

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: FOI 410

Date: 26th February 2013

Dear Adam,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 28th January 2013. You asked for:

Are you able to send me Jobcentre information on why when a person signs-on for Jobseeker's Allowance they are not often seen by the named Adviser assigned to them?

When a newly unemployed jobseeker has made a new Jobseeker's Allowance claim they are given a Jobcentre appointment, at the appointment they see two Advisers one to assess and go over the claim and the other to undertake a New Jobseeker's Interview and sign a Jobseeker's Agreement. Why does the jobseeker see two Advisers at this first Jobcentre appointment?

I would again like you to send me the Jobcentre guidance that exists that explains all of above processes and procedures?

The new claims process in the Jobcentre is primarily about putting in place the Jobseeker's Agreement, making sure claimants understand their responsibilities and providing information, advice, and guidance to help improve employment prospects and overcome things that may make finding work more difficult. However, for some claimants the process also involves gathering additional information needed to process the claim. Where this is required, this is often undertaken separately as the focus of the discussion and the skills and grading of staff required are different to those needed for a discussion about the Jobseeker's Agreement and work-related support.

Beyond the new claims stage, claimants receive back to work support delivered through advisory teams, which comprise personal advisers who provide more in-depth support where this is needed, and assistant advisers who undertake regular Jobsearch Reviews to ensure claimants are actively seeking and available for work and to see what help, if any, is needed from a personal adviser. Where personal adviser support is required, we aim to provide this through the same personal adviser, though this may not always be possible, e.g. due to absence or changes needed to manage caseload sizes to ensure claimants get the best

possible service. Similarly, when people 'sign-on', we aim to ensure they see the same assistant adviser, but for practical reasons this may not always be possible.

All that said, personal advisers and assistant advisers work as a team under adviser team managers, so where different members are involved, claimants should still receive the best possible service.

I have enclosed the guidance that explains the actions that are carried out during these interviews.

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 FoI 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