



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions



# Fraud and Error in the Benefit System:

## 2011/12 Estimates (Revised Edition)

### (Great Britain)

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December 2012

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## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

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## Executive Summary

### **Revisions Summary**

This edition is a revision to the 2011/12 report originally published on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

Minor revisions have been made to the Income Support underpayment figures. The total fraud and error Income Support underpayment has been changed from 1.0% to 0.9%. Note, the monetary value has remained unchanged at £70m.

In addition to this the 'Control Activities – NCO' Income Support total underpayment and official error underpayment monetary values have changed from £3m to £0m. Note, the rate of underpayment has remained unchanged at 0.0%.

Tables, charts and commentary in section 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of this report have been amended accordingly and flagged with a 'R'.

All other underpayment figures and charts are unaffected.

Overpayments have not been affected.

This publication includes the 2011/12 estimates of total overpayments and underpayments across the benefit system as well as individual estimates for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit for 2011/12.

The 2011/12 estimates in this report are based on 2011/12 financial year expenditure and April 2011 to March 2012 sample data for the individual benefits.

## **Fraud and Error 2011/12 Estimates**

### **All benefits**

The estimate of total overpayments due to fraud and error across all benefits is £3.4bn; this is 2.1% of the total benefit expenditure, which was £159.2bn in 2011/12.

However, please note that the net loss to DWP is less than the total overpayments, since DWP and Local Authorities identify and recover around £840m of overpayments each year. See section 1.22 below for further details.

The estimate of total underpayments due to fraud and error across all benefits is £1.3bn; this is 0.8% of the total benefit expenditure in 2011/12.

### **Type of error**

- 0.7%, or £1.2bn, of total benefit expenditure is overpaid due to fraud;
- 0.9%, or £1.4bn, of total benefit expenditure is overpaid due to claimant error;
- 0.5%, or £0.8bn, of total benefit expenditure is overpaid due to official error.
  
- 0.6%, or £0.9bn, of total benefit expenditure is underpaid due to claimant error;
- 0.3%, or £0.4bn, of total benefit expenditure is underpaid due to official error.

### **Individual benefits**

Key findings for the individual benefits that are measured on a continuous basis are that:

- 4.4%, or £310m, of Income Support expenditure (£7.2bn) was overpaid;
- 4.6%, or £230m, of Jobseeker's Allowance expenditure (£5.0bn) was overpaid;
- 5.7%, or £460m, of Pension Credit expenditure (£8.2bn) was overpaid;
- 4.9%, or £1,130m, of Housing Benefit expenditure (£22.8bn) was overpaid.
  
- 0.9%, or £70m, of Income Support expenditure (£7.2bn) was underpaid;
- 0.3%, or £20m, of Jobseeker's Allowance expenditure (£5.0bn) was underpaid;
- 1.8%, or £150m, of Pension Credit expenditure (£8.2bn) was underpaid;
- 1.4%, or £310m, of Housing Benefit expenditure (£22.8bn) was underpaid.

## **Comparisons with previous estimates**

We now compare the 2011/12 fraud and error estimates with the previously published 2010/11 and 2009/10 fraud and error estimates. Changes are not statistically significant, unless stated otherwise.

### **All benefits**

- The estimate for the percentage of total benefit expenditure overpaid in 2011/12 is 2.1% which is the same when compared to the 2010/11 estimate, but is a decrease compared to the 2009/10 estimate of 2.2%. It is worth noting that this estimate has remained between 2.0% and 2.2% since 2005/06.
- The estimated value of overpayments is £3.4bn in 2011/12. This is an increase when compared to the 2010/11 estimate of £3.2bn and the 2009/10 estimate which was £3.3bn. This is due to an increase in overall DWP benefit expenditure.
- The estimate for the percentage of total benefit expenditure underpaid in 2011/12 is 0.8%. This is the same as the estimate for 2010/11, but is a decrease when compared to the 2009/10 estimate of 0.9%. It is worth noting that this estimate has remained between 0.8% and 0.9% since 2005/06.
- The estimated value of underpayments is £1.3bn in 2011/12. This is an increase when compared to the 2010/11 estimate of £1.2bn, but is the same as the 2009/10 estimate.

