

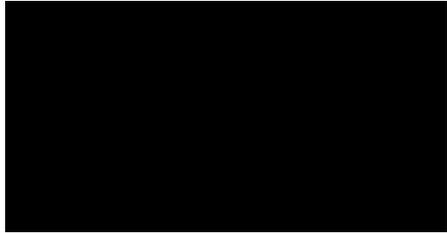


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23 November 2015

Dear

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Information request (ref: FOI_15-214)

We have now considered your request of 30 October 2015 as clarified on 30 October, 05 and 09 November 2015 for information relating to the attrition rates of students at UEA for the last three academic years (2012/13 – 2014/15). Our response is on pages 3-4 of this letter, together with a copy of your request, and we hope this will meet your requirements.

However, we regret that on this occasion it is not possible to provide all the requested information directly. In line with section 17 of the Act, this letter acts as a partial Refusal Notice. The Act contains a number of exemptions that allow public authorities to withhold certain information from release. We have applied the following exemptions to your request.

Exemption	Reason
s.21(1), Information reasonably accessible to applicant by other means	Data regarding student dropout characteristics can be obtained from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)
s.22(1), Future publication	Some information is held with a view to publication in future

Section 21(1) exemption

With regard to all of the requested information, we have established that the number of students withdrawing from study by course for the years 2012/13 and 2013/14 is reasonably accessible by other means and so has been exempted under section 21(1) of the Act. The section 21 exemption confirms there is no right of access under the Act to information that is held by a public authority, if that information is reasonably available to the applicant by another route (whether through commercial publication or publicly-funded provision).

In this case, data on students in specific courses discontinuing their studies up to, and including 2013/14, can be constructed from data tables published by [Higher Education Statistics Agency \(HESA\) on their website](#).¹ The 2014/15 data will be available from January 2016. Additional information is available upon demand from

¹ <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/pis/noncon>

HESA from their [Bespoke Data Service](#).² This has been confirmed with HESA themselves.

Section 22(1) exemption

It has been a long-standing and consistent practice for the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to gather and publish information regarding the characteristics of students within the higher education system. They have a well-established and robust collection, analysis and publication regime in place.

As noted above, statistics regarding the attrition rates of students on specific courses in the preceding academic year are published in January of each year, with statistics relating to 2014/15 to be published in January 2016.

We believe that to adhere to the accepted publication schedule is sensible, in line with accepted practices, and fair to all concerned. HESA standardises information from across the higher education sector and provides a readily accessible basis for comparison of institutions. We feel it is reasonable and appropriate in all the circumstances to withhold some of the requested information at this time and direct you to HESA.

When considering the application of this exemption we are required to assess the public interest in withholding or disclosing the requested information. There is no doubt a public interest in knowing information relating to the discontinuance of students within higher education. The very fact that HESA collects and publishes this information is evidence of that fact.

However, we would argue that this interest is more than satisfied by the publication of this information each January for the preceding year. We do not believe that the public interest is served by releasing figures that have not been examined and published by HESA alongside similar figures for other institutions. A small delay will result in accurate and standardised figures being made available for 2014/15 accompanied by any necessary contextual information.

Therefore, on this occasion, we consider the public interest in withholding the requested information outweighs the public interest in providing the requested data at this time.

You have the right of appeal against this response. If you wish to appeal, please set out in writing your reasons for appealing and send to the above address. You must appeal within 60 calendar days of the date of this letter. Any appeal received after that date will not be considered nor acknowledged. This policy has been reviewed and approved by the Information Commissioner's Office.

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

Yours sincerely

David Palmer
Information Policy and Compliance Manager
University of East Anglia

Response to Freedom of Information Act 2000 request (FOI_15-214)

I request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act.

I would like to know the total number of students who dropped out of their course of study in the last three years.

I would like this information broken down by course.

I would like this information for the last three academic years (12/13, 13/14, 14/15) and I would also like the information broken down by these years.

[Clarified on:

- 30 October 2015 to include two sets of data please, one broken down by halls of residence and one broken down by course;*
- 05 November 2015 to include only Undergraduate students and*
- 09 November 2015 to request a breakdown by course using the Higher Education Statistics Authority (HESA) 'principal subject' (or full JACS) designation]*

➤ Data by Halls of Residence³

Residence ⁴	Academic Year		
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Britten House	15	20	15
Broadview Lodge	<5	<5	Not In Use
Browne House	<5	<5	0
Colman House	23	31	38
Constable Terrace	16	24	22
Family House	0	<5	0
Kett House	0	0	0
Mary Chapman	9	9	11
Nelson Court	20	12	12
Norfolk Terrace	19	30	24
Orwell Close	<5	<5	<5
Paston House	20	15	25
Suffolk Terrace	11	18	11
University Village	40	39	38
Victory House	5	0	7
Wolfson Close	0	<5	5
Not in residences	222	136	161

³ For the purposes of anonymization, any values between 1 and 5 are recorded as '<5' in the data presented.

⁴ We have only included residences that were in use in the time period specified for undergraduate accommodation

➤ Data by Course

[Information exempted pursuant to s.21(1) & s.22(1), Freedom of Information Act]

The data by course is exempted for the reasons cited in the above-noted letter.