



**An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála
Baile Átha Cliath 2**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Dublin 2**

26 February 2019

Our Ref: FOI/Req/2019/095

Dear Mr. Pollock,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department, as follows:

- I. The number of employees of the department sacked in 2016, 2017, 2018*
- II. The reason for the dismissal of each of the above employees*
- III. The number of employees of the department suspended in 2016, 2017, 2018*
- IV. The reason for the suspension of each of the above employees*
- V. The number of complaints of bullying received by the department in 2016, 2017, 2018*
- VI. The number of complaints of sexual harassment received by the department in 2016, 2017, 2018*

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade examines all formal complaints made to its HR Unit no matter what category they fall under. Complaints in relation to bullying and sexual harassment are addressed under the *Dignity at Work: An Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy for the Irish Civil Service* policy, which came into operation in 2015.

A range of measures are available under the policy to respond to complaints, including informal resolution and mediation. The Department chooses the most appropriate course of action based on policy guidance and legal advice when required, but in the first instance prioritises informal measures.

In circumstances where a complaint of bullying or sexual harassment is made, and where these complaints are found to be upheld by means of investigation, appropriate disciplinary action is taken in accordance with the Civil Service Disciplinary Code.

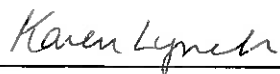
In 2016, 2017 and 2018, the HR Unit of the Department received a small number of complaints under the categories mentioned. Four of these complaints were formally investigated and disciplinary action was taken against one officer.

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2 or by email to foi@dfa.ie. A fee applies for an appeal for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfa.ie, or 01-4082857.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in appropriate circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of the staff of this Department.

Yours sincerely



Karen Lynch
Personnel Officer

(i) The number of employees of the Department sacked in 2016, 2017, 2018	Three
(ii) The reason for the dismissal of each of the above employees	The employees were on probationary contracts and were not appointed following the probationary period, in accordance with Section 7 of the Civil Service Regulation Act 1956, and Section 5 (A) of the Civil Service Regulation (Amendment) Act 2005
(iii) The number of employees of the Department suspended in 2016, 2017, 2018	Zero
(iv) The reason for the suspension of each of the above employees	N/A
(v) and (vi) The number of complaints of bullying and sexual harassment received by the Department in 2016, 2017, 2018	Four complaints were formally investigated and disciplinary action was taken against one officer