### **Type of error (Overpayments)**

- The estimate for the percentage of total benefit expenditure overpaid due to fraud in 2011/12 is 0.7%, which is a decrease when compared to the 2009/10 and 2010/11 estimates of 0.8%. The overpaid value in 2011/12 is £1.2bn which is the same as the 2010/11 estimate. In 2009/10 it was £1.1bn.
- The estimate for the percentage of total benefit expenditure overpaid due to claimant error in 2011/12 is 0.9% which is an increase when compared to the 2009/10 and 2010/11 estimates, 0.8%. The estimated overpaid value in 2011/12 has increased to £1.4bn from the 2010/11 estimate of £1.3bn. This is also an increase from £1.2bn in 2009/10.
- The estimate for the percentage of total benefit expenditure overpaid due to official error in 2011/12 has remained the same when compared to the 2010/11 estimate, at 0.5%. This is a decrease when compared to the 2009/10 estimate of 0.6%. The overpaid value in 2011/12 has also remained the same as the 2010/11 estimate of £0.8bn, but is a decrease compared to £1.0bn in 2009/10.

## Individual benefits (Overpayments)

- The estimate of Income Support benefit expenditure overpaid for 2011/12 has remained the same when compared to the 2010/11 estimate of 4.4%. This is a decrease when compared to the 2009/10 estimate of 5.4%. The overpaid value has decreased from £460m in 2009/10 to £350m in 2010/11 and then to £310m in the 2011/12 results. The decrease between 2010/11 and 2011/12 is caused by an overall decrease in Income Support expenditure.
- The estimate of Jobseeker's Allowance benefit expenditure overpaid for 2011/12 is 4.6% which is a **statistically significant** decrease when compared to the 2010/11 estimate of 6.1%. It is also a decrease compared to the 2009/10 estimate of 5.8%. The overpaid value has decreased from £270m in 2009/10 and 2010/11 to £230m in the 2011/12 results.
- The estimate of Pension Credit benefit expenditure overpaid for 2011/12 has increased to 5.7% when compared to the 2010/11 estimate of 5.6%. However, this is a decrease when compared to the 2009/10 estimate of 5.9%. The overpaid value has decreased from £480m in 2009/10 to £470m in 2010/11 and then to £460m in the 2011/12 results.
- The estimate of Housing Benefit expenditure overpaid for 2011/12 is 4.9% which is an increase when compared to the 2010/11 estimate of 4.6% and the 2009/10 estimate of 4.7%. The overpaid value has also increased to £1,130m for the 2011/12 results when comparing to 2009/10 and 2010/11 (£950m and £980m respectively).

Please see section 3 and 5 of this report for more details on changes in the estimates over time.

None of the changes above are statistically significant at a 95% level of confidence unless specifically stated. This suggests that any changes are more than likely to be due to sampling variation and that these estimates are stable over time and little change occurs year on year.

See section 1.22 for more details on how to interpret these figures and draw comparisons over time using confidence intervals.

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	6
2	Fraud and error in the benefit system: 2011/12 estimates .....	12
3	Fraud and error in the benefit system over time .....	16
4	Fraud and error in the continuously measured benefits: 2011/12 estimates .....	25
5	Fraud and error in the continuously measured benefits over time.....	29
6	Error codes within the continuously measured benefits .....	60
7	Age and gender breakdowns for the continuously measured benefits .....	88
8	Further information and future reporting.....	96
	Annex 1: Glossary of abbreviations.....	97
	Annex 2: Statistical terms .....	98
	Annex 3: Supporting material .....	99
	Annex 4: List of methodology changes.....	101
	Annex 5: List of benefits included in fraud and error estimates .....	105

