



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

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

23 October 2015

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

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: FOI 0873-15

Thank you for your email of 6 September asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I'd like to know any figures for how many people are employed by the Foreign Office on zero-hour contracts and what pay, if any, is given to interns

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.

The FCO defines zero hours contracts as a contract of employment which does not specify a fixed number of hours per week, and has no guaranteed minimum number of hours. These contracts are granted on the agreement that an employee will work a number of days or hours agreed with the hiring manager although not specifically stated in the contract. They do not preclude employees from taking secondary employment.

The FCO uses this type of contract to carry out functions that require specialist expertise but have a fluctuating workload, for example arranging significant one-off events such as the 2014 NATO summit in Newport or reviewing historic documents for public release. We only use them for exceptional roles where they represent the best value for the taxpayer and terms are mutually agreed with the employee.

65 workers are currently employed by the FCO on zero hours contracts. They are employed in a variety of areas including Protocol, Human Resources and as Sensitivity Reviewers for material to be considered for release and range in grade from Civil Service Grade 6 (FCO Band D7) to Admin Assistants (FCO Band A).

The overall number of staff currently employed by the FCO in the UK is 2,874. This figure, from our centrally held records, reflects individuals active and working (and therefore paid) in any given month ('employment' as defined by the Office of National Statistics).

Regarding pay given to interns, the FCO offers a range of internship schemes in the UK for recent graduates, undergraduates and school age students. Many of these internships and work experience programmes are aimed at individuals from backgrounds that are currently under-represented in our workforce. Details of all the internship schemes we offered during 2015/16 are available on our 'Working for FCO' web page:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office/about/recruitment#work-experience>

You'll note that some are FCO specific schemes and others are centrally run Civil Service schemes in which the FCO participates.

We pay all interns employed by the FCO in the UK:

- FCO Graduate interns (on placements lasting up to 7 months) and Government Economic Service (GES) summer interns (on 6 – 12 weeks placements) receive an FCO A1 Band salary (£18,337 per annum) and a London Location Allowance (£4,520 per annum) pro rata.
- GES sandwich student interns (on 12 months training placements) receive an A2 Band Salary (£19,805 per annum) and a London Location Allowance (£4,520).
- Interns on the Whitehall Fast Stream Summer Diversity Internship Programme (6 – 9 weeks placements) for undergraduates and recent graduates receive a centrally mandated training allowance of £350 per week.

The FCO does not pay a salary to the 16/17 year olds whom we host as part of the fully government funded 2-week summer residential Whitehall Social Mobility Internship Programme, managed by the Social Mobility Foundation. In addition to their accommodation and transportation costs, which are met by the government departments hosting the students, the students receive a daily allowance of £20 for meals.

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Yours sincerely,



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