

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

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

Our reference: IR195

Date: 20/05/2016

Dear Cheryl Moy,

I am writing in response to your review request received on 3 May 2016. An internal review has been carried out by someone of a senior grade to the person who dealt with your original request. I am now in a position to respond to you. In your review request you said:

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.

I am writing to request an internal review of Department for Work and Pensions's handling of my FOI request 'Universal Credit and Home Education'.

The specific questions asked in my FOI were not answered.

Thank you for your response, however the document you link to does not answer our specific questions. Please respond accordingly.

The review has been concluded and I can now provide additional information originally requested and apologise that this was not sent originally.

I can confirm that the same rules apply under Universal Credit as they do with Jobseekers Allowance.

The Department can confirm that that the Jobcentre cannot suggest school as appropriate child care to a home educating parent claiming job seekers allowance when offered a job. There are flexibilities within Universal Credit to cater for the needs and personal circumstances of parents whilst they are looking for paid work of 16 hours or more per week, including those who wish to educate their child(ren) at home. Additionally, lone parents may restrict their availability for jobs to their child's normal school hours until the child is 13. Parents who educate their child(ren) at home are therefore treated in the same way as all other parents.

The Jobcentre would not expect a parent to leave a child alone at home whilst they go out to work. People will need to demonstrate that they have made genuine efforts to locate childcare; this will provide parents who educate their children at home with protection if no local services that meet their needs are available.

Universal Credit claimants, who we expect to look for work, must take all reasonable action they can to secure and take up work. Any requirements placed on the claimant will be based on a discussion with their work coach, taking into account the individual's circumstances, including any offer of employment they may have received. Through conversation with the individual, Work Coaches set and agree requirements that are tailored for a broad range of circumstances, including looking for work during school hours. These reasonable requirements, including any limiting or lifting and the reasons, are recorded within the claimant commitment.

For further information, please find attached our policy on Universal Credit and home educators.

I hope this is helpful but if you have any queries about this letter please contact me quoting the reference number above.

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central 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.org.uk/Global/contact_us or telephone 0303 123 1113 or 01625 545745