# 1 Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 This report provides estimates of fraud and error for benefits administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Local Authorities. This includes a range of benefits for which we derive estimates using different methods, as detailed in 'Our Measurement System' below. For further details on which benefits are included in the total fraud and error estimates please see Annex 5. For more information on the benefit system and how DWP benefits are administered please see <https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits>.
- 1.2 The fraud and error estimates can be used for:
- Obtaining an estimate for the amount over/under paid in total and by benefit, and broken down into fraud, claimant error and official error, across the benefits administered by the DWP and Local Authorities.
  - Obtaining estimates for the amount over/under paid by benefit, broken down into the types of fraud, claimant error and official error, across Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit.
- 1.3 Within DWP these statistics are used to evaluate, develop and support fraud and error policy, strategy and operational decisions, initiatives/options and business plans through understanding the causes of fraud and error.
- 1.4 The fraud and error estimates are used as measures in the following reports:
- The fraud and error estimates are used to measure the impact indicator in the DWP business plan: Total cost to the taxpayer of fraud and error for benefit claims. This impact indicator refers to structural reform priority 1: Reform the welfare system, action 1.9: To reduce the level of benefit expenditure overpaid to a maximum of 1.7% by 2015.
  - The latest DWP business plan is available here: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/corporate-publications/dwp-business-plan-2011-2015/#bp>.
  - The fraud and error statistics form part of the DWP Business Plan transparency measures: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/corporate-publications/dwp-business-plan-2011-2015/business-plan-transparency/>
  - The impact indicator, Total cost to the taxpayer of fraud and error for benefit claims, is published in the Business Plan Quarterly Data Summary, available here: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/corporate-publications/dwp-business-plan-2011-2015/business-plan-quarterly-data>
  - The fraud and error statistics, published in May each year, feed into the DWP accounts. The 2011/12 preliminary estimates fed into the 2011/12 DWP annual report and accounts: <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp-annual-report-and-accounts-2011-2012.pdf>



## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- The statistics feed into the annual HM Revenue and Customs National Insurance Fund accounts. These are available in the National Insurance Fund Accounts section of the HMRC reports page:  
[www.hmrc.gov.uk/about/reports.htm](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/about/reports.htm)
- The fraud statistics feed into the National Fraud Authority's Annual Fraud Indicator which estimates the cost of fraud to the UK:  
[www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/nfa/annual-fraud-indicator](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/agencies-public-bodies/nfa/annual-fraud-indicator)
- The fraud and error estimates are used to answer Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information requests. Please note that we are unable to answer questions about individual fraud and error cases or provide regional estimates of fraud and error as we do not break the statistics down to this level. This is because the sample sizes for the current survey exercises are chosen to report fraud and error at the Great Britain level only, therefore reporting at a lower country/regional level could lead to unrepresentative and misleading conclusions.

- 1.5 For more information on how our estimates are used and by whom please refer to the below document published at:  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/uses\\_users.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/uses_users.pdf)

## Our Measurement System

- 1.6 Estimates of fraud and error for various benefits have been derived using three different methods, now described:

### Continuously reviewed benefits

- 1.7 Fraud, claimant error and official error (see [definitions](#) on next page) for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit are measured on a continuous basis and expenditure on these benefits accounts for 27% of all benefit expenditure. Official error is measured continuously in both State Pension and Social Fund therefore meaning that 74% of all benefit expenditure is measured for official error on a continuous basis.
- 1.8 Estimates are produced by statistical analysis of data collected through continuous survey exercises, in which independent specially trained staff from the Department's Performance Measurement team, review a randomly selected sample of cases each year.
- 1.9 For Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit the review process involves the following activity:
- Previewing the case by collating information from a variety of DWP or Local Authority (LA) systems to develop an initial picture and to identify any discrepancies between information from different sources;

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- Interviewing the claimant at their home, using a structured and detailed set of questions about the basis of their claim. This aims to identify any discrepancies between the claimant's current circumstances and the circumstances upon which their benefit claim was based.

1.10 If a suspicion of fraud is identified, an investigation is undertaken by a trained Fraud Investigator with the aim of resolving the suspicion.

1.11 Between April 2011 and March 2012 the following number of benefit claims were sampled and reviewed by the Performance Measurement (PM) team;

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Percentage of total claimant population reviewed</b>
Housing Benefit	12,900	0.26%
Income Support	6,900	0.43%
Jobseeker's Allowance	5,100	0.35%
Pension Credit	5,600	0.21%
State Pension (official error only)	2,000	0.02%
Social Fund (official error only)	1,900	0.00%
<b>Total DWP Claims</b> (for six benefits outlined above)	<b>34,400</b>	<b>0.16%</b>

1.12 Overall, less than 0.05% for all benefit claims included in DWP Global estimates were sampled and reviewed by the Performance Measurement (PM) team.

