



Department
for Work &
Pensions

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5 August 2022

Dear Mary,

Universal Credit Work Capability Assessment Statistics

Thank you for your letter of 8 April seeking clarity on our plans for developing statistics on Universal Credit Work Capability Assessments. I am mindful of the time it has taken to respond but this topic was subsequently raised by the Work and Pensions Select Committee, as part of a wider set of questions around reporting on Universal Credit, and so I wanted to consider the outcome of this.

In DWP we are committed to producing accurate, timely, high quality official statistics to inform government policy development and operational decision-making. We consider user needs when producing and disseminating our statistics in accordance with the [UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

The development of our statistics follows a four-stage process. There are two internal stages starting with discovery, where statisticians assess user requirements for new statistics and proposed changes to existing statistics, followed by an internal user engagement stage where we liaise with internal stakeholders including policy, operations, external communications and Ministers.

Once we have completed discovery and internal user engagement, and there has been a decision that the change can be progressed and should be prioritised, it will be included in our published [DWP Statistical Work Programme](#) to give all users visibility of the changes we are progressing.

The development of statistics on Universal Credit Work Capability Assessments has not progressed to the external engagement stage and, as the Secretary of State [responded](#) to the Work and Pensions Select Committee on Friday 15th July:

'There are currently no plans to develop official statistics on UC claimants undergoing a WCA. While we will keep this position under review, I anticipate there will be fewer resources available, and I am not committing to developing new statistics at this time.'

Once there is confirmation on the resources available to the Department there will need to be an assessment on our development priorities within the Statistical Work

Programme which will include the proposal for statistics on work capability assessment outcomes for Universal Credit claimants.

I continue to welcome users' views on our statistical work programme, as we aim to make best use of the resources available, to provide informative statistics that are trustworthy, high quality and represent good value.

I have copied this letter to Peter Schofield, DWP Permanent Secretary.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S E E', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Ellerd-Elliott

DWP Chief Statistician and Head of Profession for Statistics