



[REDACTED]

23 July 2026

Dear [REDACTED]

Freedom of Information request: FOI2026/00564

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on the 6 July in which you requested the following:

Your request:

Please provide the following information concerning your role as an endorsing body for the Global Talent immigration route (and, where held, Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent)):

- 1. For each calendar year from 2015 (or the earliest year held) to date: the number of Stage 1 endorsement applications assessed; the number endorsed; the number refused; and, where held, the number of endorsement review requests and their outcomes — broken down, where recorded, by Exceptional Talent versus Exceptional Promise [for ACE add: and by art form or sub-endorsing organisation].*
- 2. Where recorded, an annual breakdown of refusals by the criterion or criteria not met.*
- 3. Copies of the current internal guidance, assessment frameworks, scoring templates, or assessor instructions used to evaluate endorsement applications, and a description of the composition and selection of assessment panels (numbers and roles only; no names required).*
- 4. Copies of any internal quality assurance, calibration, or consistency-review documents concerning endorsement assessments, from 1 January 2020 to date.*

Our response

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

Question 1: For each calendar year from 2015 (or the earliest year held) to date: the number of Stage 1 endorsement applications assessed; the number endorsed; the number refused; and, where held, the number of endorsement review requests and their outcomes — broken down, where recorded, by Exceptional Talent versus Exceptional Promise [for ACE add: and by art form or sub-endorsing organisation].

Please see Table 1 on the following page.

Please note: UKRI do not categorise applications by Exceptional Talent or Exceptional Promise. Therefore, we do not hold any information within the scope of this part of your request.

In preparing this response we have considered the risks of identifying individuals from small numbers, therefore, in line with standard statistical reporting practice, data has been suppressed to mitigate against the disclosure of personal data. We consider that under Section 40(2) of the FOIA, this data would be exempt where it relates to fewer than five individuals. We believe that to disclose information relating to small numbers of individuals would

contravene the first Data Protection Principle as defined under Section 86 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and Article 5 of UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) of lawfulness, fairness and transparency.

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

As mentioned above, categories consisting of between one and four individuals have been suppressed as personal information under section 40(2) of the FOIA and are indicated by '< 5'. Where there are no members within a category, a count of zero is recorded.

Table 1: Number of Stage 1 Endorsement Applications assessed, endorsed and not endorsed

	Assessed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
2019/20	17	15*	<5
2020/21	317	310	7
2021/22	1101	1096	5
2022/23	1975	1967	8
2023/24	2598	2595*	<5
2024/25	2898	2882	16
2025/26	3182	3169	13
2026/27	678	669	9

*Values have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 5 due to the need to suppress values less than 5.

Question 2: Where recorded, an annual breakdown of refusals by the criterion or criteria not met.

Please see Table 2 below.

We have again suppressed small numbers under 5 under section 40(2) of the FOIA.

Table 2: Number of Applications broken down by Reason for Rejection from 2019/20 to 2026/27

Reason Application Was Not Endorsed	Number
Application withdrawn	30
Funder not on endorsed funder list	<5
Host organisation not on approved list	<5
Award doesn't meet criteria	<5
Applicant doesn't meet criteria	15
Evidence document(s) not suitable	<5
Other	<5

Question 3: Copies of the current internal guidance, assessment frameworks, scoring templates, or assessor instructions used to evaluate endorsement applications, and a description of the composition and selection of assessment panels (numbers and roles only; no names required).

There are no assessment panels within the UKRI Endorsed Funder route.

The information held in relation to this part of your request is provided in the attached document, Global Talent Visa Application Standard Operating Procedure: **FOI2026/00564 Annex 1**.

We have exempted some information, such as employee names and roles, applicant names and information, under section 40(2) of the FOIA. Disclosing this information would contravene the first Data Protection Principle as defined under Section 86 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and Article 5 of UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

Question 4: Copies of any internal quality assurance, calibration, or consistency-review documents concerning endorsement assessments, from 1 January 2020 to date.

This information is withheld under section 40(2) of the FOIA. Disclosing this information would contravene the first Data Protection Principle as defined under Section 86 of the Data Protection Act 2018 and Article 5 of UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

Section 40(2) is an absolute exemption and does not require a public interest test.

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](#)¹.

Yours sincerely,

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

¹ <https://www.ukri.org/who-we-are/contact-us/make-a-complaint/#skipnav-target>