

Dear S Banks,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) internal review request received on 14 September. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying. You asked:

Consent:

I asked you for the consent form for participants in the RCT that you are conducting to see if sanctions and 'challenging conversations' would result in people getting higher paying jobs or more hours. You have given a consent form for what sounds like a one off interview. Does this mean you have no consent documents for people that explains the study or their participation. Also, what you have given contradicts other documents you have released that clearly show people are mandated into this trial. See below. Please can the internal review clarify this and respond to the information I had requested.

<https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/264433/response/650974/attach/4/UC250%20Start%20Trial%20Pre%20OED%20iteration%20JW310315.pdf>

Selection:

Can you confirm that your response is saying the job coach is responsible for applying exclusion criteria? And following this decision, people are then allocated into intervention or control? This would mean that those people that fall within the exclusion criteria of recently bereaved or person experiencing domestic violence for example could receive a letter similar to the one linked above and have to opt out of the screening interview/trial? Please can the internal review clarify this as your response has generated further confusion.

In response to your request, I can confirm that the handling of your original request and response has now been appropriately reviewed by someone unconnected with the handling of your original request.

As a result of this review I can advise that I find the original decision to be partly correct. Your request for review is therefore partially upheld. The reasoning behind this decision is as follows;

Whilst all the information provided for each question was factually correct I accept that some clarification may be required to avoid further confusion.

All Universal Credit claimants who met the eligibility criteria (and do not fall into an excluded category) were included in the trial .

As part of the initial interview, Work Coaches explained to claimants how the trial would impact upon them and issued a form to confirm selection and participation.

Once selected, claimants are asked if they are prepared to answer some additional background questions which, whilst not compulsory, will aid research. The consent form and associated explanation provided as part of the earlier response relates exclusively to these questions and not to participation in the trial.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy Fol Team

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act

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.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745