

Date: 8 December 2021
Our Reference: FOIA-2021-133

RE: Your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“FOIA 2000”)

I write in response to your Freedom of Information Act 2000 request dated 11th November 2021 in which you requested the following information:

The Hate Crime Operational Guidance states the following:

“Anti Muslim hate crime tends to be based on myths and misconceptions about what Muslims do or [do not] believe. Those who would commit violence or crime motivated by their hostility tend to be more more influenced by these misconceptions.”

Please provide the following:

1. On what basis did The College claim to know what Muslims do or do not believe (This being a necessary condition in claiming to recognise misunderstanding).
2. Which theological scholars were consulted prior to making this statement?
3. What scholarly work informed the statement?
4. How does this statement accommodate the hostility that exists between Sunni and Shiite on the basis of their mutually exclusive understandings of Islam?
5. What research informs the second part of the statement, namely that hostility is based on misconception?

When a request for information is made under FoIA 2000, a public authority has a general duty under section 1(1) of the Act to inform an applicant whether the requested information is held.

There is then a general obligation to communicate that information to the applicant. If a public authority decides that the information should not be disclosed because an exemption applies, it must, under section 17(1) cite the appropriate section or exemption of the Act and provide an explanation for relying upon it.

It is important to note that a freedom of information request is not a private transaction. Both the request itself and any information disclosed are considered suitable for open publication, that is, once access to information is granted to one person under the legislation, it is then considered public information and must be communicated to any individual should a request be received. In light of this, our responses and disclosures are published on our external website at a later date. This should be borne in mind where a request is made for personal data of named individuals.

Decision

In line with section 1(1) of FOIA 2000, I can confirm that we hold some of the information. Please see below for responses to your questions.

As a point of accuracy, the words in brackets in the quote in your request did not appear in the Hate Crime Operational Guidance.

1. On what basis did The College claim to know what Muslims do or do not believe (This being a necessary condition in claiming to recognise misunderstanding).

No information held.

2. Which theological scholars were consulted prior to making this statement?

No information held.

3. What scholarly work informed the statement?

No information held.

4. How does this statement accommodate the hostility that exists between Sunni and Shiite on the basis of their mutually exclusive understandings of Islam?

If a hate crime is committed by one group against another it would be recorded as a religious hate crime.

5. What research informs the second part of the statement, namely that hostility is based on misconception?

The Hate Crime Operational Guidance was informed by assessment of recorded hate crimes involving Muslim victims.

I trust this letter answers your questions. Your rights are provided in **Appendix A**.

Yours sincerely,

Legal Services
College of Policing

Email: FOI@college.pnn.police.uk

Website: www.college.police.uk

Appendix A

Rights

If you are dissatisfied with the handling procedures or the decision of the College of Policing made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) regarding access to information you can request that the decision is reviewed internally.

Internal review requests should be made in writing, within **forty (40) working days** from the date of our original response, and addressed to: FOI team, Central House, Beckwith Knowle, Otley Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, HG3 1UF or email: FOI@college.pnn.police.uk

In all possible circumstances the College of Policing will aim to respond to your request for internal review within **20 working days**.

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)

If, after lodging an internal review request with the College of Policing you are still dissatisfied with the decision you may make application to the Information Commissioner for a decision on whether the request for information has been dealt with in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

For information on how to make application to the Information Commissioner please visit their website at <https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/official-information/>.

Alternatively, you can contact them by telephone or write to them at the following address:

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK9 5AF

Phone: 0303 123 1113