

04 February 2016

Dear Chris Taylor,

**Freedom of Information ref: 2015-4815**

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 11 November 2015.  
You asked:

**“Please can you tell me what percentage of Work Capability Assessments from April 2014 to March 2015 (inclusive) scored 0 points and the percentage of assessments during this period that scored 15 points.”**

People claiming Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) may have a Work Capability Assessment (WCA). The WCA is based on the premise that eligibility should not be based on a person's condition, but rather on the way that condition limits their functional capability. Following the WCA, the Healthcare Professional (HCP) provides a recommendation of the claimant's eligibility for ESA. The final decision on ESA benefit entitlement is made by a DWP Decision Maker (DM) informed by advice from the HCP and other available evidence.

In order to be awarded ESA a claimant must score at least 15 points (unless you are in one of the categories of people who are exceptions). These points can be added up from a number of different activities from both the physical and mental disabilities categories.

The Department regularly publishes official statistics on ESA and the WCA, the latest report was published on 10 December 2015 and can be found on the Departmental website here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/employment-and-support-allowance-outcomes-of-work-capability-assessment>

The information we hold from which you can calculate the percentages you have requested can be found in the table below.

Please note that whilst scoring 15 points or more at assessment is the most prevalent reason for people being placed in the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG), there are several other reasons for such placement which mean that people scoring zero points may be placed in the WRAG. These include medical reasons and reconsiderations and further information can be found in table 6 of the latest report referenced above and also in section 2.2.2 here:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/319379/esa-wca-outcomes-background-note-mar-14.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/319379/esa-wca-outcomes-background-note-mar-14.pdf)

**Please note that the figures supplied are derived from unpublished information and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution.**

**Employment and Support Allowance Work Capability Assessments by number of points scored: 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015**

Assessment type	Total WCAs completed	Of which: the number given a score	Of those the number with:	
			0 points	15 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>320,000</b>	<b>278,900</b>	<b>179,300</b>	<b>20,100</b>
Initial	189,400	174,200	120,700	10,800
Repeat	96,000	75,800	41,200	7,200
IBR	34,600	28,900	17,400	2,200

**Source:** Data in the table above is derived from administrative data held by the DWP and assessment data provided by Atos Healthcare.

**Notes:**

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100.
2. The data provided only includes cases with assessments completed from 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2015 inclusive. Data has been provided for initial assessments, repeat assessments, and incapacity benefits reassessments (IBR).
3. A score is not allocated by the HCP when they advise that a claimant should be placed in the Support Group, therefore Support Group outcomes are excluded.
4. Please note that the figures supplied are derived from unpublished information and have not been quality assured to National Statistics or Official Statistics publication standard. They should therefore be treated with caution.

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

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team  
Statistical Services  
Department for Work and Pensions

-----  
**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](mailto: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/>