

NRC Ref: FOI/AH041018

Date: 19th November 2018

Name: Abdul Hai

Dear Abdul

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Outcome of Internal Review

I am writing to inform you of the outcome of the Internal Review that has been carried out in to the College's handling of your recent Freedom of Information request (FOI/AH041018).

To ensure impartiality the Internal Review was overseen by Dr Laura Firth, Head of Student Experience and Dr Catherine Guy, Learning & Development Manager, who have had no previous involvement in this matter.

Scope of the Internal Review Process

A process should be used where an applicant wishes a review to be conducted about the way the College has responded to a request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). All applicants are informed of their right to request a review, under this process, when they are sent a response to their request for information.

Initial Freedom of Information Request Received on 4th October 2018

1. How many trade union reps are there working at the college?
2. How much time do reps get for their union duties?
3. How many full time union reps are there?
4. Can you give me a copy of your handbook or any other documents you have in relation to the duties performed by union reps?

Summary of Northern Regional College's Response to Freedom of Information Request (FOI/AH041018)

The College's response was sent to you via email on 23rd October 2018. The response gave a partial release of information (questions 2, 3 and 4). Information was not released for question 1 – How many trade union reps are there working at the College?

This information was not released as the College as we believed it fell under the remit of a special category under GDPR. The number of trade union reps is low and the Northern Regional College is a small college in Northern Ireland, thereby increasing the potential likelihood that trade union reps could be identified by releasing this data.

Review

As part of this review we have considered if the College released the information could the trade union reps be identified. After consulting with a trade union rep we have concluded that releasing the number of trade union reps would not lead to the identification of trade union reps. We have balanced the need to release information in the Public's interest and our obligations under Data Protection. We have concluded that the College should have released the number of trade union reps in our first response.

Conclusion

We have given due consideration to the issue raised and are releasing the information that there are currently 8 trade union reps in the Northern Regional College.

I hope you are satisfied with the outcome of this review, however if you are not you can of course refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for consideration. You can contact them in writing at the following address:

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

Yours Sincerely
Dr Laura Firth and Dr Catherine Guy