

Dear Mr Blunn

I refer to your request for information received on 29 August 2018, which is being managed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 ("the FOISA").

"Could you please provide your projections for the number of full-time students expected to attend the institution over the next 5 years, or as far forward as you have projections for? Where possible can this be split by full-time undergraduates and full-time postgraduates per campus.

For example:

2018: X full-time undergraduates and X full-time postgraduates

2019: X full-time undergraduates and X full-time postgraduates: Etc"

Queen Margaret University holds projections for some of the years requested, and our [Strategic Plan](#) indicates our intention to grow our student numbers. However, the specific information requested is being withheld under section 33(1)(b), Commercial Interests of the FOISA. Disclosure of information of this kind would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the University. Higher education institutions operate within a competitive environment, and it is highly likely that the withheld information would provide intelligence that could be used by other higher education institutions to more effectively compete with Queen Margaret University.

The application of the commercial interest exemption is subject to a public interest test. The University accepts that there is a public interest in relation to the projected future demand for higher education. This has to be balanced, however, against a greater public interest in Queen Margaret University being able to operate fairly within a competitive environment and being able to continue to provide services to its stakeholders as effectively as possible.

If you have any queries or concerns please contact:

FOI, Queen Margaret University, Musselburgh, East Lothian, EH21 6UU
foi@qmu.ac.uk

If you have any complaint about the University's handling of your request for information, you may require the University to review its actions and decisions in relation to this response by writing within 60 working days of the date of your request to FOI, Queen Margaret University, Queen Margaret University Drive, Musselburgh, East Lothian EH21 6UU or at foi@qmu.ac.uk.

You may, within a further six months, if you are dissatisfied with the outcome or with the University's failure to review its actions and decisions in relation to this response, apply to The Scottish Information Commissioner. Details on how to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner is available on their website: www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal

Best wishes,

Fraser Rudge

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