

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: 2014-3384

22 August 2014

Dear C W Critchley,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 28 July 2014.

You asked:

“How many people[1*] are unemployed in Stockport?

How many people[2*] under the jurisdiction of Stockport Jobcentre Plus are currently involved in the Work Programme?

Since the introduction of the Work Programme in 2011, how many people[3*] under the jurisdiction of Stockport Jobcentre Plus have found work within six months?

What percentage[4*] of the total figure[1*] is this?

Since the introduction of the programme, how many people[5*] under the jurisdiction of Stockport Jobcentre Plus have found full-time, permanent work?

How many of these ex-Work Programme people[6*] are still in the same work?”

You have requested information relating to Stockport Jobcentre Plus (JCP) including numbers of people who are unemployed, who have been involved in the Work Programme and found and stayed in work. There are two main measures of unemployment outlined in more detail below. One of these relates to the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). The Work Programme uses private and public companies, called providers, to find work for claimants transferred to them from JCP. Work Programme participants consist of JSA and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) claimants referred by JCP at specified points in their claims as well as voluntary Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Income Support (IS) referrals.

Once referred, individuals remain on the Work Programme for an allotted time of 104 weeks, unless they complete early. Providers are paid for outcomes related to lasting employment, in

particular when an individual reaches six months in work, or three months for those expected to require more assistance. This is known as a Job Outcome payment. Only one Job Outcome payment can be claimed per referral. There are no payments for job entry. Following a Job Outcome payment and after each further four continuous weeks in employment the provider will receive a Sustainment Payment. Once individuals complete 104 weeks, if they are not in employment then they go back to JCP. Payments continue to be paid to providers beyond 104 weeks if individuals remain in employment.

In response to question 1, the two main measures of unemployment are:

- (i) Unemployment, which is the headline figure, measures all people who meet the internationally agreed definition of unemployment, namely those who are without a job, want a job, are seeking a job, and are available to start work. This is measured by the Labour Force Survey (LFS), and is not dependent on being in receipt of benefit.
- (ii) The claimant count measures the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA). This is sourced from administrative records of people being paid the benefit.

Statistics on unemployment based on the LFS and the claimant count are published on the Nomis website www.nomisweb.co.uk, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) official website of labour market statistics, which allows you to construct your own tables.

As a result, Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you.

To produce a table of the number of claimants who claim Jobseeker's Allowance in Stockport JCP office, from the claimant count, go to www.nomisweb.co.uk. Select **Advanced Query** in the **Detailed Statistics** section, and then select the dataset **claimant count with rates and proportions** from the **claimant count** drop down menu and make your table selection as follows:

1. Select the relevant geography by clicking the **geography** tab. For example, if you require data for Stockport JCP office, select **jobcentre plus offices**, then **Greater Manchester East & West** from the drop down and then tick **Stockport Wellesley** from the list.
2. Then select the dates you require by clicking the **date** tab, the latest data available is up to 30 June 2014.
3. If you wish to include any other breakdowns on your table, these are available via the corresponding tabs on the left.

Finally, click the **review selections** tab, check to see if the correct variables are included. Once you are happy with the table selection, click **download data**. This will output your table into an Excel file available for your analysis.

Please note that the responsibility for statistics on the NOMIS website lies with the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Information on how to submit a freedom of information request to ONS can be found via the link below.

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/about-ons/what-we-do/FOI/how-to-make-a-foi-request/index.html>

In response to question 2, please see the table below which shows the current status of all Work programme referrals for Stockport JCP.

The status of all Work Programme Referrals in Stockport JCP Office, as at March 2014

	Total	Completed allotted time (104 weeks) ²			Provider still receiving Outcome payments	Completed: Maximum Outcome payments attained ³	Still on the scheme	Completed allotted time: Never Attached
		Completed Early	Returned to JCP at 104 weeks	Returned to JCP post 104 weeks				
Referrals	6,350	20	1,960	220	410	360	3,350	30
Of which								
Job Outcome payments	1,430	-	210	80	290	350	500	.
Of which Sustainment Payments								
1-4	340	-	80	30	60	.	180	.
5-8	250	-	40	20	70	.	120	.
9-12	250	-	50	10	90	.	90	.
13+	460	-	10	10	60	360	20	.

Source: DWP: Information, Governance and Security Directorate (IGS)

Notes:

1. “-“ Nil or Negligible; “.” Not Applicable; Figures around rounded to the nearest ten. Some additional disclosure control has also been applied. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. This will include people referred up till the 3 April 2012 as claimants are on the programme for 104 weeks, slightly less than 2 years.
3. Total individuals for Referrals and Sustainment payments will not equal the total number of individuals for Job Outcome payments due to differences in the validation procedure. For more information please see the background information note on the Work Programme home page.

In response to question 3, as mentioned above, Work Programme providers are paid for Job Outcomes related to lasting employment, in particular when an individual reaches six months in work or three months for those expected to require more assistance. The Department does not hold all of the data required to answer your query fully as Work Programme providers are not required to submit job start information until they claim a job outcome; only then are they requested to input a job start date which helps secure the validity of the job outcome payment.

However, of the 6,350 Job Outcome Payments for Stockport JCP Office, **90** were claimed within 6 months of referral.

In response to question 4, we would like to point out that these figures are not directly comparable for several reasons:

- The number of people who are unemployed in question one, answered using the claimant count, includes only those people who are claiming JSA. The number of people who have had a Job Outcome payment within 6 months of Referral includes those claiming JSA, ESA, IB and IS. Therefore, to calculate a meaningful proportion you would need to narrow your request to take only those on the Work Programme who are claiming JSA.
- However, claimants have different referral points to the Work Programme depending on their circumstances, such as age and benefit type. Therefore the full claimant count caseload will not be eligible to participate in the Work Programme. Further information can be found in section 2.6.4 of this publication:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/321518/work-programme-statistical-release-june-2014.pdf
- Additionally, claimant count information has a smaller time lag than Work Programme information so latest data available is at differing time points.

In response to question 5 and 6, we do hold some information on the nature of employment for those individuals with a job outcome. However, due to the differing formats in which the data is collected we estimate that the cost of extracting this information would exceed the appropriate limit of £600.

The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing your request further.

However, under Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act we are obliged to assist you in providing options to narrow your request, by reforming or refocusing it, so that it will fall beneath the cost limit. In this case our advice would be to narrow your question so that it only asks for information on the number of people at Stockport Jobcentre Plus office referred to the Work Programme who have found employment lasting more than one year based on the number of sustainment payments received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact us 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@dwpgsi.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 www.ico.gov.uk