

Ref: FOI2025-026

09 June 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

Further to our previous correspondence regarding your request for the following information:

In job roles related to warhead safety, for which interviews were conducted in 2023, I would like to know if the interviewers received any guidance or instruction on posing DEI questions to candidates, such as "What is your attitude towards Diversity?"

This could include written policies or guidelines, internal memos, emails or training materials.

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

A search has been carried out throughout the business to locate the information you requested in the first part of your request, we can confirm that AWE has not been able to locate any information in a recorded format that would enable us to provide a response to your question.

Under Section 16 of the FOI Act (advice and assistance) you might find it helpful to note that there were approximately 50 candidates for the area you requested.

With regard to the second part of your question, requesting policies and training material, we can confirm that AWE holds information in relation to the hiring managers, but this is being withheld under s 43 (2) of the Act.

Section 43 (2) - Commercial Interests Section 43 (2) of the Act provides an exemption for information that where disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it). The exemption is designed to protect sensitive commercial information that could harm the competitive position of a business or organisation if it were made public. Section 43 is a qualified exemption subject to a Public Interest Test (PIT) which means that the information requested can only be withheld if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Although the Act does not define 'in the public interest', there is a presumption under the Act that openness is in the public interest. In applying the public interest test a public authority will take into account the distinction that has been often made by courts between things that are in the public interest, and things that merely interest the public.

We have identified the following public interest factors that may be seen as encouraging the disclosure of information:

Transparency in recruitment, especially with regard to DEI.

Disclosing AWE's recruitment policies and training material would demonstrate transparency and openness, enabling the public to see how DEI is at the core of the recruitment strategy.

However disclosure of this data would expose sensitive recruitment details which could be advantageous to future applicants putting them at an unfair advantage, damaging the fair recruitment policy that AWE upholds.

After considering the arguments for and against disclosure, it is determined that the public interest in withholding the policies and training material outweighs the public interest in disclosure for the reasons stated above. As the exemption is prejudice based, the risk of releasing exempted material to a limited audience would represent preferential release, and an unfair advantage to a small group of individuals.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications. If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled you have a right to request an internal review within 40 days of receiving this letter, by writing to information.requests@awe.co.uk or our postal address: Information Requests Team, AWE Aldermaston, Reading, RG7 4PR. If you are still unhappy after an internal review has been completed, under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you have the right to take your complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office. Please note the Commissioner will generally not consider a complaint until you have exhausted AWE's internal complaints process.

Yours sincerely,

AWE Information Requests Team