

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: Fol 2121

DATE: 5 July 2016

Dear Ms Brooke,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 7 June 2016. You asked:

In a previous FOI request you stated; " if they (claimants) do not provide email or phone details this does not prevent them from continuing with their claim to Universal Credit. "

However, the online claim form for Universal Credit does not allow a claim to proceed without entering a mobile phone number and an email address.

All published Universal Credit literature states that the only way to make a claim for Universal Credit is via online. There is no way to make a claim online without entering something into the boxes for mobile phone and email details.

Therefore, please can you tell me how a person without a mobile phone or email address should make a claim for Universal Credit, bearing in mind that the online claim form will not proceed without these details.

There is no legal requirement for a claimant to provide a mobile telephone number or email address in order to make a claim to Universal Credit (UC). Depending on where they live will affect how they claim UC.

If they make a claim in an area where the live service is available claimants are asked to provide their home address, an email address (if they have one), a mobile number (if they have one) and a landline number (if they have one). However, if they do not provide email or phone details this does not prevent them from continuing with their claim to UC. The reason they are asked to provide a phone number is because it provides a quicker method of contacting the claimant if there are any queries about their new claim. In addition, most people have requirements in their claimant commitment to look for work and this is easier if we are able to contact them quickly.

If they make a claim in an area offering the full UC service then they will be unable to proceed without entering a telephone number in the mobile phone box. A landline number would let you proceed further. However, everyone who makes a claim will need an email address. This is to enable a security feature which uses a code, sent via email, to progress the claim.

We would actively encourage people to use the service in a digital manner in every instance but we understand there are circumstances in which this is not an appropriate means of claiming and so alternative routes are on offer such as telephony or visiting a Jobcentre where a work coach is on hand to offer support and assistance.

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