



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

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

4 July 2018

Dear Requester,

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*

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 12 June 2018. I have identified one record which falls into the scope of your request and have made a decision to grant access to it.

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 to date in 2018, the HR Unit of the Department has 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.

(i) The number of employees of the department sacked in 2016, 2017, 2018	One
(ii) The reason for the dismissal of each of the above employees	The employee was on a probationary contract and was not appointed following the probationary period, in accordance with Section 7 of the 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) The number of complaints of bullying, sexual harassment received by the department in 2016, 2017, 2018	Four complaints were formally investigated and disciplinary action was taken against one officer.