1.13 The Data Quality Adjustment (DQA) Team in PM conduct independent checks on a randomly selected sub-sample of cases after the results of the individual reviews have been completed by the main sample checking teams. The DQA team record discrepancies between the levels of the overpayment/underpayment errors they calculate compared with the original results from the main sample checks. These results from the checked cases are then applied to all cases within the sample population by assuming the same rate of incorrectness/change in the overpayments/underpayment rates would apply to all cases. The DQA process is also used by PM as a feedback loop to improve their processes and highlight any operational training needs.

1.14 Between April 2011 and March 2012 the following number of benefit claims were selected for DQA;

<b>Benefit</b>	<b>Number Selected for DQA</b>
Housing Benefit	1,960
Income Support	680
Jobseeker's Allowance	470
Pension Credit	900
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,010</b>

### Occasionally reviewed benefits

- 1.15 Since 1995, the Department has carried out National Benefit Reviews (NBRs) for various benefits to estimate the level of fraud and error in a particular financial year following the same process outlined in 1.8 and 1.9 above. These benefits cover 59% of total expenditure. Please see [Annex 5](#) for details of benefits covered by occasional reviews.

### Unreviewed benefits

- 1.16 The remaining benefits, which account for around 14% of total benefit expenditure, have never been subject to a specific review. These benefits tend to have relatively low expenditure which means it is not cost effective to undertake a review. For these benefits the estimates are based on assumptions about the likely level of fraud and error.
- 1.17 For some of these benefits the estimates of fraud and error are based on comparable measured benefits. Council Tax Benefit, for example, has many similarities to Housing Benefit, both in terms of entitlement and its administration. Therefore, the estimate of fraud and error in Council Tax Benefit (CTB) is based on the results of measurement of HB, adjusted to account for the greater proportion of pensioners in receipt of CTB.
- 1.18 Where there is no similar measured benefit it is assumed that fraud and error is equal to the average estimate of fraud and error across all measured benefits.

### Definitions of fraud, claimant error and official error

- 1.19 The tables presented in this report estimate fraud, claimant error and official error. The definitions are explained further below.
- **Fraud:** This includes all cases where the following three conditions apply:
    - the basic conditions for receipt of benefit, or the rate of benefit in payment, are not being met;
    - the claimant can reasonably be expected to be aware of the effect on entitlement; and
    - benefit stops or reduces as a result of the review.
  - **Claimant Error:** The claimant has provided inaccurate or incomplete information, or failed to report a change in their circumstances, but there is no fraudulent intent on the claimant's part.
  - **Official Error:** Benefit has been paid incorrectly due to inaction, delay or a mistaken assessment by the DWP, a Local Authority or Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs.
- 1.20 Note, current methodology states that all errors (fraud, claimant error and official error) found on a case are recorded separately and the full values of each error are recorded in isolation of one another. This can lead to the sum of the error values being higher than the benefit award. In such cases a capping calculation

is performed (using a fraud, claimant error, official error hierarchy) to ensure that the sum of the errors does not exceed the award so that the monetary value of fraud and error is not over-reported. This can lead to some of the originally captured fraud, claimant error and official error raw sample values being reduced during the calculation of the estimates.

- 1.21 For more information on the methods used to produce these estimates and how they are quality assured please refer to the document below published at: [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/quality\\_methods.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/quality_methods.pdf)

## Interpretation of the results

- 1.22 Care is required when interpreting the results presented in this report;

