| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 23-3277  Responded to: 10th January 2024 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

1. **Communications between the University of Edinburgh and Police Scotland between 10 September 2022 up until the most recent communications available.**

* **Email correspondence between the University of Edinburgh and Police Scotland between 10 September 2022 up until the most recent correspondence available.**
* **Recordings of telephone conversations between the University of Edinburgh and Police Scotland between 10 September 2022 up until the most recent correspondence available.**

If I start off by just looking at the email aspect of your request, I regret to inform you that I am unable to provide you with the information you have requested, as it would prove too costly to do so within the context of the fee regulations.

As you may be aware the current cost threshold is £600 and I estimate that it would cost well in excess of this amount to process your request.

As such, and in terms of Section 16(4) of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 where Section 12(1) of the Act (Excessive Cost of Compliance) has been applied, this represents a refusal notice for the information sought.

By way of explanation, we have previously attempted to conduct similar keyword searches to the one that would be required. In this case a search for emails containing the phrases “University of Edinburgh”, “Edinburgh University”, “Edinburgh Uni” along with potentially others would be required.

Despite extensive efforts to retrieve emails requested by keyword it has become clear that whilst we do have the facility to conduct a keyword search but we do not have the facility to limit this to a particular date range.

This means that any mention of the keywords on any date would be returned. These are returned as individual full mailbox archive files for each mailbox that contains these keywords.

Once these archives are retrieved, a manual process is required to confirm which emails within each file contain the keyword required. This is further complicated by the fact that we will simply know there is at least one email within the mailbox archive that contains the keyword. There could be 1 or 100 and so each email would need to be manually checked for the topic requested.

During previous similar keyword requests we have conducted a rough estimate using one of our divisions (A Division) which accounts for a bit over 1,300 mailboxes. It is estimated that 100-200 of these may contain the keywords requested. If this is extrapolated across our other divisions this would give us a rough estimate of 2,400 to 3,600 mailbox files to review but it is expected this number may be higher due to the relative size of some of our divisions.

At an average estimate of 30 minutes to check each mailbox file concerned, this equates to around 1,200 to 1,800 hours of work to complete.

This is before we consider a review of additional correspondence such as call recordings held by Police Scotland which would again require a degree of manual searching. It is likely a full check of all calls held by the force would add hundreds of additional hours to the time it would take to comply with the request.

Police Scotland have assessed that the £600 cost limit within the Act equates to 40 hours of work and that your request would breach the cost threshold.

In order to be of assistance, you may wish to consider reducing the scope of your request to a group of mailboxes or staff and limiting it to a reduced time period which may allow it to be progressed.

**2. Number of Police Officers on duty on campus during the protest held on the University of Edinburgh campus on Wednesday 11th October 2023 outside 40 George Square for the book launch of ‘Sex and Gender: A Contemporary Reader’.**

**3. Number of Police Officers on duty on campus during the protest held on the University of Edinburgh campus on Wednesday 22nd November 2023 outside 40 George Square for the screening of ‘Adult Human Female’.**

**4. Total number of Police Officers on duty on campus during the Pro-Palestine protest held on the University of Edinburgh campus on Friday 20th October 2023.**

**•Please break down the total number of Police Officers called onto campus after the detainment of a student during the Pro-Palestine protest held on the University of Edinburgh campus on Friday 20th October 2023.**

**5. Total number of Police Officers on duty on campus during the Pro-Palestine protest held on the University of Edinburgh campus on Friday 10th November 2023.**

In relation to questions 2-5 of your request, the requested information is considered to be exempt in terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (the Act). Section 16 of the Act requires Police Scotland to provide you with a notice which:

(a) states that it holds the information,

(b) states that it is claiming an exemption,

(c) specifies the exemption in question and

(d) states, if that would not be otherwise apparent, why the exemption applies.

Where information is considered to be exempt, this letter serves as a Refusal Notice that information is held and an explanation of the appropriate exemption is provided.

The exemptions that I consider to be applicable to the information requested by you are:

**Section 35(1)(a)&(b) – Law Enforcement**

The information requested is exempt, as its disclosure would or would be likely to prejudice substantially the prevention or detection of crime and apprehension or prosecution of offenders. If the details of Police Scotland’s resource deployment to specific events or locations were disclosed, experience has shown that it would allow those intent on committing crime or causing disorder to gauge the likelihood of detection or to take measures to negate the likelihood of detection. It would allow criminals to plan how best to engage or occupy existing police resources in an effort to maximise their chances of committing serious crime, therefore harming the efficient and effective conduct of the service.

Such information would prove extremely useful information for persons involved in criminality as they would be able to plan and conduct their activities to avoid detection. It would confirm the amount of resources available in a specific area, which would allow those intent on wrong doing to judge the police response time to a variety of incidents. In turn this would prejudice substantially the ability for our officers to prevent and detect crime and apprehend or prosecute offenders.

Disclosure would have an adverse impact on the ability of the Police to carry out its law enforcement role effectively, and thereby prejudice substantially the prevention and detection of crime.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the public interest test.

**Section 39(1) – Health, safety and the environment**

Disclosure of the information requested would prove extremely useful for criminals and those intent on wrongdoing, to estimate the level of resources deployed by the Police and would assist them in circumventing the efficient and effective provision of law enforcement by the police service, which in turn would have an adverse impact on the safety of the officers involved and the general public.

This would increase the risk to the personal safety of individuals and also the safety of the police officers responding to incidents.

This is a non-absolute exemption and requires the application of the public interest test.

**Public Interest Test**

As you will be aware, the two exemptions detailed above are non-absolute and require the application of the public interest test. Public awareness would favour a disclosure as it would contribute to the public debate surrounding the use and deployment of police resources.

I would, however, contend that the efficient/effective conduct of the service and public safety favours retention of the information as it cannot be in the public interest to release information that would prejudice law enforcement or which is likely to have an adverse impact upon public safety.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.