/19	2017/18
<i>No. of students treated at least once</i>	687	939
<i>No. of students treated for depression</i>		

<i>No. of students treated for anxiety</i>	<i>[Information not held - s.1(1)(a), Freedom of Information Act]</i>
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Students come to Mental Health services or SSS counselling services with a number of varying concerns, symptoms, and/or issues and we do not record at the time of appointment precisely what the student may be suffering from. The specific nature of the counselling session and subject nature is not categorised with such precision as to identify it as solely for depression or anxiety. Any number of different conditions may be discussed or deemed to be affecting the student during those sessions. SSS only records the type of session, for example whether it's counselling or cognitive behavioural therapy, not the condition to which the session may relate to.

*4) Of the students who have been treated by your university's mental health counselors, please could you specify for each semester of the 2017-2018 academic year, and for the first semester of the 2018-2019 academic year:
How many students have been treated by your university's mental health counsellors with 20 or more appointments.*

Zero. Individual students are allocated six counselling sessions, and should a student require referral from counselling through to Mental Health services or a referral to an external organisation then this would then be counted as treatment under those services. It is very rare that a student will require more than their allocated six counselling sessions.

*5) For the 2017-2018 academic year, and the first semester of the 2018-2019 academic year, please could you tell me how many students were referred to external services (such as local NHS services) for mental health treatment, specifying:
The number of referrals in each semester of each academic year.*

[Exempted pursuant to s.12(1), Freedom of Information Act, 2000]

A full explanation of this exemption is in the main body of this letter above.