



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

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

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

25 August 2017

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: FOI 0698-17

Thank you for your email of 23 July 2017 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

“Can you please advise the following information about the 'Undertaking to Repay' service you oversee within the foreign commonwealth office:

- Information and/or guidance provided at FCO that covers FCO's involvement and legal jurisdiction when blocking or restricting access to a UK passport being issued to a UK passport applicant who hasn't fully repaid his/her 'Undertaking to Repay' loan?

- Information and/or guidance provided at FCO that covers how the 'Undertaking to Repay' loan is a legally valid agreement between the FCO and the borrower?”

Outcome of search

I apologise for the delay in sending our final response. In our letter of 21 August 2017, we stated that we were considering applying Sec. 35 – Formulation of government policy, in order to withhold information. We have now completed our search and I am pleased to advise that this information does not fall under this exemption.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold some information relevant to your request.

Disclosure

Q1. The FCO has authority to refuse passport facilities, derived from the Royal Prerogative, (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/royal-prerogative>). This provides for passport facilities to be refused, when a UK national has been repatriated from abroad at public expense, until they have repaid their debt.



Q2. The Undertaking To Repay (UTR) is an enforceable agreement where the FCO agrees to lend a sum of money in consideration of a 10% surcharge in lieu of interest where full repayment is not made within six months. A copy of the UTR agreement is attached for your reference.

Consular FOI/DPA Team
Consular Directorate

