



[REDACTED]

12 October 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information request: FOI2021/00429

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 16 September in which you requested the following:

Your request:

I would be very grateful if you could respond to my Freedom of Information request below:

SARS-CoV-2 Virus Isolation

1. *Has the The Medical Research Council isolated the SARS-CoV-2 virus?*
2. *If so, what was the methodology used to isolate and purify the SARS-CoV-2 virus?*
3. *If not, could you send me a pdf file or link to just one scientific peer reviewed research paper that The Medical Research Council refers to that shows and convinces The Medical Research Council that the SARS-CoV-2 virus has been isolated?*

RT-PCR Amplification Test: Cycle Threshold

1. *What is your 'Cycle Threshold' recommendation for the RT-PCR Amplification Test?*
2. *Has this Cycle Threshold recommendation changed during the course of the pandemic?*
3. *If it has changed, when was this and why?*

Our response:

I can confirm UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) do not hold information relevant to your request. Please see the information below.

In relation to your questions about the isolation of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the Medical Research Council (MRC) is part of UKRI and is one of the bodies through which the government supports medical and clinical research. This is achieved through a range of grants and personal awards to scientists and universities, medical schools and other research institutes. The MRC does have its own institutes; however, these do not hold information relevant to this request.

Under Section 16 of the FOIA, our duty to advise and assist, the MRC does provide funding to the [Centre for Virus Research](#)¹ at the University of Glasgow. It is possible that they may hold information that could be relevant to your request. Details of how to submit a Freedom of Information request to the University of Glasgow can be found [here](#)².

In regard to your questions relating to the "cycle threshold", we believe this is a public health question, rather than a medical research question. Our suggestion would be to direct these enquiries to [Public Health England](#)³,

¹ <https://www.gla.ac.uk/researchinstitutes/ii/cvr/aboutus/>

² <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/dprooffice/contact/>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

[Department of Health and Social Care](#)⁴, or [NHS England](#)⁵ as they may recommend a certain threshold for determining whether an individual is infected with the virus.

If you have any queries regarding our response or you are unhappy with the outcome of your request and wish to seek an internal review of the decision, please contact:

Head of Information Governance


Email: foi@ukri.org or infogovernance@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: <http://www.ico.gov.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 policy: <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-and-standards/complaints-policy/>

Yours sincerely,


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Information Rights Team
UK Research and Innovation
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⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-of-health-and-social-care>

⁵ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/contact-us/foi/>