

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: Fol 2202

DATE: 15 July 2016

Dear Glenys Harriman,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 17 June 2016. You asked:

Please could you provide information on when a claimant commitment under the Digital ("Full") UC service would be filled in online by the claimant without attending a Work Search Interview, and how they know how to complete it, and access relevant documents.

I have been told different things from DWP personnel - recently I was told every claimant would have to attend an initial interview.

A response to one of my requests stated this " Universal Credit do not have an example of a claimant commitment as we encourage claimants to apply and agree to their commitment on-line. We do have guidance for work coaches however, for when claimants prefer to make a claim and sign their commitment face to face. The guidance is attached as separate annexes."

But the "Creating a Claimant Commitment" (one of the attachments) said:

" The Claimant Commitment Pack is made up of the following 3 separate sections: • Your meeting plan • Your Work Search • My Work Plan.

They are issued to claimants during their initial Work Search Interview (WSI) and can be re-issued when requested depending on the claimant's regime and requirements."

So what I need to know is-

- a) Do all claimants need to attend a first claim interview? And would the Claimant Commitment Pack be issued then, or at a later Work Search Interview?*
- b) If a claimant does not have to attend the Interview at which the Claimant Commitment Pack is normally issued, would they be able to access this online via the Digital Gateway? Does the online claim tell them this?*
- c) What are the criteria for determining who has to agree their claimant commitment face to face rather than online?*

When a claimant makes their claim to Universal Credit online, they verify their identification and bank details. Depending on the data provided, the claimant will be automatically allocated to a conditionality group, for example, 'working enough' or 'no work related requirements' conditionality groups.

Depending on the claimant's conditionality groups of either 'working enough' or 'no work related requirements', they may either:

- Receive a simple claimant commitment, telling them that if their circumstances change they need to contact us, or;
- They will be required to attend the jobcentre for a face to face meeting.
- If the claimant commitment is automatically sent, the claimant can agree to it online.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Strategy 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