

**FOI Request – FOI2021/03/22**

I refer to your Freedom of Information request received on 30 March 2021

**Your Request**

I am writing to make an open government request for all the information to which I am entitled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Please could you provide a breakdown of advertising and marketing expenditure by line item. If this could be submitted as an excel that would be much appreciate. Ideally this would cover the following questions:

1. What has been the total annual budget for marketing over the last 5 years (2017-2021)?
2. How much of the marketing budget is spent on in-house marketing and how much is spent on 3rd party providers (e.g. Agencies)?
3. What are they types of third party services used e.g. (managed marketing services, content creators, self-service platforms) and how is the expenditure distributed among them?
4. How much of the marketing budget is spent on digital advertising and how much is spent on traditional advertising methods?
5. What is the segmentation of digital expenditure by channel (e.g. how much is spent on Facebook ads, Google ads etc.) ?

**University's Response**

Further to Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the "Act") we confirm that the information requested is held by the University of Sunderland (the "University").

The University is withholding this information however, as per section 43.2 of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 43.2 of the act exempts from disclosure information which may or may likely prejudice the commercial interests of the organisation or another.

Commercial interests relate to the ability to participate successfully in a commercial activity. This could be the ability to buy or sell goods or services, or the disclosure of financial and planning information to market competitors.

The University is operating within a highly competitive market and the drive to attract and retain students is central to its operations. The University believes that to provide details about our recruitment and marketing spend would be to release an unprecedented level of information about our commercial strategy. As such, the release of such information has the potential to damage our commercial interests and the University is protecting this information as per Section 43.2 of the Act.

If you have any further enquiries about this matter, please do not hesitate to contact us by emailing [sunfoi@sunderland.ac.uk](mailto:sunfoi@sunderland.ac.uk).

Kind regards,  
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