



Ministry of Defence

Army Secretariat
Army Headquarters
IDL 24 Blenheim Building
Marlborough Lines
Andover
Hampshire, SP11 8HJ
United Kingdom

Ref: FOI2019/12815/10/04

E-mail: ArmySec-Group@mod.gov.uk

Website: www.army.mod.uk

S Wulesleag

Email Address: request-618864-7c526ce1@whatdotheyknow.com

09 December 2019

Dear S Wulesleag,

Thank you for your email of 11 November in which you requested the following information:

"Please can you demonstrate how Army facial hair policy;

"Beards and whiskers are only to be worn with authority, which will usually be granted only on medical or religious grounds, or where tradition permits."

conforms to the 2010 equality act in that discrimination is made between rights of individuals to grow facial hair for religious reasons / medical reasons however this privilege is not protected for non-religious beliefs?"

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. I am writing to advise you that following a search of our recorded information, I have established that no information you requested is held by the Ministry of Defence.

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act gives an applicant the right to access recorded information held by public authorities at the time the request is made and does not require public authorities to answer questions, provide explanations or give opinions, unless this is recorded information held. Following a search of our recorded information I have established that the information you have requested is not held by the MOD. However, in line with our duty to advise and assist you under Section 16 of the Act, please note that facial hair growth is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 provides legal protection from discrimination for certain 'protected characteristics'. Full list of the protected characteristics can be found in the link below. You may also find it helpful to note that everyone in the Army is treated fairly with dignity and respect. The Army's values and standards are design to ensure that all behaviour is lawful, appropriate and professional.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/4>

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, if you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

Manning Team 2
Army Secretariat