

**Information Governance Team**

Email: [foi@york.ac.uk](mailto:foi@york.ac.uk)  
<http://www.york.ac.uk/records-management/foi>

Dear Isha Gupta,

**Freedom of Information Request Ref: F21\_161**

Thank you for your request for information from the University of York. Please see our response below.

**Please could you provide a breakdown of advertising and marketing expenditure by line item. If this could be submitted as an excel that would be much appreciate. Ideally this would cover the following questions:**

- 1. What has been the total annual budget for marketing over the last 5 years (2017-2021)?**
- 2. How much of the marketing budget is spent on in-house marketing and how much is spent on 3rd party providers (e.g. Agencies)?**
- 3. What are they types of third party services used e.g. (managed marketing services, content creators, self-service platforms) and how is the expenditure distributed among them?**
- 4. How much of the marketing budget is spent on digital advertising and how much is spent on traditional advertising methods?**
- 5. What is the segmentation of digital expenditure by channel (e.g. how much is spent on Facebook ads, Google ads etc.) ?**

University spend for marketing and advertising occurs in many central and academic departments across the University and uses many accounting codes or descriptions which would not align with the categories you have specified or be used in a consistent manner across the University. In many cases, such spend may only be indirectly associated with these activities or spend will support multiple purposes simultaneously. In addition, many staff in these departments may have one or more job responsibilities which may cover the types of information you have requested in addition to unrelated activities. In order to determine what information is held in relation to your request and all its parameters would require contacting departments from across the University and dozens of members of staff within those departments as well as individual review of thousands of financial transactions.

It is estimated that the time taken to determine whether the information is held, identify, locate and retrieve the relevant records and extract and collate any information from these, would exceed the

costs limit under section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 (FoIA). The 'appropriate limit' is currently £450 for universities, as defined by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. This letter accordingly acts as a refusal notice in respect of the information sought.

In accordance with the section 16 duty to provide you with advice and assistance in respect of your enquiry, the University may be able to reconsider a revised request which identified spend in a particular area of the University. In addition, the University does not have a list of types of advertising or marketing spend so it would be necessary for you to be more specific in what information you are requesting.

Prior to submitting a revised request you may wish to review information publicly available on the University website such as:

- <https://www.york.ac.uk/about/departments/academic/>
- <https://www.york.ac.uk/about/departments/support-and-admin/>
- <https://www.york.ac.uk/about/funding-and-expenditure/>

Please note however that the University may consider some areas of spend commercially sensitive and its release prejudicial to the University's commercial position (i.e. our strategies, investments and possible growth areas). Universities operate in a global market and compete for students, research funding and accreditation. Competition is heightened as it also takes place in a difficult economic climate and, in England and Wales, a new funding environment.

In accordance with the provisions of section 17(4) of the FoIA, this letter acts as a Refusal Notice in respect of the information withheld under section 12(1) above.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, [you have the right to ask for an internal review](#). Your internal review request should be submitted in writing by **24 June 2021** to [foi@york.ac.uk](mailto:foi@york.ac.uk), detailing your grounds for appeal/complaint.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to [the Information Commissioner](#) for a decision.

I hope this information is useful.

Yours sincerely,

Information Governance Team