



Foreign &  
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03 October 2016

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0844-16**

Thank you for your email of 5 September asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

1. *What was the average cost per employee of sickness absence in each of the last six financial years (from 2010/11 to 2015/16)?*
2. *What proportion of sickness absences were classed as long-term absences, and what proportion were classed as short-term absences, in each of the last six financial years (from 2010/11 to 2015/16)?*

*If you do not hold information for all of these financial years, or hold information on a calendar year basis, please send me such information as you have available.*

3. *What are your current trigger points, or trigger levels, for intervention relating to sickness absence?*
4. *In the last three years, what were your top four absence reasons?*
5. *What are the data fields in the system you currently use to record sickness absence?*
6. *Do you have an OHA service?*
  - a. *If so, is it contracted, or in house?*
  - b. *Is the service telephone-based, site-based, or other?*
  - c. *Does the service deal with case-work only, or provide other information such as prevention/ wellbeing initiatives?*

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.

Q1

Year	Average cost

2010/11	£397.54
2011/12	£391.78
2012/13	£339.27
2013/14	£357.56
2014/15	£376.46
2015/16	£395.70

Q2

**Proportion of sick absence**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Short term</b>	<b>Long term</b>
2010/11	61.2%	38.8%
2011/12	52.1%	47.9%
2012/13	52.4%	47.6%
2013/14	47.6%	52.4%
2014/15	46.9%	53.1%
2015/16	44.5%	55.5%

This data is correct as of 31st March each year.

Q3 The FCO's current trigger points for intervention relating to sickness absence are as follows:

- 12 days self-certificated sick absence in any 12 month period
- a combination of self-certificated and/or medically-certified sick absence totalling at least 15 days during the last 12 months
- 5 separate occasions of self-certificated and/or medically-certified sick absence in any 12 month period (this could effectively be a total of 5 days i.e. 5 x 1 day absences)

NB: Weekends count towards sick absence if bounded by periods of sick absence e.g. Friday and Monday sick absence is 4 sick days.

Q4. It is not mandatory to enter a reason for sickness absence. Across the last three years, where a reason has been recorded, the top four absence reasons (supplied by the officer) were; 'Unknown Illness', 'Respiratory System', 'Mental Disorders' and 'Symptoms Ill-Defined'.

Q5. In order to record sick absence we request staff members complete the following data fields in the system we currently use to record sickness absence:

- Absence Type: (the drop down for this allows the officer to note whether a medical certificate has/hasn't been provided to cover the period)
- Absence Reason:
- Absence Start Date:
- Absence End Date:
- Number of Days Applied For:

Of the above it is not mandatory to complete the Absence Reason field.

Q6a-c - The FCO Occupational Health service is provided as part of a Healthcare contract with an external provider. Assessments can be face-to-face or by telephone depending on the location of the member of staff being assessed. In addition to casework they also provide health promotion initiatives.

Yours sincerely

Knowledge Management Policy  
Directorate Operations Team