- **These estimates are subject to statistical sampling uncertainties.** All estimates are based on reviews of random samples drawn from the benefit caseloads. In any survey sampling exercise, the estimates derived from the sample may differ from what we would see if we examined the whole caseload. Further uncertainties occur due to the assumptions that have had to be made to account for incomplete or imperfect data or using older measurements. Where possible, these further uncertainties have been quantified and combined with the sampling uncertainties to give an overall assessment in the form of 95% confidence limits. These confidence limits show the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies. A few remaining sources of uncertainty could not be quantified and have not been incorporated into the confidence limits; e.g. where the assessment of error involves subjective judgment that may be applied with varying degrees of strictness for different review cases or for different periods of time.
- **A proportion of continuously measured benefit expenditure cannot be captured by the sampling process.** This is mainly because of the delay between sample selection and the interview of the claimant, and also the time taken to process new benefit claims, which excludes the newest cases from the review. The estimates in the tables in this report have been extrapolated to cover all expenditure. The confidence intervals reflect some, but not all, of the uncertainty involved in applying the sample results to elements of expenditure that are not fully covered by the sample. We consider that the remaining unquantified uncertainty from this source is relatively small.
- **The estimates do not encompass all fraud and error.** This is because fraud is, by its nature, a covert activity, complex official error can be difficult to identify and some suspicions of fraud on the sample cases cannot be proven. For example, unreported earnings in the informal economy will be much harder to detect than those in the formal economy.
- **Some incorrect payments may be unavoidable.** The measurement methodology will treat a case as incorrect, even where the claimant has promptly reported a change and there is only a short processing delay.

- **Some overpaid benefit is subsequently recovered.** The estimates in this publication are of the amount of benefit that is paid out incorrectly, rather than the eventual financial loss to the Department and Local Authorities. In 2011/12 DWP recoveries (excluding Housing Benefit) were estimated to be in the region of £360m. Housing Benefit recoveries by Local Authorities are estimated to be in the region of £480m for 2011/12, according to the latest available data.  
[http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/hb\\_ctb/recoveries\\_and\\_fraud\\_data/index.php?page=recoveries\\_and\\_fraud\\_data](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/hb_ctb/recoveries_and_fraud_data/index.php?page=recoveries_and_fraud_data). Therefore, the net loss to the Department is less than the overpayment figures shown in this report.

1.23 Care is also required when interpreting and comparing the results over time presented in this report:

- The estimates are based on a random sample of the total benefit caseload and are therefore subject to statistical uncertainties, as explained in the first bullet above. This uncertainty is quantified by the estimation of 95% confidence intervals surrounding the estimate. These 95% confidence intervals show the range within which we would expect the true value of fraud and error to lie.
- When comparing two estimates users should take into account the confidence intervals surrounding each of the estimates. The calculation to determine whether the results are significantly different from each other is complicated and takes into account the width of the confidence intervals. We perform this robust calculation in our methodology and state in the report whether any differences between years are significant or not. However, the general reader can broadly estimate whether differences are significant by seeing how much the confidence intervals overlap. If they do not overlap then the differences between estimates are generally significantly different and indicate a real change in the estimates over time. If confidence intervals do overlap then the difference between estimates are generally not significantly different, indicating that any changes are more than likely to be due to sampling variation rather than real change.

1.24 For more information regarding sampling uncertainties and interpreting confidence intervals please refer to the below document published at:  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/var\\_conf\\_levels.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/var_conf_levels.pdf)

## Methodology Changes

1.25 No methodology change has been applied to this report's data.

1.26 See Annex 4 for a full list of methodology changes that have been applied to the reports since 2005/06.

## 2 Fraud and error in the benefit system: 2011/12 estimates

- 2.1 This section presents estimates of overpayments and underpayments across all benefit expenditure in 2011/12. These are derived from the estimates produced for each individual DWP benefit. Monetary estimates have been rounded to the nearest £10m.
- 2.2 For the continuously reviewed DWP administered benefits (Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit), estimates of the percentage of benefit expenditure overpaid or underpaid based on measurement activity from April 2011 to March 2012 have been used, as these are the latest available estimates. The percentages have then been applied to 2011/12 gross<sup>1</sup> expenditure.
- 2.3 An explanation of 'Continuously reviewed', 'Occasionally reviewed' and 'Unreviewed' is given in section 1 above.
- 2.4 For a full list of all benefits included in the fraud and error estimates and their method of measurement please see Annex 5.
- 2.5 The 'Last Measured' column provides information on which measurement sample period has been used to produce the percentage estimates. Unless stated otherwise in the 'Notes to table', the latest 2011/12 expenditure has then been applied to these estimates to provide the most up to date monetary values for fraud and error. Please note, the latest (i.e. 'Last Measured') continuously reviewed and occasionally reviewed benefit estimates have been used as proxies to estimate the 'Unreviewed' benefits.
- 2.6 These estimates are subject to the statistical uncertainties and other limitations discussed in Section 1.

