

From: [O'Connor,D](#)
To: [Wilson,Clive](#); [Maguire,RE](#)
Subject: RE: FOI query - thesis supervisor
Date: 27 June 2019 14:23:00

I'm happy that we can say something like, "following data protection guidelines we do not, as standard, release the names of PhD supervisors."

It is our default policy, after all.

Danny

From: Wilson,Clive
Sent: 27 June 2019 14:12
To: Maguire,RE <R.E.Maguire@lse.ac.uk>
Cc: O'Connor,D <D.O'Connor@lse.ac.uk>
Subject: RE: FOI query - thesis supervisor

Thanks Rachael, much appreciated.

I can't help think this journalist will just find it very convenient that the supervisor has died. But although we could release it – we don't have to. It's only really chance that I know that he passed away. Danny – your call on that one 😊

thanks again

Clive

From: Maguire,RE
Sent: 27 June 2019 14:04
To: Wilson,Clive
Cc: O'Connor,D
Subject: RE: FOI query - thesis supervisor

Hello Clive,

This is not true as this is third party personal information which is being requested. Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act requires that we consider whether the data protection principles will be breached if we release personal data. The personal data in this case is:

- The degree granted
- The supervisor's name.

The main data protection principle is the first, relating to fairness. We have to consider if it will be fair to release personal data relating to another individual. Regarding the degree, this is fair to release as it is usually in the student's interests to confirm they received the degree they are saying they received. There will be negative consequences for them if we don't. Regarding the supervisor's name, this would not normally be fair because the School does not release the names of teaching staff on a regular basis and there would be an expectation from staff that their names were not released. However, as the supervisor is dead, data protection no longer

applies. You have to be a living individual. So the supervisor's name in this instance could be released.

FoI is not a complete right to information anyway, there are exemptions and other reasons we can refuse e.g. vexatious requests. I suggest linking to the ICO's website for more information www.ico.org.uk as a further resource.

Regards,
Rachael

From: Wilson, Clive
Sent: 27 June 2019 13:52
To: Maguire, RE <R.E.Maguire@lse.ac.uk>
Cc: O'Connor, D <D.O'Connor@lse.ac.uk>
Subject: FOI query - thesis supervisor

Hi Rachel

sorry, more on the Ing-Wen Tsai thesis.

A Chinese journalist has been writing on the disappearance of Ing-Wen Tsai's thesis. I had initially replied to him with our standard response and told him that releasing the supervisor's name was not allowed under UK data protection rules – as Simeon Underwood had stated 4 years ago.

The journalist has come back with

I consulted a British writer and checked with The Freedom of Information Act of UK, it came to my knowledge that as a public figure, a government official, and let alone a sitting president of a democratic country, any information regarding Ms. Tsai's degree, her thesis, her supervisor, etc. should be public information and LSE is responsible to provide whatever they have.

(I haven't included the long non-LSE related bumpf)

The supervisor passed away in 2016 and hadn't been at LSE since 1984. I feel as though, if he were alive, we would need his permission to release his name. But as Ing-Wen Tsai is the current president of Taiwan do we need to release this?

(I also see there is an international relations exclusion but that's probably a stretch)

Many thanks

Clive

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