

Jack Maxwell  
Email: request-687355-  
540b235b@whatdotheyknow.com

Email:  
FOIRequests@homeoffice.gov.uk  
  
[www.gov.uk/ukvi](http://www.gov.uk/ukvi)

FOI Reference: 60070

26 November 2020

Dear Mr Maxwell

Thank you for your enquiry of 25 August in which you requested information on immigration applications. Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I apologise for the delay in replying.

### Information Requested

*Please disclose strategy documents and Data Protection Impact Assessments in relation to the use of algorithmic decision-making by your department. By 'algorithmic decision-making', I mean to include decisions in which a computer automatically performs part or all of the decision-making process without a human's direct involvement, such as:*

- 1. Determining a person's identity, suitability or eligibility for a particular immigration status.*
- 2. Gathering additional information about a person (e.g. from social media).*
- 3. Assessing the risk posed by a person.*

*Disclosing these documents should not exceed the cost limit under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. If cost limit is an issue, please prioritise disclosure of the aforementioned documents regarding the following subject areas in order:*

- 1.Applications for asylum.*
- 2.Applications for asylum support.*
- 3.Change of Conditions applications for individuals with No Recourse to Public Funds conditions.*

*4.Applications made under the EEA regulations.*

*5.Applications made under Appendix FM .*

*6.Other application systems where the Home Office uses algorithms.*

## **Response**

Under section 12(1) of the Act, the Home Office is not obliged to comply with an information request where to do so would exceed the cost limit.

We hold the information which you have requested but we have estimated that the cost of meeting your request would exceed the cost limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. We are therefore unable to comply with it. The ownership and oversight is currently across multiple teams; therefore, the information request would exceed the cost limit regardless of how you have already refined it.

The £600 limit is based on work being carried out at a rate of £25 per hour, which equates to 24 hours of work per request. The cost of locating, retrieving and extracting information can be included in the costs for these purposes. The costs do not include considering whether any information is exempt from disclosure, overheads such as heating or lighting, or items such as photocopying or postage.

If you refine your request, so that it is more likely to fall under the cost limit, we will consider it again. However, due to the broad request it is likely to exceed the cost limit regardless of how it is refined.

Please note that if you simply break your request down into a series of similar smaller requests, we might still decline to answer it if the total cost exceeds £600.

Even if a revised request were to fall within the cost limit, it is possible that other exemptions in the Act might apply.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to [foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:foirequests@homeoffice.gov.uk), quoting reference 60070. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response.

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff not involved in providing you with this response. If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely

J Slater  
Central Operations

We value your feedback, please use the link below to access a brief anonymous survey to help us improve our service to you:

<http://www.homeofficesurveys.homeoffice.gov.uk/s/108105TAZNG>