



## FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



**Request Number:** F-2014-05625

**Keyword:** Crime

**Subject:** Student Sexual Assaults

### Request and Answer:

#### Question

Please can you provide the number of sexual assaults and rape cases involving university students since the start of term/1st September?

E.g. 'Since 1st September, there have been 15 cases of rape reported to the police'.

#### Answer

Section 17(5) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the Police Service of Northern Ireland, when refusing to provide such information (because the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit) to provide you the applicant with a notice which states that fact.

It is estimated that the cost of complying with your request for information would exceed the "appropriate costs limit" under Section 12(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450.

I have been advised by the record holder that there are approximately 200 crimes of rape and sexual assault which have been reported to police since 1 September 2014 where the victim was aged 17 or over at the time the offence was committed. While occupation details exist for persons on NICHE (Computer System), in around half of the crimes identified the occupation details are blank. In some of the other entries Occupation is identified as 'Student' and in some of the others indicating Schoolboy/Schoolgirl'. However, the occupation details may not be accurate as they can relate to the person's occupation at the time their nominal record was created on NICHE and may not have been updated since. For example the occupation of some of the persons identified as student/school boy or girl was based on information from a number of years ago and has not been updated since. For this reason I have been advised that each of the 200 crime records would need to be examined to see if the victim was a university student. This would take approximately 33 hours, greatly exceeding the 18 hour cost limit.

Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, if any part of the request exceeds the cost threshold then the whole request will be excess costs and there is no obligation to answer any part of the request.

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, this letter should be considered as a Refusal Notice, and the request has therefore been closed.

You may wish to submit a refined request in order that the cost of complying with your request may be facilitated within the 'appropriate limit'. In compliance with Section 16 of the Act, I have considered how your request may be refined to bring it under the appropriate limit, however as a manual examination would be required for retrieval of any information, it is not possible to offer any refinement to assist your request.

Submission of a refined request would be treated as a new request, and considered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, including consideration of relevant Part II exemptions.

If you have any queries regarding your request or this decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this letter.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing [foi@psni.pnn.police.uk](mailto:foi@psni.pnn.police.uk).

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ [www.psni.police.uk](http://www.psni.police.uk)

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.