



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

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[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

Email:  
[freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

Our Ref: FOI2018/10261

Date 4 December 2018

Dear Emily Williams,

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request received on 19 November. You asked for:

*“When a Universal Credit claimant posts a message on their UC Journal they are presented with a list of options explaining what the message is about (e.g. payment issue, etc).*

*The available options appear to be:*

- *A payment*
- *A change*
- *An appointment*
- *Job applications*
- *Add a work search note*
- *A message for my work coach*
- *Service issues*

*For each of the available options please send me:*

- *Any documents which identify whose workstream (e.g. JCP work coach, etc) the message will go into; and*
- *Any documents which identify the timeframe in which these messages should be read, actioned and responded to (these may be targets, service standards, expectations, etc)*

*If any of these documents are publicly available then please direct me to these.”*

### **DWP Response**

It may be helpful if I explain the role of the Freedom of Information Act. The Act provides a right of access to recorded information held by a public authority like DWP (subject to certain exemptions). The Act does not provide that a public authority must create new information to answer questions; nor does it provide that a public authority give advice, opinion or explanation in relation to issues/policies under question.

In cases where a customer does ask a question, rather than request recorded information, we do our utmost to provide the recorded information that best answers the question. Once the public authority has provided the recorded information, it has met its obligations under the Act; interpretation of the information provided is left to the requestor.

We do not have any documents that relate specifically to this request so cannot share any guidance or any documentation about standard response times or Service Standards. However, the following information may be of help.

- A payment – This generates a to-do for the case manager to respond to
- A change – This redirects the claimant to the change of circumstances flow for them to directly report the change
- An appointment – This generates a to-do for the work coach to respond to\*
- Job applications – This redirects the claimant to the job applications page to record this information for their record
- Add a work search note – This records the information in the journal for a work coach to view
- A message for my work coach – This generates a to-do for the work coach to respond to\*
- Service issues – This generates a to do for the case manager to respond to

\*If the claimant does not have a work coach these messages are automatically diverted to the case manager

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

Yours Sincerely,

Policy Group Fol Team  
Department for Work and Pensions

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#### **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@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:freedom-of-information-request@dwp.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 [ico.org.uk/Global/contact\\_us](http://ico.org.uk/Global/contact_us) or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745