



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Human Resources Directorate
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
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Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0220-17

Thank you for your email of 2 March asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

How many Foreign Office Diplomatic Service staff have working level of competency in the Russian language? How many Diplomatic Service staff received Russian language training of any kind in the past 5 years (please provide figures for each year).

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 information relevant to your request.

Language skills are a priority for the FCO. The ability to communicate with others in their own language is vital to the FCO's delivery of the Government's foreign policy priorities and enables diplomats to connect and do business around the world. We want to ensure officers posted overseas have the correct skills to be effective in their role.

Where there is a requirement, we can provide full time language training up to C1 Operational level (which is equivalent to degree level) before an officer takes up an overseas position. Not all officers will need to have this high level of fluency for an overseas role. Many officers will undertake training on a part time basis, both in the UK and overseas, either to learn a new language for personal development or to maintain existing language skills.

Our HR data base indicates that there are currently 205 officers who have registered some knowledge of Russian language. This will range from very basic level to fluent speakers. Of those, 55 officers have a valid exam pass at C1 level or above.

During each of the past five years, the number of staff who received Russian training of any kind were as follows:

2013/2014	80
2014/2015	93
2015/2016	90
2016/2017	98

Yours sincerely,

Human Resources Directorate



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