

# Freedom of Information request 625/2013

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## Information request

At DWP what is the definition of a statement of reason, and what is the definition of a written explanation, in the context of a decision made by a decision maker.?

## DWP response

Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you. The information you requested is available and can be accessed via the DWP website <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/>

However, in the interests of customer service the following are extracts from the Decision Makers' Guide.

### “Explanation

01120 Where

1. a claimant or their representative queries a decision by
  - 1.1 asking for it to be explained
  - 1.2 requesting a written statement of reasons
  - 1.3 making an application for revision
  - 1.4 making an appeal **and**
2. the decision is not changed by revision or supersession

the DM or another suitably trained officer should offer the claimant or representative an informal explanation of the decision. The claimant or representative should be contacted by telephone if possible, unless they have specifically requested a response in writing.

01121 The purpose of the explanation is to help the claimant understand the decision, and to clarify any areas of dispute in the event of an application for revision or appeal.

01122 The explanation must

1. be personalized

2. be given in a manner that is clear, understandable and effective
3. explain why the decision was made
4. explain the effects of the law on the facts
5. deal with any further points the claimant or representative may make
6. ensure that the claimant understands the decision even if they do not agree with it
7. ensure that the revision and appeal process including time limits is explained.

### **Request for written statement of reasons**

01130 Where an outcome decision is notified without a statement of the reasons for the decision, the claimant has one month from the day following the date of notification to ask for the written statement<sup>1</sup>. Claimants can ask for a written statement of reasons, for example by asking for an explanation of a decision, either orally, by telephone or in person at an appropriate office, or in writing. They **do not** have to use the specific words “request for a written statement of reasons”. Where the application is made orally, the Department must keep a record of the conversation.

01131 A written statement of reasons should

1. be personalized
2. give an explanation of why the decision was made
3. provide details of the law used to make the decision, and how it was applied
4. give information about the extended time limit for revision and appeal.”