



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

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16 August 2021

File ref: FOI2021/00079

Ellen Blacow

Sent by email: request-726834-  
62dbcc7f@whatdotheyknow.com

Dear Ellen Blacow

**Freedom of Information request: FOI2021/00079**

Thank you for your email of 12 February 2021 requesting information about the University of Edinburgh's internet and IT structure. Please accept our apologies for the delay to our response to your request. The University's working practices are currently affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The University of Edinburgh is a global university, rooted in Scotland. We are globally recognised for our research, development and innovation and we have provided world-class teaching to our students for more than 430 years. We are the largest university in Scotland and in 2019/20 our annual revenue was £1.12 billion, of which £296 million was research income. We have over 44,000 students and over 15,000 staff. We are a founding member of the UK's Russell Group of leading research universities and a member of the League of European Research Universities.

The University has over 600 buildings (excluding residential accommodation), located on a number of sites dispersed throughout the city of Edinburgh. It also provides residential accommodation for around 9,500 students at over 40 different locations,

The University comprises three academic colleges, subdivided into twenty-one schools, and three support groups, subdivided into some seventy support services. The University operates a devolved management structure, with IT arrangements and complaints dealt with at central, college, school and department level. Providing a comprehensive response to all of your questions would involve contacting almost every area of the University. Doing this would cost more than £600, the limit over which the University is not required to respond to freedom of information requests.

However, in responding to your request I have provided information held by the University's Information Services Group (ISG), which provide central IT support services, Accommodation, Catering and Events (ACE), which provide accommodation services, and Academic Services, which manage complaints dealt with centrally.

## Internet and IT structure

You asked how much the University spent on broadband during the 2019/20 financial year. ISG report a spend of £568.60. ACE report a spend of £602,000.

You asked for the internet network provider. We have interpreted this question to mean who provides the University's public network/internet connectivity. Like most, if not all, UK universities, we connect to the JANET network provided by Jisc. This includes student accommodation, with the University now providing its own network services with JANET providing the internet connectivity. Optify provided the service until June 2021.

You asked for the average network speed on each of the University's campuses. The University has five key campuses. However, one of these is a collection of properties across Edinburgh City Centre, so is not a traditional 'campus'. It is difficult to provide specific figures, it is not possible to calculate an average network speed on each campus, as there are many different technologies in operation and multiple variable factors affecting speed, including whether it is between two devices or one device and the internet and the location of the devices. Nevertheless, the University's campus connectivity ranges from a minimum of 2 x 10Gbps up to 2 x 40Gbps and the majority of edge ports are 1Gbps. The University is currently conducting a network replacement project, which will see the minimum speed for campus connectivity increase to 40Gbps. In directly managed University accommodation, the average network speed is 100-150Mb/s.

You asked for the percentage of each campus covered by Wi-Fi. The University does not hold details on the percentage of coverage for each campus and the University is not required to create new information in order to respond to freedom of information requests. However, please note that the University has Wi-Fi in all the areas required, including teaching rooms, meeting rooms, office spaces, lecture halls, corridors and communal spaces, as well as some limited outdoor spaces. The University is currently conducting a network replacement project to replace the entire University network and this includes improved Wi-Fi coverage and signal strength to ensure there are no black spots. Directly managed University accommodation has 100% Wi-Fi coverage in bedrooms and common areas.

You asked for the number of times the University has switched network provider between January 2015 and December 2020. We were unsure how to interpret this question. If you mean the provider of the University's connection to the internet, the answer is zero. If you mean the provider that manages the University's (internal) network, the answer is zero. If you mean the supplier of the University's (internal) network equipment, the answer is one.

You asked how many broadband routers there are across all University campus buildings. In terms of the campuses, there is one broadband router for a small remote teaching/study room. In terms of directly managed University accommodation, there are four DSL routers covering small isolated flats. This is mostly a managed network using fibre links.

You asked whether the University has fibre-optic broadband across any campus buildings. ISG report that there are no campus buildings with fibre-optic broadband

managed by ISG. In terms of directly managed University accommodation, however, ACE report that almost all buildings have fibre connections.

You asked whether any of the directly managed University accommodation residences require an ethernet cable as opposed to Wi-Fi. No, all directly managed University accommodation has Wi-Fi.

