

Dear Mr Shaw,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 12 December 2012. I have supplied the answer to the questions you asked in the order you raised them.

1. Does the Universal Job Match system have it's flaws?

The launch of this service has been accompanied by some technical challenges which have caused difficulties for some jobseekers. Any problems arising with the service have been addressed with urgency.

The operation of the Universal Jobmatch service is subject to constant monitoring and any problems that arise are investigated thoroughly.

2. Would Results Returned Using The Universal Job Match System Be Used To Decide and/or Contribute Towards A Decision To Which Benefits Were Sanctioned Based On The Efforts of the Job Seeker?

3. Why After Asking JCP Staff As To Whether It Was Mandatory In Signing Up For Universal Job Match, To Be Told That It Wasn't, But I Still See and Hear JCP Staff Conversations Insisting That Failure To Sign Up To Universal Job Match "Could" Result In Non-Payment Of Benefits. Could You Please Confirm As To Whether Or Not Benefits "Could" Be Affected If a Job Seeker Fails To Sign Up To Universal Job Match.

4. If Signing Up To Universal Job Match is Mandatory, Then Why is Such An Unreliable System Being Used To The Extent In Which Job Seekers Are Being Forced To Use A System Which Would Not Provide Them With The Best Prospects Of Finding Work.

In answer to questions 2 – 4 I can confirm that Universal Jobmatch is not currently mandatory and jobseekers can choose whether or not to take advantage of the full service that is available to them. Claimants who choose not to create an account will not be subject to a benefit sanction.

We intend to introduce mandatory use of Universal Jobmatch in 2013.

5. If Signing Up To Universal Job Match is Not Mandatory Then Why Other Than Target Based Motivation Is Such a Flawed System Being Used Where To The Extent in Which JCP Staff Are Trying To Convince Job Seekers That Such a Method is Mandatory??

Jobcentre Plus staff have been asked to try and encourage claimants to use the service because Universal Jobmatch is one of the key enablers for helping them to find work.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

If you are not happy with this response you may request an internal review by e-mailing freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, SW1H 9NA. Any review request should be submitted within two months of the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office for a decision. Generally the Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 5AF www.ico.gov.uk