

Freedom of Information Internal Review decision

Internal Reviewer	Lawyer – Legal Workplace and Information Rights
Reference	IR20171571/IR2018018
Date	20 March 2018

Requested information

On 20 January 2018, you made a request to the BBC under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the FOI Act) in the following terms:

“Please tell me how many of the 124 external recruits by BBC News (Freedom of Information Request - RFI20171571/IR2018002)

- are BAME / white majority / white other,

- declared a disability.

Please discount from your response any of the 124 who were recruited for the World Service or Monitoring”

On 14 February 2018, the BBC responded advising that:

“In response to your request; it is not mandatory for staff to inform the BBC of their diversity information. Therefore the figures in the responses below only relate to records where the information is known.

The tables below show the ethnicity and declaration of a disability of the 124 external recruits to network news identified in RFI20171571/IR2018002.

Table 1 – Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Count of Staff
BME	18
Majority	57
Other White Background	18
Prefer Not To Say	6
Grand Total	99

Table 2 – Disability

Disability	Count of Staff
Disabled	13
Not Disabled	60
Prefer Not To Say	2
Grand Total	75

Please note that, as set out in section 6(1)(b)(ii) of the FOI Act, our subsidiaries (including BBC Studios & Post Production Ltd, UKTV, BBC Global News Ltd and BBC Worldwide Ltd), as well as the charities BBC Media Action and BBC Children in Need, are not subject to the Act, therefore information for their personnel is not included in the figures quoted above."

On 14 February 2018, you sought internal review of the BBC's original decision. In your request for internal review, you said:

"I do not believe my request has been answered. I asked for external hires for World Service and Monitoring not to be included in the information I requested. Yet the BBC's response appears to be for all of 124 BBC News external hires who disclosed their ethnicity and disability.

It hardly seems credible that there have been no external hires for World Service or Monitoring following the extensive recruitment thanks to the £85 million government funding boost. If there have been no external hires in World Service or Monitoring please state that otherwise to be clear what I asked ..."

The issues on review

The issue on review is limited to considering whether the BBC acted consistently with its obligations under section 1(1) of the FOI Act to disclose the requested information it holds.

Decision

The FOI Act provides a general right of access to recorded information held by public authorities. Section 1 of FOI Act provides that any person making a request for information is entitled to be told whether the public authority holds the information requested and, if held, to be provided with it.

Your FOI request that is the subject of this internal review relates to one of your previous FOI requests and internal reviews (RFI20171571/IR2018002). Therefore, in undertaking this internal review, I have considered the BBC's responses for RFI20171571/IR2018002. I also liaised with the relevant business area, Human Resources.

Your previous FOI request was relevantly for information regarding the number of candidates recruited to BBC Network News between 17 October 2016 and 17 October 2017. In the BBC's internal review decision (IR2018002), the BBC advised that there had been 124 external candidates recruited to BBC Network News during this period.

In your present FOI request, you requested diversity and disability information about the 124 external candidates referred to in IR2018002. That is, you requested diversity and disability

information about the 124 external candidates recruited to BBC Network News between 17 October 2016 and 17 October 2017.

After liaising with Human Resources, I can confirm that the diversity and disability statistics provided to you in the BBC's original decision did not include statistics for World Service and Monitoring. Rather, the statistics are in respect of external candidates recruited to BBC Network News, consistent with the terms of your FOI request.

In addition, Human Resources have advised that it is not mandatory for candidates to populate a response in respect of diversity and disability fields. Therefore, the total figures in Tables 1 and 2 provided to you is less than the overall figure of 124 external recruits.

In these circumstances, the information provided to you in the BBC's original decision is consistent with the terms of your FOI request.

Conclusion

I am satisfied that the BBC complied with its obligation under sections 1(1)(a) and (b) of the FOI Act in providing you with the requested information that it holds.

Appeal Rights

If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your internal review, you can appeal to the Information Commissioner. The contact details are: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF; Telephone 0303 123 1113 or <https://ico.org.uk/>