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<sup>1</sup> Gross expenditure has been used for all benefits except for Social Fund benefits where net expenditure has been used.

## Overpayments

2.7 The estimates of overpayments due to fraud and error in 2011/12 are shown in Table 2.1 below.

**Table 2.1: Estimated overpayments in 2011/12**

Benefit	Expenditure	Fraud & Error		Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Last Measured
<b>Continuously reviewed</b>										
Income Support	£7.2bn	4.4%	£310m	2.6%	£180m	1.2%	£80m	0.7%	£50m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
Jobseeker's Allowance	£5.0bn	4.6%	£230m	2.9%	£150m	0.6%	£30m	1.1%	£50m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
Pension Credit	£8.2bn	5.7%	£460m	1.7%	£140m	1.8%	£150m	2.1%	£170m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
Housing Benefit	£22.8bn	4.9%	£1,130m	1.5%	£350m	2.8%	£650m	0.6%	£130m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
<b>Occasionally reviewed</b>										
Incapacity Benefit	£5.0bn	2.4%	£120m	0.3%	£10m	0.9%	£40m	1.2%	£60m	Oct 09 - Sep 10
Disability Living Allowance <sup>1</sup>	£12.6bn	1.9%	£240m	0.5%	£60m	0.6%	£80m	0.8%	£100m	Apr 04 - Mar 05
State Pension <sup>2</sup>	£74.2bn	0.2%	£120m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£60m	0.1%	£60m	Apr 05 - Mar 06
Carer's Allowance	£1.8bn	5.5%	£100m	3.9%	£70m	1.0%	£20m	0.6%	£10m	Apr 96 - Mar 97
Interdependencies <sup>3</sup>			£50m		£10m		£20m		£20m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
<b>Unreviewed</b>										
Unreviewed (excl CTB) <sup>4</sup>	£17.6bn	2.2%	£390m	0.8%	£150m	0.7%	£120m	0.7%	£120m	
Council Tax Benefit	£4.9bn	4.4%	£220m	1.4%	£70m	2.5%	£120m	0.6%	£30m	
<b>Total<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>£159.2bn</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>£3.4bn</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>£1.2bn</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>£1.4bn</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>£0.8bn</b>	
Range <sup>6</sup>		(1.8,2.5)	(2.9,3.9)	(0.6,1.0)	(1.0,1.6)	(0.7,1.1)	(1.1,1.7)	(0.4,0.7)	(0.6,1.1)	

### Notes to table:

Figures expressed as percentages (%) give the overpayments as a percentage of the benefit paid out in the year.

1 The 2004/05 Disability Living Allowance (DLA) National Benefit Review identified cases where the change in claimant's needs had been so gradual that it would be unreasonable to expect them to know at which point their entitlement to DLA might have changed. These cases do not result in a recoverable overpayment as we cannot identify when the change occurred. Because legislation requires the Secretary of State to prove that entitlement to DLA is incorrect, rather than requiring the claimant to inform us that their needs have changed, cases in this sub-category are legally correct. The difference between what claimants in these cases are receiving in DLA and related premiums in other benefits and what they would receive if their benefit was reassessed was estimated to be around £0.6 billion (+/-£0.2 billion) in 2004/05. This component is not included in the total above.

2 Official error estimates for State Pension (SP) are derived from a continuous measurement exercise which covered the period April 2011 to March 2012. SP fraud and claimant error estimates have been produced based on a National Benefit Review exercise carried out in 2005/06. The latest 2011/12 expenditure has then been applied to these estimates to provide the most up to date monetary values for SP fraud and error.

3 'Interdependencies' is an estimate of the knock-on effects of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) overpayments on caring and disability premiums on income-related benefits, which depend on the rate of DLA in payment.

4 Social Fund (SF) estimates are included in the 'Unreviewed' category. SF official error estimates are derived from a continuous measurement exercises which covered the period April 2011 to March 2012. It is estimated that 4.0% of expenditure was overpaid due to official error corresponding to £8.7m of net 2011/12 expenditure (which was in total £220m). The confidence intervals surrounding this estimate were [3.2%-4.7%] or [£7m-£10m]. Fraud and claimant error continue to be unmeasured and are estimated using a proxy.

