

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: 2905

19/08/2013

Dear Frank Zola,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 25/06/2013. You asked :-

Can you confirm that Jobcentre Advisers have authority to issue sanction based Jobseeker's Directions (JD) requiring mandated DWP access to a Universal Jobmatch (UJ) account for:

1.1 Anyone claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)?

1.2 Anyone leaving mandated Work Programme (WP) provision, after they have completed 2 years on it and continuing to claim JSA?

2. Please email a copy of the information Jobcentre staff have access to concerning how they should work with and support people leaving WP provision, after they have completed 2 years on it and continuing to claim JSA?

Within your Universal Credit (UC) pilot, can you confirm that Jobcentre Advisers have authority to issue a sanction based Claimant Commitment requiring mandated DWP access to a Universal Jobmatch account for:

3.1 Any specific individual claiming Universal Credit?

3.2 Everyone claiming Universal Credit?

4. Please supply information of any DWP proposals/ideas/discussions to require all people claiming JSA or UC, either as a integrated part of a JSA or UC claim or via JD or a CC, to give DWP access to individual's UJ account.

Response

In respect of your questions 1.1 and 1.2 it is not mandatory for JSA claimants to allow DWP access to their account; therefore Jobcentre advisers cannot issue a Jobseeker's Direction for this purpose. Please see the following extract from Chapter 3 of the Universal Jobmatch Toolkit.

Issuing a Jobseeker's Direction to mandate JSA claimants to create a profile and public CV in Universal Jobmatch

51. Where you have explained the benefits to claimants of creating a profile and public CV in Universal Jobmatch and they will not do so willingly, they can be mandated to create a profile and public CV.
52. However, for legal reasons, you **cannot issue** a Jobseeker's Direction to mandate a claimant to create a profile and public CV unless a DWP IAD service is reasonably available to them should they need to use one - for example, because they do not want to accept cookies and therefore need to have access to a device on which cookies have already been accepted.
53. You also **cannot issue** a Jobseeker's Direction to mandate a claimant to give us access to their account – this is their decision not ours.

In respect of your question 2 a copy of the current Post Work Programme guidance is enclosed in a PDF format.

Finally turning to your questions 3.1, 3.2 and 4 under current DWP policy, Universal Credit claimants are not currently required to provide their adviser with account access on a mandatory basis.

DWP considers it is not required to disclose information held about any ideas, proposals or discussions concerning mandatory account access because the policy is still under development. Section 35 of the Freedom of Information Act therefore applies. Some of the information held is also covered by the legal professional privilege exemption in section 42 of the Act.

Section 35 (formulation of government policy etc)

The Department considers that the balance of public interest weighs in favour of non-disclosure. This is because the Act acknowledges that good government depends on good decision making and therefore needs space in which to formulate policies based on the best advice available with full consideration of all the options. Ministers also need to be able to conduct rigorous and candid risk assessments of their policies and programmes including considerations of the pros and cons without there being premature disclosure which might close off other, better options.

Section 42 (legal professional privilege)

There are no identifiable reasons why the strong presumption in favour of non-disclosure of legally privileged information should be overridden in relation to Universal Jobmatch.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FoI Team

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@dwpgsi.gov.uk or by writing to DWP, Central Fol Team, Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, 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