



Request Reference: 3204

FOI Request dated 24/07/2024

Request –

This request concerns university agreements with businesses and public authorities from the People’s Republic of China in the last three months.

1) Please provide a list of the partnership agreements signed between the university and

a) Companies from the People’s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR).

b) Public authorities (such as universities) from the People’s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR).

c) Charities or foundations from the People’s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR).

Between 25th April 2024 to 24th July 2024.

For each agreement, please state:

i) The Chinese entity the agreement was signed with

ii) The title of the agreement

iii) Any summary or description of the agreement held

iv) The total value of the agreement to the university

v) The time period of the agreement

2) Please state the total in payments received by the university from

a) Companies from the People’s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR).

b) Public authorities (such as universities) from the People’s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR).

c) Charities or foundations from the People’s Republic of China (including Hong Kong SAR).

Between 25th April 2024 to 24th July 2024.

For these payments, please state

i) The Chinese entity the agreement was signed with

ii) What project or purpose for the payments was (donation, research grant etc)

iii) Any summary or description of the project the payment related to

iv) The value of the payments over the period.

v) The date of the payments

Response

Q1 - We provide the following response to Questions 1. i, ii, iii and v. Question 1. iv is commercially sensitive and therefore the information is not provided, *see below the table for public interest test.

Entity	Country	Summary	Title of Agreement	Agreement Expiry Date
Aston Education	Hong Kong	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	31/01/2027
Beijing Aoji Education Consulting Co Ltd	China	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	31/01/2027

Beijing Better Education Technology Co., Ltd	China	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	19/04/2027
Beijing New Oriental Vision Overseas Consulting Co Ltd	China	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	31/07/2027
Can-Achieve International Education Ltd	China	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	31/01/2027
Hong Kong Education Web	Hong Kong	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	30/03/2027
iHorizon Group (HK) Ltd	China	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	30/04/2027
Jiangxi Amiba Education & Technology Group	China	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	20/12/2024
Rongshihui Holding Inc	China	For services to support student recruitment activity.	Referral Partner Agreement	05/01/2024
Xi'an International Studies University (XISU)	China	To facilitate study pathways for students within Hull University Business School.	Memorandum of Agreement	18/10/2028
Shanghai Vocational College of Science and Technology	China	To facilitate collaborations within the Faculty of Arts, Cultures and Education.	Memorandum of Understanding	18/06/2027

*Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) places two duties on public authorities. Unless exemptions apply, the first duty at Section 1(1)(a) is to confirm or deny whether the information specified in a request is held. The second duty at Section 1(1)(b) is to disclose information that has been confirmed as being held. Where exemptions are relied upon Section 17 of FOIA requires that we provide the applicant with a notice which: a) states that fact b) specifies the exemption(s) in question and c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

This part of your request we have exempt from disclosure by virtue of the following exemption:

Section 43(2) – Commercial Interests

Section 43 is a class-based qualified exemption and is therefore subject to a Public Interest test.

Public interest considerations Factors favouring disclosure

Disclosing information regarding value of our partnership agreements would ensure the University are being open and transparent with the public. The disclosure would encourage public debate and increase public awareness on this subject matter. It would also allow the public to see where the public funds for the University are being spent.

Factors against disclosure

Disclosing the information requested is likely to damage the relationship between the University and our partnerships. In turn, this could prejudice the commercial interests of the service provider(s), especially in cases where there may be a limited number of agreements. Making a disclosure could identify information which has been specifically obtained through negotiation between the University and their partners, thus prejudicing the University position in future negotiations.

Balance test

Despite there being an identifiable public interest in the University being open and transparent, the interests of the University may be jeopardised if information relating to sensitive commercial information our partnership agreements are disclosed. The community would also be impacted as costs to the University

could be driven up by the lack of competition due to partners refusing to do business with University's that disclose commercially sensitive information. If this information were to be disclosed, this could cause harm between the University of Hull and its partners. Having weighed up all of the factors outlined above, on balance the argument for disclosing this information is not made out and therefore it is in the public interest to withhold this information from disclosure.

Section 17 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 requires the University, when refusing to provide information (because the information is exempt) to provide you the applicant with a notice which: (a) states that fact, (b) specifies the exemption in question and (c) states (if that would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 this email acts as a Refusal Notice for those aspects of your request

Q2 -

- i) Beijing Tongtu Education*
- ii) UK Study Tour*
- iii) Study Tour*
- iv) <£5000*
- v) 08/05/2024*