

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

7 March 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

G01717: Freedom of Information Request

We refer to your request for information dated 08/02/2023 under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the "Act").

Please find below your question, with the University's corresponding response.

Question

I would like to make an FOI request about the university's Confucius Institute.

First, I should provide some context. I am in possession of the majority of the legal documentation governing the UK's 30 Confucius Institutes, that is, agreements between the relevant British universities and Chinese entities.

One common theme in these agreements is a clause seeming to demand that staff from the People's Republic of China (PRC) who work at the Confucius Institutes in the UK should 'follow Chinese law' whilst on British soil, or that the Institute's activities (as carried out by staff) should not contravene Chinese law.

Recently, some students at Newcastle University sent an FOI request to their university asking whether staff from the PRC have indeed to follow Chinese law on campus. Newcastle's response was to state unequivocally that "Chinese staff in the UK must still abide by Chinese law as well as UK law."

My FOI request is as follows:

Do the staff from the PRC at the University's Confucius Institute have to abide by Chinese law on campus? Has the University entered into agreements that demand as much?

Answer

In accordance with [Section 1\(1\)\(a\)](#) of the Act, we confirm that the University holds the information of the description specified in your request.

Staff would have to submit to the jurisdiction of the particular countries laws and court system that they are working in.

The University has not entered into any such agreements that demand such. Any agreements and any dispute or claim arising out of or in connection with them or their subject matter or formation is governed by and construed in accordance with the law of England and Wales. Each party to any agreement irrevocably

If you do not feel that we have dealt with your request in accordance with the requirements of [Part I](#) of the Act, you may request a review. Your request for a review **must** specify in what respect you consider that the requirements of [Part I](#) of the Act have not been met; mere dissatisfaction with our response is insufficient. Please address your request for a review by completing the [form](#) and selecting Fol Review.

In accordance with section 5.3 of the [Code of Practice](#), a request for a review must be sent within 40 working days of the date of this letter. The University is not obliged to accept any requests for a review beyond 40 working days. We will acknowledge your request for a review and endeavour to respond within 20 working days of its receipt but please note that a deadline for a review response is not prescribed by the Act.

The Information Commissioner is responsible for enforcing rights of access to information and the operation of the publication scheme. You may apply to the Information Commissioner in writing (FOI/EIR Complaints Resolution, Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF) or [electronically](#) for a decision whether, in any specified respect, your request for information has been dealt with by the University in accordance with the requirements of [Part I](#) of the Act. The Information Commissioner will not normally act unless they are satisfied that the University's review procedure has been exhausted.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'foi' in a cursive, lowercase style.