



Cabinet Office

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foi-team@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Sarah Louise Barbera
By email: request-1022256-9d1b041f@whatdotheyknow.com

FOI Reference: FOI2023/10372

3 October 2023

Dear Sarah Louise Barbera

We refer to your request where you asked:

“1. In total, how many whole-time equivalent (WTE) ‘behavioural scientists’ were employed in your Cabinet Office department as of 1st September 2022?”

2. In total, what was the annual cost of employing behavioural scientists – both in-house employees and those commissioned to provide advice on a sessional basis - in your Cabinet Office department in 2022?

3. In addition to behavioural scientists, how many WTEs with ‘psychologist’ in their job titles (for example ‘social psychologist’, ‘behavioural psychologist’, ‘occupational psychologist’) were employed in your Cabinet Office department as of 1st September 2022?

4. In total, what was the annual cost of employing psychologists - both in-house employees and those commissioned to provide advice on a sessional basis - in your Cabinet Office department in 2022?

****Additionally the requester has sent in an identical request for years 2019, 2020 and 2021. Please treat this as an aggregation of all****

We are writing to inform you that the Cabinet Office is unable to comply with your request. Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act relieves public authorities of the duty to comply with a request for information if the cost of dealing with it would exceed the appropriate limit. The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations, and for central Government this is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3 1/2 working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

Your request exceeds the cost limit because the information you have requested is not centrally held. Complying with your request would therefore require searches to be undertaken in a number of areas within the Cabinet Office, in order to gather any and all information within the scope of the request.

If you wish, you may refine your request so that the cost of determining whether the Cabinet Office holds relevant information, locating, retrieving and extracting it would not exceed the appropriate limit. For example, you may wish to do this by reducing the timeframe of the request.

Please note that your requests were aggregated because they were similar in nature. Given that you separated your identical requests into separate years, we note that this is not an appropriate method of bringing your request within the cost limit. As per the ICO:

“Can we aggregate requests when estimating the cost for responding?”

Yes. When calculating the cost estimate you can aggregate requests from the same person, or a group of people acting together, that you receive within a 60 working day period. However, the requests must ask for the same, or similar, information.”

Please be aware that if the Cabinet Office does hold any information relevant to a refined request, it may be subject to one or more of the exemptions in the Freedom of Information Act.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request or wish to request an internal review, you should write to:

Head of Freedom of Information
Cabinet Office
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

email: foi-team@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

You should note that the Cabinet Office will not normally accept an application for internal review if it is received more than two months after the date that the reply was issued.

If you are not content with the outcome of your internal review, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Cabinet Office. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

<https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. Khan', written in a cursive style.

FOI Team
Cabinet Office