

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: Fol 2217

DATE: 18 July 2016

Dear Glenys Harriman,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 20 June 2016. You asked:

Please could you set out the procedure - I don't know if this will be in guidance to decision makers or elsewhere- which DWP should undertake following a request for a mandatory reconsideration of a decision submitted in writing.

In particular it would be useful if this specified which job role does what and the timescales, and whether this differs under Universal Credit from other DWP decisions eg JSA.

I am requesting this because an associate has said that the Universal Credit helpline told her that a reconsideration request in a letter would not be actioned until the requester has telephoned the helpline - as only at that point the helpline staff create a task which is sent to the decision maker.

If this is indeed the case it would cause delays and could also lead to overpayments if a notification of a change is not acted on within the monthly assessment period in which the change occurred.

A Mandatory Reconsideration can be requested either by telephone, face to face or in writing. Each Mandatory Reconsideration request will be dealt with appropriately. A request in writing does not require a telephone call answer.

Please find attached an extract from the Mandatory Reconsideration guidance which explains the process from requests received in writing.

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@dwg.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 www.ico.gov.uk