

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

e-mail: freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our Ref: VTR IR345 of 1165

07 May 2013

Dear S Rotheram,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 14 April 2013; the Department understands that you are seeking an internal review of the handling of your previous Freedom of Information request, our reference Fol 1165. You stated:

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.

I am writing to request an internal review of Department for Work and Pensions's handling of my FOI request 'JSA Government Gateway'. I wrote to the DWP on 10/3/2013 and asked :-

"Can a Job Seekers Allowance(JSA) claimant be mandated by a Work Programme Provider or Job Centre Plus(JCP) to open a Government Gateway account? I look forward to hearing from you. Thank You."

You replied with a rather waffley answer that for the most part concerned Universal Jobmatch. I DID NOT ask for information on Universal Jobmatch so therefore this information was irrelevant to my request.

However in amongst your answer you did state this:-

Jobcentre Plus can mandate a JSA claimant to open a "Government Gateway account where they have reasonable access to an Internet Access Device (IAD)."

In turn I asked:-

*"Could you now please direct me to the Regulations, Codes or Laws etc that allow Jobcentre Plus to do this, (Mandate Jobseekerst open a Government Gateway account) as you should have done in the first place under the terms of the Fol Act. If this is not possible because of the £600 limit, then most recent regulations and/or guidance will suffice.
Thank You."*

By law you should have replied to me by 10/4/2013. I sent you a reminder on that date. You have not replied to me (although the request has been acknowledged). You have not told me what the delay is or how my request is progressing. I am therefore asking for an internal review of the handling of this request.

A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this address: http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/jsa_government_gateway

Please be assured that your request has been given our full consideration and that all aspects of your review were taken fully into account.

The review was conducted by an official of the Department, of the relevant grade and authority to carry out such requests. The case has been examined afresh, and guidance has been sought from domain experts to ensure all factors were taken fully into account.

Your original request, which was dated 10 March 2013 and which we received on 11 March 2013, asked if Jobseeker's Allowance claimants could be mandated to open a Government Gateway account. The Department provided a response to your request, our reference Fol1165, on 25 March 2013; as required by the Freedom of Information Act, a reply to your request of 10 March was due no later than 10 April 2013.

I note that you asked for the "*Regulations, Codes or Laws etc...*", that you referenced in your email of 14 April, in an earlier email of 25 March 2013. This was in response to our reply, Fol1165, of the same date and the Department understood this earlier email to be a request for a review of the reply given. Accordingly, a response (our reference IR286) was provided to you on 15 April 2013; again, as required by the Freedom of Information Act, a response was due to you within 20 working days and no later than 24 April 2013.

I maintain that the responses to these requests were provided to you in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act. However, following a review of your request history on 'whatdotheyknow', I accept that you were not kept fully apprised even though you contacted the Department on three further occasions, namely; 26 and 27 March 2013 and 10 April 2013. For this, please accept my apologies.

During this review, I also noted that you emailed the Department on 15 April 2013 seeking a review of our response IR286; this is currently being actioned and you should expect a response no later than 14 May 2013.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central 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.gov.uk