

Government backs FoI effectiveness study

*By Mark Chillingworth, Information World Review
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A major study of whether the UK's Freedom of Information Act (FoI) is successful is to be carried out by Constitution Unit of the University College London (UCL). The study will analyse the impact of the Act and whether it has made the nation's government more accountable.

The study will look into who uses the Act, what they want to know and what affect the knowledge they garner from using the Act has on them? UCL will also consider whether the Act, which was introduced last year, has improved trust in the Labour government and more responsive.

UCL claims this is the first systematic study of the objectives, benefits and consequences of FoI anywhere ion the world.

The study has won funding from the Department of Constitutional Affairs (DCA) and from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC); receiving £40,000 and £146,000 from each organisation respectively.

The Constitution Unit will complete the study by surveying people who have submitted FoI requests and by interviewing civil service managers at six central government departments who are responsible for FoI compliance. Newspaper coverage of the Act and FoI disclosures will also be analysed.

Source: <http://www.iwr.co.uk/information-world-review/news/2163168/government-backs-foi>