

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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

Our Ref: VTR IR101

DATE: 5 May 2106

Dear Mr Smith

Thank you for your email of 14 March 2016 relating to your Freedom of Information (FOI) request 'DWP Staff Claiming Universal Credit'. (Reference number Fol 575).

In reply to the response we sent you, you have said:

“With regard to your final point, that DWP staff need not reveal that they are claiming Universal Credit to their own department, the DWP. Surely anyone claiming UC must of necessity declare all and any employment during a specific period to their appointed Work Coach. How then will it be possible for that Work Coach, checking what paid employment has been undertaken to avoid noticing that the claimant is like themselves, a member of the DWP staff ? Bearing in mind, not only a personal knowledge of a working colleague that they may see every day, and whose details they must recognise online When reviewing the Universal Jobmatch account of the claimant In addition, of course, to the written diary sheets that must be submitted as an integral part of a UC claim. Or is it the case that DWP staff will not be checked with the same rigour as as applied to the ordinary claimant, but subjected only to a cursory analysis, in which the DWP affects to believe that they are not DWP staff?”

Our response is:

DWP employees who are also UC claimants are not required to let their employer know that they are claiming UC.

Employees are not expected to inform their Line Managers in DWP that they are claimants of Universal Credit, unless they wish to do so.

It is DWP policy that all employees who are required to attend a meeting with a Work Coach as a UC claimant have the right to request to be seen by a Work Coach from another job centre to respect their privacy.

In addition, all DWP staff are made fully aware of their obligations to data protection and the necessity for discretion in all their dealings, both with their own colleagues and members of the public.

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