

By email only to: request-712845-1dc3cc0a@whatdotheyknow.com

15 March 2021

Dear Chloé Meley,

Freedom of Information Act 2000  
Request for information: response

Date of request: 14 December 2020  
Due date: 13 January 2021  
Ref: RITM0349805

We refer to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act"). Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding to your request: we are dealing with a large number of requests, and our ability to process them has been affected by having to work remotely because of the pandemic.

Below is your question with the University's corresponding response.

**Question:**

Dear University of Southampton,

Could you tell me the number of applications you have received for nursing courses in the past five academic years (including 2020-2021, up until this December)?

Could you also break down this information into monthly categories (x number of applicants in April) and into different courses (Adult Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, etc)?

It would be great if you could provide this information in an excel spreadsheet, if possible.

If you need any clarification do not hesitate to contact me.

Under section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act it is your duty to provide advice and assistance and so I would expect you to contact me if you find this request unmanageable in any way.

Yours faithfully,

Chloé Meley

**Answer:**

We confirm that the University holds information of the description specified in your request.

The information you have requested regarding the past 5 academic years is publicly available from UCAS Exact: <https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis/data-products-and-services/exact>

As the information you have requested is available through UCAS Exact, it is reasonably accessible to you by other means, and the disclosure is exempt by virtue of [section 21](#) of the Act.

Whilst we hold the requested information for 2020/21 cycle data, we are unable to provide it, as it is exempt from disclosure by virtue of [Section 43\(2\)](#) of the Act (prejudice to commercial interests).

The application and offers data regarding the current cycle 2021 (2020/21) are not publicly available and we cannot share them as they are commercially sensitive. As Section 43(2) is a qualified exemption, the University has considered the [public interest test](#):

**Factors favouring disclosure**

- Openness and Transparency: it is in the public interest that the University is as open and transparent as possible in the way that we operate and the way in which we make decisions.

**Factors favouring non-disclosure**

- Prejudice to commercial interests: it is not in the public interest to share information that would undermine the ability of the University to compete with other universities. Higher education providers are in a highly competitive market; sharing the requested information would harm the University's ability to decide key strategic activities relying on in-cycle admission data and student recruitment plays a key factor in the University's operational sustainability.
- Anticompetitive activity: it is not in the public interest to disclose information that would reduce competition between universities, as competition between providers (of higher education) inevitably redounds to the benefit of customers (students).

Given the above considerations, the University concludes that it is in the greater public interest not to disclose the information at this time.

If you do not feel that we have dealt with your request in accordance with the requirements of [Part I](#) of the Act, you may request a review. Your request for a review should specify in what respect you consider that the requirements of [Part I](#) have not been met. Please address your request to the Chief Operating Officer at the following address: [foi@soton.ac.uk](mailto:foi@soton.ac.uk).

In accordance with section 5.3 of the [Code of Practice](#), a request for a review must be sent within 40 working days of the date of this email. The University is not obliged to accept any requests for a review beyond 40 working days.

We will endeavour to respond to your request for a review within 20 working days of receipt.

The Information Commissioner is responsible for enforcing rights of access to information and the operation of the publication scheme. You may apply to the Information Commissioner in writing (FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF) or [electronically](#) for a decision whether, in any specified respect, your request for information has been dealt with by the University in accordance with the requirements of [Part I](#) of the Act. The Information Commissioner will not normally take action unless they are satisfied that the University's review procedure has been exhausted.

Yours sincerely,



Freedom of Information Office  
email: [foi@soton.ac.uk](mailto:foi@soton.ac.uk)