

Our ref.: F478.21-22

To whom it may concern

21 October 2022

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Your request to access information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for your request for access to information held by the University of Warwick.

We have considered your request under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Your request

You have requested access to the following information:

under the Freedom of Information act, I would like to know for every postgraduate programme (both taught and research) for the 2021/22, 2020/21, 2019/20, 2018/19 and 2017/18 admission cycles:

- the programme name,
- the programme code,
- the number of applications,
- the number of offers made,
- the number of acceptances.

Please provide the data in an excel spreadsheet.

Clarification wording, dated 12 September 2022

Many thanks for your reply, I would like this dataset at the individual course level with the individual course codes.

Further clarification, dated 23 September 2022

Many thanks for your reply. Please see my answers below:

- Please could you clarify what you mean by 'accepted'? Do you mean the number of applicants who accepted their offer or the number of offer holders who subsequently enrolled? The distinction is that an applicant may accept an offer but never actually enrol on the course. As such, please confirm whether you are interested in (1) number of offers accepted by applicants or (2) number of enrolments?

=> the number of enrolments.

- The University is unable to provide admissions data for applicants for entry onto courses starting in the 2022/23 academic year as the current admissions cycle is not yet complete. The University will not be in a position to provide this until after the enrolment data is available for the 2022/23 academic year for the various cohorts of students which is usually at the start of November in each given year. Are you therefore happy to proceed with data for only 2021, 2020, 2019 and 2018?


=> Yes, please proceed with data for 2021, 2020, 2019 and 2018. Are you able to send the updated data at the end of November or do I need to submit a separate request for that?

Our response

Please find the requested information in the attached spreadsheet titled 'FOI Request – F478.21-22' – Attachment.

Data notes:

- Application data includes applicants who deferred from a previous cycle.
- Enrolment numbers are based on snapshot data taken on 31st of October in each of the given academic years and correct as of that date.
- Please note that the University declines to provide the requested information in relation to certain postgraduate 'post-experience' courses* offered by WBS as it considers that the exemption under section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 applies. Section 43(2) states that "information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it)". The University considers that the release of the requested information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the University.



WBS is one of the University's largest departments, delivering market leading programmes for the Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Executive Markets (referred to as post-experience programmes). WBS has invested heavily in the growth of its' post-experience programmes which includes the introduction of a business development function that uses a consultative selling methodology to build trusted relationships with potential candidates. Given the premium nature of the post-experience programmes, it can take upwards of 24 months to convert a 'prospective candidate' to enrolled status. Providing acceptance and conversion rates for admissions data relating to the post-experience programmes enables the recipient to analyse and interpret the school's student recruitment and admissions strategy and operations. This could enable a competitor to better understand WBS' operating model, prejudicing both WBS' and the University's financial success and profitability in the future.

The exemption at section 43(2) is a qualified exemption, which means that the University must consider whether the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. As a public authority, there is a clear balance to be struck between balancing the University's commercial interests and ensuring that it is as open, transparent, and accountable as possible. After weighing up the competing interests, the University considers there is no overriding public interest in the circumstances that would warrant prejudicing the University's commercial interests. The University considers that the benefit that would result from the information being disclosed does not outweigh the considerations favouring non-disclosure. As such, the University is of the opinion that the public interest lies in favour of withholding the requested information.


*Post-experience courses include all iterations of the WBS MBA, DBA and the Global Central Banking and Financial Regulation MSc.

Next steps

For further information on how to interpret our response, including important information on how we present statistics, please see [our methodology](#) available on our website¹.

We are not able to warrant that any information provided is correct. Any information provided may be subject to intellectual property rights.

If you are dissatisfied with the University's response to your request, you may request an internal review of the response **within 40 working days** by contacting us using the contact details in the footer of this letter.



If you remain dissatisfied with the University's response to your request, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (**the ICO**). The ICO's contact details are as follows –

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

Phone: 0303 123 1113
Fax: 01625 524510

www.ico.gov.uk

We hope that this information is helpful, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Legal and Compliance Services

ⁱ <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/legalandcomplianceservices/freedomofinformation/methodology/>