



20 February 2020

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SECTION

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Ms Emma Lister

Sent by email: request-637846-3144a51a@whatdotheyknow.com

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Dear Ms Lister

Freedom of information request

Thank you for your email of 22 January 2020 requesting information about undergraduate withdrawal rate. To enable the University to process your request, I am writing to you to provide advice and assistance, and to ask for clarification.

You asked for records on undergraduate student withdrawal rates from 1997 to the present, including information about the programmes students were on, the year of study the students were in, the dates on which students ceased studies, and relevant students' age and gender. Unfortunately we are unable to provide the detailed breakdown you have requested, as disclosing this much information about individual students could enable them to be identified. This would breach the data protection principles set out in data protection legislation. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 does not require us to provide this sort of information as it is exempt under section 38(1)(b).

We would be able to provide information showing the number of undergraduate students who withdrew, broken down by:

- Programme
- Year of study
- Age
- Gender

Please note that providing these elements in combination may lead to numbers fewer than five, which could also enable identification of individuals. Due to this, we may need to provide these elements separately or aggregate the data.

You also asked for the level of maintenance loan that students were receiving during their studies, and for information on any additional bursaries, grants or other financial support. The University does not hold information concerning the level of maintenance loans paid to undergraduates funded by the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) or the Student Loans Company (SLC). Information on how to make freedom of

information requests to these organisations is available on the [SAAS website](#) and the [SLC website](#).

The University does hold information concerning bursaries. From 2005 to the present, information concerning the type of bursary for each student is held on the student record system, and we may be able to report on the number of students receiving each bursary who withdrew. However, as numbers may be low, this may need to be aggregated by year or across several types of bursary. Identifying the amount provided, and information on bursaries dating from before 2005, would require a manual process to identify, collect and collate information. This would be likely to cost over £100, the limit over which the University can charge for responding to freedom of information 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 are interested in this information and I will explore the cost and provide a fee notice.

Please note that we will not be able to provide each amount received as part of a bursary by individual students, as this would also breach the data protection principles set out in data protection legislation.

Please let me know what information you would like to receive and on what basis, and I will process your request. Please respond within 40 working days of receipt of this letter, or your request will expire.

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

Rob Don
Information Compliance Officer

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