



Information Compliance
Information Services

Northampton Square
London EC1V 0HB
T +44 (0)20 7040 4000
F +44 (0)20 7040 8565
www.city.ac.uk

Dr Jim Partridge

Correspondence via e-mail to: request-384901-2844e9a2@whatdotheyknow.com

14th February 2017

Dear Dr Partridge,

Freedom of Information Act Request 2017/019

Thank you for your email dated 27th January 2017 requesting information about City, University of London, made in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For ease of reference, your question is reproduced below in bold followed by our response.

Please provide the average full economic cost (to the university) of an undergraduate degree in engineering at the University. Please include all costs directly and indirectly associated with the activity e.g. including staff pension costs and IT costs. Please include all costs that can be reasonably attributed to the degree using the data that you have

Please break down your answer in two ways (a) by the seven UCAS classifications of engineering degrees (b) by cost type (e.g. payroll, IT, equipment etc) please break this information down into its natural and principal cost categories giving as much detail as is feasible.

FYI – UCAS classify engineering degrees into seven categories as follows

- 1. General engineering**
- 2. Civil engineering**
- 3. Mechanical engineering**
- 4. Aerospace engineering**
- 5. Electronic and electrical engineering**
- 6. Production and manufacturing engineering**
- 7. Chemical, process and energy engineering**

This is not a strange or unusual request but is merely requesting what is a key management metric i.e. the cost per degree. Since Universities are required to be run in a financially astute manner, this information should be routinely provided to university course leaders, and should be a key factor in the decision to continue or discontinue providing courses and in the setting of undergraduate fees.

If you do not have the complete information, please provide as much as possible.

Our Response:

We have withheld the average full economic cost (to City) of an undergraduate degree in engineering under Section 43 (2) (Commercial Interests) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We consider this information to be commercially sensitive and that disclosure may harm City's commercial interests. Section 43 (2) is a qualified exemption and so subject to the public interest test which follows. We recognise that it is in the general public interest for City, University of London to publish as much information as possible about its courses. This could increase public understanding and promotes openness, transparency and highlights the strengths of the University. However, the higher education sector is competitive in respect of attracting students, recruiting and retaining academic staff and developing new funding opportunities or revenue streams often in partnership with the private sector. Responses to Freedom of Information requests are regarded as being made to the world at large and the disclosure of the breakdown on full economic cost (to City) of an undergraduate degree in engineering would be strategically useful to our competitors in the higher education sector and your request needs to be considered in the context of disclosure under competition legislation as well as under the Freedom of Information Act. City, University of London must be able to protect commercially sensitive information where disclosure would allow its competitors to undermine its commercial interests. Having considered the public interest test, we feel that the general public interest is satisfied with the information published on our website at: www.city.ac.uk/courses?level=Undergraduate&subject=%22Engineering%22. Therefore, we have decided to withhold the information requested.

If you are dissatisfied with the way your request for information has been managed, please contact the Director of Information Technology at:

By Post	Director of Information Technology City, University of London Northampton Square London EC1V 0HB
By Telephone	0207 040 4000
By Email	foi@city.ac.uk

Please do so in writing, describe the original request, explain your grounds for dissatisfaction and include an address for correspondence.

If after contacting City, University of London you are still dissatisfied with the outcome, you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner:

By Post	Information Commissioner's Office Wycliffe House Water Lane Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF
By Telephone	01625 545700
Website	www.ico.org.uk/

Yours sincerely,

Saidu Sesay
Information Compliance Officer