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Re: FOI request 2017/218

14 June 2017

[REDACTED]

I refer to your request dated 22 May 2017 which you made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for records held by this Department/Body. I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request dated 30 May 2017 which advised you I am the decision maker assigned to Part 3 of your request.

3. How much money did the Government spend on redundancy payments for lecturers and professors in universities and colleges in the past three years? How much in each college and for how many people?

I, Ray Corbet, Higher Executive Officer have now made a final decision to refuse your request on 14th June 2017. The purpose of this letter is to explain that decision. This explanation has the following parts:

1. an explanation of the relevant findings concerning the records to which access is denied, and
2. a statement of how you can appeal this decision should you wish to do so

1. Findings, particulars and reasons for decisions to deny access

The Department of Education and Skills has responsibility for sanctioning *ex-gratia* payments provided for under the Collective Agreement on Enhanced Redundancy, agreed by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Public Service Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. The Department does not record the grade of the person to whom an employer proposes to make redundant. This information is held by the individual employers of the relevant universities/colleges.

I would also add that generally speaking, lecturing staff have the protection of the Croke Park Agreement and subsequent national agreements against compulsory redundancy. Therefore the number of redundancies among the cohort of lecturing staff would be relatively low and these are most likely where staff have been engaged on a fixed term contract to cover absences of permanent staff such as career breaks.

As the record sought does not exist in the Department of Education and Skills your request has been refused under the provisions of section 15 (1) (a) of the Freedom of Information Act, 2014 which states:

15 (1) A head to whom an FOI request is made may refuse to grant the request where
(a) the record concerned does not exist or cannot be found after all reasonable steps to ascertain its whereabouts have been taken.

2. Right of appeal

You may appeal this decision. In the event that you need to make such an appeal, you can do so by writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough Street, Dublin 1. Your correspondence should include a fee of €30 for processing the appeal. Payment should be made by way of personal cheque or postal money order made payable to the accountant in the Department of Education and Skills. Please note the Department of Education and Skills no longer accept cheque payments from business users. For further information regarding payment methods for business users, please email foi@education.gov.ie

Publication

All non-personal FOI requests will be recorded on an FOI disclosure log which will be published on the Department of Education and Skills website in due course.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact me by telephone on 01-8892410.

Yours sincerely,

Ray Corbet
Higher Executive Officer
External Staff Relations Section