

**Mr John Gilchrist**  
Freedom of Information Officer

3 April 2018

Ref: FOI/March 2018/ Markos Volikas

By email to [request-469948-65370046@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-469948-65370046@whatdotheyknow.com)

The Burroughs  
Hendon  
London  
NW4 4BT  
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0)20 8411 4061  
e-mail:  
[j.gilchrist@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:j.gilchrist@mdx.ac.uk)  
[www.mdx.ac.uk](http://www.mdx.ac.uk)

Dear Mr Volikas

Your request for information received on 11 March 2018 has been dealt with under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

I am writing as a research volunteer at the Open Rights Group. We are conducting a study to better understand filtering and blocking of websites on the public estate, to understand what content and sites are inaccessible and why. I am writing to ask about this in relation to Universities. We are following up our previous FOI requests with a refined list of questions to make the answers uniform and suitable for analysis. With this in mind, please answer the questions as directly as possible.

We would like to know, in relation to your publicly accessible Internet networks, or Internet networks for your clients:

1. The categories of content blocked or filtered, e.g.:

(a) Security or Malware

(b) Content types, eg adult, alcohol etc

2. Statistics relating to the requests blocked or filtered, eg how many site requests filtered or blocked per category

3. Monitoring requirements you have for users, eg if you record or may record their Internet usage

## **University Response**

Please note that the University considers the information to be exempt from disclosure under s31(1)(a)(b) where the release of information would, or would be likely to, prejudice the prevention and detection of crime and/or the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This exemption is qualified and prejudice-based and, as such, I am required to apply the public interest test.

### **Public Interest Test**

#### **Favouring disclosure**

Transparency and accountability would be increased.

#### **Favouring non-disclosure**

The University acknowledging whether we filter for security or malware may then be used to allow hackers greater insight of our environment and put it risk from external intrusion.

### **Balancing Test**

Whilst disclosure of this information may improve accountability, it would also indicate the University's approach to filtering that may subsequently be compromised as a result. As such, it is my decision that the public interest lies in the non-disclosure of the exempted information in this case.

I trust this satisfies your request sufficiently. Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, you have the right to complain about the University's response to your request for information. If you have such a complaint, you may contact Mrs Teresa Kelly, Clerk to the Board of Governors, Middlesex University, Hendon campus, London NW4 4BT, tel: 020 8411 6018, [t.kelly@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:t.kelly@mdx.ac.uk) within 40 days of the date of this letter for a review of the University's decision. If you remain unsatisfied with the outcome of that complaint, you may seek further recourse by lodging an appeal with the Information Commissioner.

Yours sincerely

**John Gilchrist**

Freedom of Information Officer