You asked whether any of the directly managed University accommodation residences have the option of both an ethernet cable and Wi-Fi, and to provide a list of the names of the residences where the answer is yes. A list of the names of residences with the option of both is as follows:

- Baird House
- Chancellor's Court
- Ewing House
- Fraser Court
- Grant House
- John Burnett House
- Holland House
- Holland Annexe
- Lee House
- Turner House
- Ascham Court
- Blasket Avenue
- Blackfriars Street
- Blackwood Crescent
- Causewayside
- College Wynd
- College Wynd
- Darroch Court
- Davie Street
- East Newington Place
- Hermits Croft
- Kincaids Court
- Morgan Court
- New Arthur Place
- Nicolson Street 5
- Nicolson Street 92 & 96
- Ratcliffe Terrace
- Robertson Close
- Roxburgh Place
- Sciennes
- South Bridge & Drummond Street
- South Clerk Street
- South College Street
- Warrender Park Road
- Warrender Park Crescent
- West Mains
- West Nicolson Street

- West Richmond Street
- Buccleuch Place
- Buccleuch Place Lane
- David Horn House
- Kitchener House
- Patrick Geddes
- Edward Salvesen
- Phillip Henman
- Churchill House
- Fleming House
- Nicolson Street
- Deaconess
- O'Shea South
- O'Shea North
- Orrok Lane
- Plus 93 individual flats (not blocks)

### **Data destruction**

You asked whether the University has a data destruction policy. We contacted ISG in relation to this question and they reported they do not have a specific data destruction policy. However, if you can clarify what you mean by data destruction policy, for example what you would consider to be covered by such a policy, we can make further enquiries in relation to this part of your request.

Please note however that the University's retention of personal data is managed in accordance with data protection legislation. Further information about [data protection at the University](#), including the [University's Record Retention Schedules](#) is published on its website.

### **Student complaints**

You asked for the number of student complaints received by the University relating to the 'internet', 'Wi-Fi' and 'broadband' between January 2015 and December 2020, and for the number of complaints to be provided by calendar year.

ACE report that they do not hold any information about student complaints relating to the 'internet', 'Wi-Fi' and 'broadband' in student accommodation during the period. ACE also noted that complaints could be directed to many areas of the University and that students in directly managed University accommodation are advised to direct complaints, queries or support requests directly to the internet service provider. As explained above, although the University now provides its own network services, with JANET providing the internet connectivity, Optify provided the service until June 2021.

Academic Services do not collate data relating to 'internet', 'Wi-Fi' and 'broadband' as part of our statutory reporting process. However, a keyword search of the Central University Complaints log, which records matters that are reported to the Central University Complaints team directly at Stage 1 of the Complaint Handling Procedure (CHP), or escalated by the Central University team to Stage 2, has found no complaints in the log using those terms.

Please note that this response does not contain information on complaints made via the 50 plus Schools, Colleges and service areas that submit data to the Academic Services team each quarter. All 'areas' submit four returns each academic year. These are discrete documents which are never integrated into Academic Services' Central log. ISG would have made around 20 returns for the period in question. A quarterly return comprises of an Excel spreadsheet and narrative report, which Academic Services, or ISG, would need to manually interrogate to obtain the information requested. In the case of ISG, it is estimated that it would take a minimum of 30 minutes to review each return, which amounts to more than one day of work. Doing this would cost more than £100, the limit over which the University is able to charge a fee for responding to requests. The level of the fee is set by legislation, and is set at 10% of any cost over £100, to a maximum of £50. Please let me know if you would like this charge to be calculated. The basis on which we calculate the cost of responding to freedom of information requests is set out in the [freedom of information charging information](#) on our website. It should also be noted that many quarterly returns from this period will be in paper files in Old College.

### **Requested format**

We are aware that you requested a response in machine readable format where applicable. We have provided your response in PDF format, as machine readable formats do not tend to present as well. However, if you would like us to provide your response in a different format, please let us know. It would be helpful if you could specify what type of machine readable format you would prefer.

### **Right to review**

If you are dissatisfied with this response, you may ask the University to conduct a review of this decision by contacting the University's Records Management Section in writing (e.g. by letter or email) or in some other recorded form (e.g. audio or video tape). You should describe the original request, explain your grounds for dissatisfaction, and include an address for correspondence. You have 40 working days from receipt of this letter to submit a review request. The contact details for the Records Management Section are at the top of this letter. When the review process has been completed, if you are still dissatisfied, you may use the [Scottish Information Commissioner's guidance on making an appeal](#) to make an appeal to the Commissioner. If you do not have access to the Internet, please let me know and I will provide a copy of the relevant web pages.

### **Privacy notice for information request applicants**

[The University of Edinburgh's request privacy notice](#), which describes how we use the information you have supplied about yourself and your request, is published on the University website.

Yours sincerely

**Rachel Scott**

Records Management Section

**If you require this letter in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact the Records Management Section on 0131 651 4099 or email [recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk](mailto:recordsmanagement@ed.ac.uk)**