

Freedom of Information request re "SARS-COV-2" isolation, IMPFOI-21-85

Christine Massey <[REDACTED]>

Fri, Mar 12, 2021 at 12:55 PM

To: IMPFOI <foi@imperial.ac.uk>

Dear "Team",

Thank you for your response, however it is insufficient and I require further assistance in accordance with the *Freedom of Information Act, 2000*.

Be advised that all responses/nonresponses from the "Team" will be made public.

The response you have provided thus far reflects very poorly on your institution and your "Team" because it either feigns misunderstanding of a perfectly clear and reasonable request (that has already been understood quite perfectly by [dozens of institutions around the world](#)), or it demonstrates gross incompetence and utter lack of intelligence.

In case of the latter: I have **only** requested **existing records** held by public authorities ("*All records in the possession, custody or control of Imperial College London ...*").

There are no separate "*parts*" to my request. The remainder of my **Description of Requested Records** was clarification of my 1 request.

I did not request a "*directory*" or a "*document listing every resource on this topic produced by anyone, ever, anywhere*", or "*a record of every document that has ever been downloaded or printed by staff or students of the College*", or that anyone "*create information*" for me.

As you acknowledge, the Act provides a right to access existing records held by public authorities and exempts information **if it is already reasonably accessible to the requester**. To my knowledge, no responsive records exist; obviously a requester **cannot** reasonably access records when, to their knowledge, those records do not even exist.

Further, I remind you that Section 1 of the Act states:

General right of access to information held by public authorities.

- (1) Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled—
- (a) to be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and
 - (b) if that is the case, to have that information communicated to him.

Thus the College has a "**duty to confirm or deny**" and you are presently in violation of that duty.

Therefore, I look forward to a response from the College that is in accordance with *the Act*.

Thank you and best wishes,
Christine

On Fri, Mar 12, 2021 at 12:07 PM IMPFOI <foi@imperial.ac.uk> wrote:

Dear Ms Massey,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information Act request, which was as follows:

*All records in the possession, custody or control of Imperial College London describing the isolation of **any variant** ("new" or "old") of the alleged "SARS-COV-2" / "COVID-19 virus", directly from a sample taken from a diseased patient, where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material (i.e. monkey kidney cells aka Vero cells; fetal bovine serum).*

Please note that I am using "isolation" in the every-day sense of the word: the act of separating a thing(s) from everything else. I am not requesting records where "isolation of SARS-COV-2" refers instead to:

- *the culturing of something, and/or*
- *the performance of an amplification test (i.e. a PCR test), and/or*
- *the sequencing of something.*

*Please also note that my request is **not limited** to records that were authored by Imperial College London or that pertain to work done at/by Imperial College London. Rather, my request includes any record matching the above description, for example (but not limited to) any published peer-reviewed study authored by anyone, anywhere, ever that has been downloaded or printed by Imperial College London.*

If any records match the above description of requested records and are currently available to the public elsewhere, please provide enough information about each record so that I may identify and access each one with certainty (i.e. title, author(s), date, journal, where the public may access it). Please provide URLs where possible.

Part of your request is asking Imperial College to locate for you and then compile a directory of all scientific papers on the isolation of the COVID-19 virus where the patient sample was not first combined with any other source of genetic material. In addition, you have asked the college for details of "any published peer-reviewed study authored by anyone, anywhere, ever that has been downloaded or printed by Imperial College London". Imperial College does not hold a directory or document listing every resource on this topic produced by "anyone, ever, anywhere". Neither do we hold a record of every document that has ever been downloaded or printed by staff or students of the College. The Freedom of Information Act provides a right to access existing records held by public authorities; it

does not extend to a right to have public authorities create information in order to respond to requests.

Scientific papers on this topic produced by Imperial College or others are generally in the public domain and thus already accessible to you. Information is exempt from the Freedom of Information Act (Section 21) if it is already reasonably accessible to the requester. You can view Imperial College COVID-19 publications (which will contain references to other published papers where relevant) on our [website](#).

If you are unhappy with the way that we have handled your request, you can ask us to conduct a review. Please make your representation in writing within 40 days of the date you received this response. If you remain dissatisfied with how Imperial College has handled your request, you may then approach the [Information Commissioner's Office](#).

Yours,

Freedom of Information Team
[Imperial College London](#)