

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)

Decision notice

Date: 21 August 2017

Public Authority: University of Manchester
Address: Oxford Road
Manchester
M13 9PL

Decision (including any steps ordered)

1. The complainant has requested information on a variety of partnerships and communications between the University of Manchester and a number of institutions. The University has failed to respond to this request for information.
2. The Commissioner considers that the University breached section 10(1) FOIA in the handling of this request.
3. The Commissioner requires the public authority to take the following steps to ensure compliance with the legislation.
 - The University must provide the complainant with a response to this request in accordance with its obligations under the FOIA.
4. The public authority must take these steps within 35 calendar days of the date of this decision notice. Failure to comply may result in the Commissioner making written certification of this fact to the High Court pursuant to section 54 of the Act and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

Request and response

5. On 20 March 2017 the complainant made the following request for information to the University:

"I request that a copy of the following documents [or documents containing the following information] be provided to me:

- *All documents between the University of Manchester and Israeli institutions.*
 - *The partnership between the University of Manchester and the Weizmann Institute, Israel including research contracts, investment fundings, exchange programmes, procurement.*
 - *The partnership between the University of Manchester and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, including research contracts, investment fundings, exchange programmes, procurement.*
 - *The partnership between the University of Manchester and Technion – Israeli institute of Technology, including research contracts, investment fundings, exchange programmes, procurement.*
 - *All investment holding from the University of Manchester (ending fiscal year 2016)*
 - *All procurement documents between the University of Manchester and all Israeli institutions and companies.*
 - *All correspondence (emails, minutes e.t.c) between members of the University of Manchester and the Israeli lobby during the month before and during Israeli Apartheid Week. (1st February 2017 – 3rd March 2017)*
 - *All investments held on behalf of the University of Manchester by the following financial institutions; Daiwa Securities Group, Credit Suisse group, Julius Baer group, Blackrock, JP Morgan Chase, Mastercard Class A, Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, BOC Hong Kong Holdings Ltd, Kasikorn Bank PCL, Kasikorn Bank PCL ADR, Itau Unibanco Holding SA ADR."*
6. The University acknowledged receipt of the request on 27 April 2017 and the complainant sent a follow-up email chasing a response on 17 May 2017 and 23 July 2017. The Commissioner wrote to the University on 27 July 2017 and at the date of this notice the University had not provided a response to the request.

Scope of the Case

7. The complainant contacted the Commissioner on 24 July 2017 and again on 10 August 2017 to complain about the way her request for information had been handled.

8. The Commissioner has considered whether the University dealt with this request in accordance with its obligations under section 10(1) FOIA.

Reasons for decision

9. Section 10(1) provides that:

"Subject to subsections (2) and (3), a public authority must comply with section 1(1) promptly and in any event not later than the twentieth working day following the date of receipt."

10. Section 1(1) provides that:

"Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled –

*(a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and
(b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him."*

11. The request was made on 20 March 2017 and a response is yet to be provided. The Commissioner therefore finds that the University breached section 10(1) in failing to respond within 20 working days.

Right of appeal

12. Either party has the right to appeal against this decision notice to the First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights). Information about the appeals process may be obtained from: First-tier Tribunal (Information Rights)

GRC & GRP Tribunals,
PO Box 9300,
LEICESTER,
LE1 8DJ

Tel: 0300 1234504

Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: GRC@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.justice.gov.uk/tribunals/general-regulatory-chamber

13. If you wish to appeal against a decision notice, you can obtain information on how to appeal along with the relevant forms from the Information Tribunal website.
14. Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

Signed

Jill Hulley
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Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF