



[REDACTED]

02 September 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2026/00656

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 30 July in which you requested the following:

Your request:

I would like to know details of the process used to administer the staff surveys which are issued to all staff, and details of the processing of the results of those surveys.

In particular, I would like to know how the information is aggregated, anonymised, and with whom it is shared and for what purposes.

I would also like information relating to any incidents where the anonymisation of this data may have been compromised, whether it have been through technical means such as cyberattack, mis-configuration, etc, for via administrative means – either deliberate or erroneous.

In particular, I am looking for instances of where specific answers given by employees were shared with line managers of those employees.

While any such incidents would be of interest, I am particularly interested in occurrences that would have happened since July 2023.

I would like to know what responses where shared, from whom and to whom, the circumstances under which they occurred, and what corrective action was taken once they were discovered – such as whether disciplinary action was taken against the person who shared it, or results of a root cause analysis investigation if the breach was the result of cyberattack.

If no such incident has occurred, I would like for that to also be confirmed in writing.

I appreciate that the surveys are undertaken by DJS Research on UKRI's behalf, however the guidance I have received so far informs me that the FOI request should be "submitted to the organisation or council that commissioned the work".

Our response

I can confirm that UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) does hold information relevant to your request. Please see the information below.

Part 1: Details of the process used to administer the staff surveys which are issued to all staff, and details of the processing of the results of those surveys.

In particular, I would like to know how the information is aggregated, anonymised, and with whom it is shared and for what purposes.

I can confirm that [DJS Research](https://djsresearch.co.uk/)¹ undertake the administration, processing and analysis of the survey on UKRI's behalf. The UKRI Engagement Team does not oversee or record how council-level reports are subsequently used by authorised local recipients and therefore does not hold that information.

HR Management Information data is provided to DJS Research to enable survey administration. DJS Research distributes personalised survey links directly to employees and completed survey responses are returned directly to DJS Research for processing.

Personal identifiers, such as names and email addresses, are removed before survey data is shared with UKRI.

All data collected through the People Survey by DJS Research is anonymised before it reaches UKRI, ensuring individual responses cannot be traced. We receive data that can be analysed by various factors, including council, department, grade, length of service, and working arrangements. This allows UKRI to identify specific trends and areas of focus within different groups across the organisation. If the number of responses for a given group falls below a particular threshold, DJS does not share the data with UKRI at that level, in order to protect employee anonymity.

Survey results are reported only where minimum reporting thresholds are met. Where reporting groups fall below the agreed threshold, results are either suppressed or aggregated into a larger reporting group to protect anonymity. Free text comments are also subject to minimum response thresholds. The minimum number of responses for a group is ten, so fewer than ten responses results in those results being combined with other teams at a Section level, until the threshold is reached.

Anonymised survey reports are shared with the central UKRI Employee Engagement Team for the purposes of analysing employee engagement at UKRI level, identifying themes and trends, supporting organisational improvement activity and enabling action planning. Council-level reports are shared with authorised recipients identified by each council. Employee Engagement Champions are responsible for maintaining these distribution lists.

Survey participants are informed through survey guidance and FAQs that free text comments will be shared with UKRI as submitted. Participants are therefore advised not to include information that may identify themselves or other individuals.

A blank copy of the 2025 survey has been provided in the attached document: **FOI2026_00656 Annex 1**.

You will note that, for every free text question, the following guidance is given: Your comment will be provided back to UKRI as it is written. Where possible, DJS Research will try to redact any mentions of specific individuals, however, please try not to identify yourself or others in your comment.

More details of how DJS handle personal data are also available on their website: [Business Market Research Company : By DJS Research Terms And Conditions](https://djsresearch.co.uk/about/terms).²

UKRI also refreshed their Data Protection Impact Assessment prior to the 2025 survey going live.

Part 2: I would also like information relating to any incidents where the anonymisation of this data may have been compromised, whether it have been through technical means such as cyberattack, mis-configuration, etc, for via administrative means – either deliberate or erroneous. In particular, I am looking for instances of where specific answers given by employees were shared with line managers of those employees.

While any such incidents would be of interest, I am particularly interested in occurrences that would have happened since July 2023.

I would like to know what responses were shared, from whom and to whom, the circumstances under which they occurred, and what corrective action was taken once they were discovered – such as whether

¹ <https://djsresearch.co.uk/>

² <https://djsresearch.co.uk/about/terms>

disciplinary action was taken against the person who shared it, or results of a root cause analysis investigation if the breach was the result of cyberattack.

If no such incident has occurred, I would like for that to also be confirmed in writing.

With regard to incidents where anonymisation may have been compromised since July 2023, UKRI has not identified any records relating to:

- the disclosure of identifiable People Survey responses;
- compromises to survey anonymity;
- data breaches involving People Survey responses;
- instances where specific survey responses were shared with a respondent's line manager; or
- cyberattacks, system misconfigurations, or inappropriate disclosures resulting in People Survey data being compromised.

The Employee Engagement Team receives survey data from the survey provider, DJS, in a format that is not linked to named individuals and has no means of identifying which respondent submitted a particular comment. Free-text comments are provided in a consolidated dataset and are not attributed to individual respondents.

Neither the Employee Engagement Team nor UKRI's Data Protection team holds any records of identifiable survey responses have been inappropriately disclosed. In addition, UKRI does not hold information relating to how council-level reports are subsequently handled by authorised recipients within councils, institutes, or business areas.

Your rights

If you have any queries regarding our response please do let us know. If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review, explaining which elements of this decision you disagree with and why. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of our response and should be addressed to:

Head of Information Governance

Email: foi@ukri.org

Please quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are still not content with the outcome of the internal review, you may apply to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the review procedure provided by UKRI. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: www.ico.org.uk.

If you wish to raise a complaint regarding the service you have received or the conduct of any UKRI staff in relation to your request, please see [UKRI's complaints procedure](#)³.

Yours sincerely,


Information Governance
Information Rights Team
UK Research and Innovation
foi@ukri.org | dataprotection@ukri.org

³ <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>