



Department
for Work &
Pensions

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team
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SW1H 9NA

James Kelsall
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freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gov.uk

[DWP Website](#)

Our Ref: FOI2023/44842

7 July 2023

Dear James Kelsall,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 9 June. You wrote:

“In relation to Universal Credit Work Capability Assessments (not Work Capability Assessments in relation to any other benefits), please provide all statistics you hold relating to the waiting time for a decision from the date of the referral for an assessment.

All statistics provided should be for the most recent period for which statistics are able to be released.”

DWP Response

We can confirm that the Department holds the information you are seeking. However, we are engaging an exemption from disclosure under Section 22(1) of Fol Act as the information is intended for publication at a future date.

As required by the Fol Act the use of this qualified exemption requires the public interest for and against disclosure to be assessed.

We recognise that there is a public interest in the length of time people wait (clearance times) for a Universal Credit (UC) Work Capability Assessment (WCA) decision and that release of the information would provide greater transparency around the use of UC WCAs to assess eligibility for certain elements of UC.

However, when considering arguments against disclosure there is a strong public interest in permitting public authorities, such as DWP, to develop and publish statistics in a manner and form and at a time of their own choosing. Therefore, in this instance the Department has a reasonable entitlement to make its own arrangements to publish information.

On balance DWP is satisfied that in this instance the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Therefore, the information you seek will not be released at this time. Additional information on the future release of these statistics can be found in the [UC WCA statistics release strategy](#).

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team
Department for Work and Pensions

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.gov.uk or by writing to: DWP Central Fol Team, Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA.

Any request for an internal review must be received by us within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please note we are not obliged to provide a review if it is requested after more than 40 working days.

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.

Website: [ICO FOI and EIR complaints](#) or telephone 0303 123 1113.