

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA)
Decision notice

Date: 23 October 2024

Public Authority: The Governing Body of University of Bedfordshire

Address: Vicarage Road
Luton
LU1 3JU

Request:

The complainant requested the following information from the University of Bedfordshire on 8 August 2024:

" BACKGROUND

I understand your university is a member of the Association of University Chief Security Officers (AUCSO), which runs a Special Interest Group on Protest and Encampments/Protests and Assembly.

This FOI request will make reference to pro-Palestine protest activity, which I would like you to interpret as including but not limited to the following activities: encampments, chanting, gatherings and demonstrations, written or verbal comments and flyering.

QUESTIONS

Please provide:

1. Copies of all emails exchanged between your university staff*, AUCSO and other universities' security teams since 1 October 2023 discussing Palestine protest activity on your campus, as well as copies of any documents/images attached to those emails or included in the body of the emails.

2. Copies of any and all guidance documents your university has received from AUCSO since 1 October 2023 in connection with pro-Palestine protest

activity, including but not limited to anything addressing the following:

- Encampments
- Sharing data with police
- When to make Prevent referrals
- Sharing data with the Home Office
- Disciplinary action

3. A list of any and all meetings between AUCSO and any university staff* which have taken place at your university since 1 October 2023 to discuss Pro-Palestine protest activity.

4. For each of the meetings covered under the scope of question 3, please provide the:

- A. The meeting agenda
- B. The list of attendees and apologies
- C. Meeting minutes
- D. Any presentations shown at the meeting
- E. Documents circulated during the meeting

5. Please provide copies of all emails sent and received by your university staff* and police since 17 May 2024 discussing Palestine protest activity on your campus, as well as copies of any documents/images attached to those emails or included in the body of the emails.

6. A list of any and all meetings between police and any university staff* which have taken place at your university since 17 May 2024 to discuss Pro-Palestine protest activity.

7. For each of the meetings covered under the scope of question 3, please provide the:

- A. The meeting agenda
- B. The list of attendees and apologies
- C. Meeting minutes
- D. Any presentations shown at the meeting
- E. Documents circulated during the meeting

*A NOTE ON S12 COST EXEMPTION:

In regards to question 1-7 above, if it would exceed the cost limit to conduct searches for information held by all relevant university staff and departments who have emailed/met with police and AUCSO - then please restrict your searches to the systems/inboxes used by your university's security team, the team responsible for student wellbeing/welfare and the senior leadership team including your Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent leadership position)."

Commissioner's Decision:

A public authority will breach section 10 of FOIA if it fails to respond to a request within 20 working days. Based on evidence available to the Commissioner, by the date of this notice the public authority has not issued a substantive response to this request. Therefore the Commissioner finds a breach of section 10.

Steps:

The public authority must provide a substantive response to the request in accordance with its obligations under FOIA.

The public authority must take this step within 30 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 FOIA and may be dealt with as a contempt of court.

Right of Appeal:

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: 0203 936 8963

Fax: 0870 739 5836

Email: grc@justice.gov.uk

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

Any Notice of Appeal should be served on the Tribunal within 28 (calendar) days of the date on which this decision notice is sent.

**Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF**