

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: FOI2018/15635 & IR 2339

2 April 2019

Dear Stephen Hucklesby,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 13 December 2018 and Internal Review request received on 17 January 2019.

I acknowledge that in this instance, the Department failed to respond within the 20 working days and DWP apologise for the delay. Furthermore, we apologise for not keeping you updated of the progress of your request. DWP is working to avoid any such errors occurring in the future.

In reviewing your request the reviewing officer upholds your complaint as the Department failed to respond to your request within 20 days.

The response to your original request is set out below. You asked:

*In an answer to a Parliamentary question the Minister of State for employment indicated:*

*“Every Universal Credit claimant in Sheffield has a dedicated case manager based in the Universal Credit Service Centre in Makerfield.” (HC Deb, 10 December 2018, cW).*

*I would like to understand the roll of the case manager in administering a family’s Universal Credit claim. The experience of clients with UC is that replies in their journal from the service centre are from different people each time rather than a single case manager.*

- *Could you confirm that each UC claimant has a dedicated case manager allocated to them?*
- *Could I have any documents describing this role such as the current job description, person specification and pay scales?*

## **DWP Response:**

In response to the first part of your request 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, you may find the following explanation useful. This has however been provided outside of our obligations under the Freedom of Information regime.

All UCFS (Universal Credit Full Service) claimants will be allocated a Case Manager (CM) in their “owning” Service Centre. However, the allocated CM can change over the lifetime of a claim and other CM colleagues can and do pick up and clear actions (particularly if they are urgent) as necessary if the allocated CM is not available for any reason.

Regarding the second part of your request, please find attached (Annex 1) a recent job advert including job description, person specification and pay scale. An internal job summary is attached also (annex 2).

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central 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 [https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact\\_us](https://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us) or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745