

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: FOI2018/12964

11 December 2018

Dear Anne Anon,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 5 December. You asked:

I have been made aware that NI Numbers beginning with the letter "S" denotes a non British National and that "SH" denotes an EU National. A previous FOI response from you to another requester has denied that this is the case and stated that allocation is random. However upon checking my company's staff list of over 3000 employees and comparing their personal information with their NI number, it appears to confirm that NI numbers beginning with an "S" are indeed allocated to non-British nationals. It would be a statistical improbability for this to have been via random allocation. With this information in mind, please can you confirm the following:

- Does the letter S denote a non-British national?
- Do the letters SH denote someone from the EU?

If the above is incorrect, please can you confirm the correct method for identifying non-British nationals from their NI number?

DWP Response:

On this occasion the Department will not be processing your response further. This is because your request does not comply with Section 8(1)(b) of the FOI Act. This means that to comply with your request the department requires that you give your real name. The Information Commissioner (ICO) has issued guidance for public authorities on this topic. The ICO considers that "the name of the applicant refers to the real name of the applicant. You can see the guidance issued by the ICO here:

<https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1164/recognising-a-request-made-under-the-foia.pdf>

If you would like to submit your request again using a name that satisfies the above requirement DWP will be pleased to consider it.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Fol 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@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 or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745