

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: [freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

Our Ref: Fol 886

Date: 05 April 2018

Dear Glenys Harriman,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 7 March 2018. You asked:

*We have been hearing that when a couple on Full service Universal Credit separate they have been unable to access their own journal histories.*

*This has meant claimants having to take screenshots before they unlink their claims. Furthermore we have heard that DWP also appear to have difficulty accessing this information following separation.*

*Could you please supply any documentation relating to the procedure when claims are unlinked that would explain why this happens; plus any guidance for DWP staff as to what they should do if they are unable to access information on a claimant's journal.*

### **DWP Response**

The information you have requested is not held. It may be helpful if I explain the role of the Freedom of Information Act. The Act provides a right of access to recorded information held by a public authority like DWP (subject to certain exemptions). The Act does not oblige a public authority to create new information to answer questions; nor does it require a public authority to give advice, opinion or explanation in relation to issues/policies under question.

Anyone can request copies of information which a public authority already holds in a recorded form, but the Freedom of Information Act does not require the Department to generate answers to questions, or create or obtain information it does not hold.

However, in order to be helpful, I can confirm that the act of splitting a claim immediately means that neither partner have access to information in the portal from before the split. This is to protect the data and the claimant. In addition, Case Managers are still able to access old versions of the journal while the system default is to the current version

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy Fol Team

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**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](mailto: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](http://www.ico.gov.uk)