

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
Central Freedom of Information Team

freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Our reference: Fol 695

Date: 17 March 2017

Dear Glenys Harriman,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 20 February 2017. You asked

“Please could you provide guidance / regs on the means by which a claimant may provide evidence of child care costs in Full Service UC, as follows:

I have been told that the only way these can be provided is by handing them in at the Job Centre, but this can be very difficult to do if the claimant is in full time work and/or lives a long way from the nearest Job Centre.

- 1. Does it have to be the Job Centre closest to the claimant's home or can it be one that is near their place of work?*
- 2. Is it the case that the evidence of child care costs cannot be posted? If not, why not?*
- 3. Is it the case that they cannot be scanned/photographed and uploaded onto the online account? If not, why not? (Is this because they could be tampered with?)*
- 4. Reg 33 of the UC regs says "(2) The childcare costs condition is only met in respect of an assessment period if those charges are reported to the Secretary of State before the end of the assessment period following the assessment period in which they are paid. "*
As the word used is "reported" rather than "evidenced" is it the case that amount can be reported but the evidence provided after the relevant monthly assessment period and the child care cost element be paid later?"

DWP Response:

1. Jobcentres can use their discretion to handle a claim at the most appropriate Jobcentre.
2. Support with childcare costs in Universal Credit is given on proof of paid childcare costs. Currently claimants have to present evidence of their childcare costs by providing receipts to their work coach. However, if parents are working or unable to get to the JCP they can agree with their work coach to send the childcare receipts in to the JCP, provided that the claimant

continues to meet all that they are required to as part of their Claimant Commitment.

3. This is correct. There is no current facility for electronic upload of childcare receipts. We are looking to add upload functionality to future builds of the Universal Credit service, which will allow claimants to upload documents as evidence of childcare costs.

4. Yes. This is correct. The claimant has to report the costs to their work coach before the end of the Assessment Period to which the costs are attributed (not necessarily the Assessment Period in which the costs were paid). The childcare cost element can be paid later, upon receipt of evidence for care that was reported in the appropriate assessment period.

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

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FoI 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@dpw.gsi.gov.uk or by writing to: DWP, Central FoI 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.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745