

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: VTR IR350 of IR286

8 May 2013

Dear S Rotheram,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 15 April 2013; the Department understands that you are seeking an internal review of your previous Freedom of Information request, our reference IR286. 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 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.*

*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.*

*Thank you for your prompt response. However you have not told me the reason why you were late in answering this request, neither have I had any sort of apology for your lateness in dealing with it.*

*Your response does not answer my question which I will repeat :*

*"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?". You have answered that a Work Programme provider can not; for which I thank you. Now could you tell me If Job Centre Plus can? A straight yes or no would be nice. If I do not get a satisfactory reply I will be going to the ICO. A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this address: <http://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/js...>*

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.

As part of this review, I note that a response concerning the majority of the above request has already been provided to you, our reference IR345, via the 'whatdotheyknow' website therefore; this review focuses on the final paragraph of your request.

Our last response, our reference IR286 and to which this review refers, informed you that a Jobcentre Plus adviser can 'mandate' a claimant, via a Jobseeker's Direction, to create a profile and public CV within Universal Jobmatch. Furthermore, a claimant must have a Government Gateway ID and password in order to log onto Universal Jobmatch.

A previous response to you on this same subject, our reference Fol 1165, with regard to Work Programme providers, Government Gateway accounts, and Universal Jobmatch stated that "the question of whether a provider can mandate a claimant to open an account is currently being considered".

To add to these previous responses; registering with Government Gateway is not in itself a condition of entitlement for Jobseeker's Allowance and that there are no regulations specifically relating to claimants signing up for Government Gateway.

However and as previously stated, Jobcentre Plus Advisers can issue a Jobseeker's Direction requiring Jobseeker's Allowance claimants to create a profile and public CV within Universal Jobmatch, where appropriate. As claimants must have a Government Gateway ID and password to log in to Universal Jobmatch we can reasonably expect the claimant to create a Government Gateway account as part of this direction and failure to do so without good reason would result in a benefit sanction being applied.

Jobseeker's Directions require Jobseeker's Allowance claimants to take specific actions which will help the claimant to find, or improve their ability to find employment. As registering with Government Gateway alone will not help the claimant to find or improve their chances of

finding work, a Jobseeker's Direction would not be issued solely for this purpose; Jobseeker's Directions can be issued under section 19A(2)(c) of the Jobseekers Act 1995.

Having concluded my review, I am satisfied that we have now provided all of the available information to answer your original request.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol Team

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