



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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

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

24 August 2017

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0719-17**

Thank you for your email of 31 July 2017 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

*This is a Freedom of Information request about secondments into your department. I am making this request because I believe it is in the public interest in understanding for the number and nature of agreements that facilitate the exchange of skills and expertise between government and other commercial and social organisations. I also believe there is a public interest in understanding how conflicts of interest are managed.*

1. Please state how many people are currently on secondment.

*For each current secondment, please state:*

- a) civil service seniority level*
- b) job title*
- c) organisation seconded from*
- d) date commenced*

2. Please state how many secondments concluded since 1 January 2016.

*For each concluded secondment, please state:*

- a) civil service seniority level*
- b) job title*
- c) organisation seconded from*
- d) date commenced*
- e) date finished*

3. Please state the name and purpose of each form that is completed by the department and/or the secondee during the process of declaring and managing conflicts.

*Thank you for the time and energy you will invest in preparing a response. If you consider that some information is exempt from disclosure under one of the exemptions in the FOIA please cite which exemptions you are using to redact information.*

*Please also explain, in line with the guiding principles of the Information Tribunal, how the public interest would, or would be likely, to be materially prejudiced by disclosure. I would prefer to receive all information in electronic format and in machine-readable formats where applicable. I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this request.*

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.

**Please state how many people are currently on secondment?**

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) currently has fewer than five secondees from an organisation outside the Civil Service. Some of the information you have requested is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. Sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply in this situation. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. This states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle, which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances, Section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

**Please state how many secondments concluded since 1 January 2016?**

A total of five colleagues have completed their inward secondment at the FCO since 1 January 2016. We cannot provide more detailed information as requested, as this might enable individual identities to be revealed. As above, Sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply in this situation.

**Please state the name and purpose of each form that is completed by the department and/or the secondee during the process of declaring and managing conflicts.**

We have interpreted your request to mean the FCO's process for individuals to declare potential conflicts of interest.

All FCO UK based members of staff, including those on inward secondment, have a contractual obligation to comply with the [Civil Service Code](#). This sets out the framework by which all Civil Servants should abide, and the core values and standards of behaviour they are expected to uphold.

All individuals working for the FCO, including staff on inward secondment, require security clearance appropriate for the role they are doing. The level of security clearance granted is determined at the end of a vetting process during which the character and personal circumstances of an individual are checked to ensure they can be trusted with sensitive government information and assets. An individual will only be placed into a role if they achieve the required security clearance. Security clearance is subject to review and renewal on a regular basis.

Yours sincerely,

## Human Resources Directorate



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.