



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Human Resources Directorate
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

24 February 2015

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0076-15

Thank you for your email of 26 January asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

With reference to the provisions of The Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would be obliged if you could provide me with answers to the following question(s):

1. *How many staff were employed by your department who had spent criminal convictions in 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 so far?*
2. *How many staff were employed by your department who had unspent criminal convictions in 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 so far?*
3. *What were these criminal convictions for?*
4. *How many staff were employed by your department who were residents of a foreign country at time of employment starting in 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 so far?*
5. *What countries were these employees residents of?*
6. *How many staff were employed by your department as casual workers in 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 so far?*
7. *How many staff were employed incorrectly by your department and therefore had their employment terminated in 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 so far?*
8. *What the reasons for this incorrect employment?*

I would like to request that my name and contact details be redacted from any external publication of the outcome of this Freedom of Information request.

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold some information relevant to your request.

We have interpreted your question for UK Based staff only as our records for local staff are held at post.

In answer to your questions 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 this information can be required as part of the FCO's Security Vetting procedures. However, this information is not held centrally. To obtain this information we would need to look into all personnel security files. To search for the information that we do hold would exceed the appropriate cost limit.

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. The limit has been specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. For central government the appropriate limit is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 3 ½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it. Your request as presently formulated is widely-framed and I estimate that it will take more than 3 ½ working days to locate, retrieve and extract this information. In these circumstances we are not obliged under the Act to comply with your request. Normally under section 16 of the Act we would be obliged to advise you to refine your request to narrow its scope to bring it within the appropriate limit. However, given that each file would need to be searched, we cannot advise you how to narrow your request.

6. How many staff were employed by your department as casual workers in 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 so far?

I can confirm that the FCO does hold information relevant to your request for the years 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14. Under section 21 of the Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to you. The information relevant to these financial years is available in the published [FCO Annual Accounts](#).

For the year 2014/15, the number of casual workers as at 31st December 2014 is 16.

7. How many staff were employed incorrectly by your department and therefore had their employment terminated in 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15 so far?

No one has been employed incorrectly by the FCO. All staff are offered employment subject to obtaining security vetting clearance. This covers pre-appointment checks which include checks on Criminal Records and on nationality. As a UK Based member of staff you have to have lived in the UK for two out of the last 10 years.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless it is exempt. The information we have

supplied to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

I hope you are satisfied with this reply. However, if you wish to make a complaint or if you would like a review of our decision, please write to the FOI and DPA Team, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Room K4.14, King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH. E-mail: foi-dpa.imd@fco.gov.uk. You have 40 working days to do so from the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may then apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the FCO. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

Human Resources Directorate



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.