



Department
for Work &
Pensions

DWP Central Freedom of
Information Team
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Arthur Tanner
request-1044818-4b031248@whatdotheyknow.com

[freedom-of-information-
request@dwp.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gov.uk)

[DWP Website](#)

Our Ref: FOI2023/85497

27 November 2023

Dear Arthur Tanner,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information (Fol) request received on 7 November. You wrote:

“I wish to use two or three part identity verification for people phoning me claiming to work for DWP.

This is a simple process, staff at DWP are given a password or passwords that only they know. When phoning me they are asked a question or series of questions, to which only DWP staff have access to the answers.

I have recently had a number of what appear to be scam phone calls with people claiming to work for DWP, asking for passwords eg, pets name, date of birth, place of birth, school, NI number and so-on, but when I have asked them to positively identify themselves they have refused to answer simple security questions, claiming they don't have to answer. I am currently assuming that these phone calls are being made by scammers.

Is there any legislation in place that prevents me from using two or three part verification of callers? If so, can you specify what this legislation is, e.g. the name and section of the relevant acts of parliament and the date of the legislation. A link directly to the legislation would be useful, in the same way I can quote section 7 of the 1996 education act which can be found here:- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/section/7> Which takes me to the specific legislation I am discussing in this example.

If there is no legislation in place preventing me from using two or three part/step verification to confirm identity (to a moderately safe level) of people phoning me claiming to work for DWP please confirm this.”

DWP Response

On this occasion we will not be processing your request further. This is because your request does not comply with Section 8(1)(b) of the Fol Act as you have not provided a name. Your Email account advises the name Arthur Tanner, however you have signed the Email Quentin Elphick.

To enable us to provide a response, please provide your real name.

The Information Commissioner's Office (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". The following link provides [ICO Guidance on valid FOI requests](#).

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team
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