5 Rows and columns may not sum to totals due to rounding.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

6 Approximate 95% confidence intervals are given. These allow for non-sample error (i.e. an error in sample estimates which cannot be attributed to sampling fluctuations) in occasionally reviewed benefits and the additional uncertainty that comes from the use of older measurement periods.



## Underpayments

2.8 The estimates of underpayments due to fraud and error in 2011/12 are shown in the Table 2.2 below.

2.9 Note that these estimates only include claimants that are getting less than they are entitled to and do not include those people who are entitled to benefits but who do not apply, or whose applications are not awarded when they should be. For estimates of 'non-take-up' of some benefits see <http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=irb>

**Table 2.2: Estimated underpayments in 2011/12 (R)**

Benefit	Expenditure	Fraud & Error	Fraud	Claimant Error	Official Error	Last Measured
<b>Continuously reviewed</b>						
Income Support	£7.2bn	0.9% £70m	0.0% £0m	0.5% £40m	0.4% £30m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
Jobseeker's Allowance	£5.0bn	0.3% £20m	0.0% £0m	0.2% £10m	0.1% £10m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
Pension Credit	£8.2bn	1.8% £150m	0.0% £0m	0.9% £70m	0.9% £80m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
Housing Benefit	£22.8bn	1.4% £310m	0.0% £0m	1.1% £240m	0.3% £70m	Apr 11 - Mar 12
<b>Occasionally reviewed</b>						
Incapacity Benefit	£5.0bn	0.7% £30m	0.0% £0m	0.0% £0m	0.7% £30m	Oct 09 - Sep 10
Disability Living Allowance	£12.6bn	2.5% £320m	0.0% £0m	2.4% £300m	0.1% £10m	Apr 04 - Mar 05
State Pension <sup>1</sup>	£74.2bn	0.2% £120m	0.0% £0m	0.0% £0m	0.2% £120m	Apr 05 - Mar 06
Carer's Allowance	£1.8bn	0.1% £0m	0.0% £0m	0.1% £0m	0.0% £0m	Apr 96 - Mar 97
<b>Unreviewed</b>						
Unreviewed (excl CTB) <sup>2</sup>	£17.6bn	1.3% £230m	0.0% £0m	1.0% £180m	0.3% £50m	
Council Tax Benefit	£4.9bn	1.1% £60m	0.0% £0m	0.9% £40m	0.3% £10m	
<b>Total<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>£159.2bn</b>	<b>0.8% £1.3bn</b>	<b>0.0% £0.0bn</b>	<b>0.6% £0.9bn</b>	<b>0.3% £0.4bn</b>	
Range <sup>4</sup>		(0.6,1.1) (0.9,1.7)	(0.0,0.0) (0.0,0.0)	(0.3,0.8) (0.5,1.3)	(0.2,0.3) (0.3,0.6)	

### Notes to table:

Figures expressed as percentages (%) give the underpayments as a percentage of the benefit paid out in the year.

1 Official error estimates for State Pension (SP) are derived from a continuous measurement exercise covering the period April 2011 to March 2012. SP fraud and claimant error estimates have been produced based on a National Benefit Review exercise carried out in 2005/06. The latest 2011/12 expenditure has then been applied to these estimates to provide the most up to date monetary values for SP fraud and error.

2 Social Fund (SF) estimates are included in the 'Unreviewed' category. SF official error estimates are derived from continuous measurement exercises in the period April 2011 to March 2012. It is estimated that 1.3% of expenditure was underpaid due to official error corresponding to £2.9m of estimated net expenditure in 2011/12 (which was a total of £220m). The confidence intervals surrounding this estimate were [0.8%-1.9%] or [£1.6m-£4.3m]. Fraud and customer error continue to be unmeasured and are estimated using a proxy.

3 Rows and columns may not sum to totals due to rounding.

4 Approximate 95% confidence intervals are given. These allow for non-sample error (i.e. an error in sample estimates which cannot be attributed to sampling fluctuations) in occasionally reviewed benefits and the additional uncertainty that comes from the use of older measurement periods.

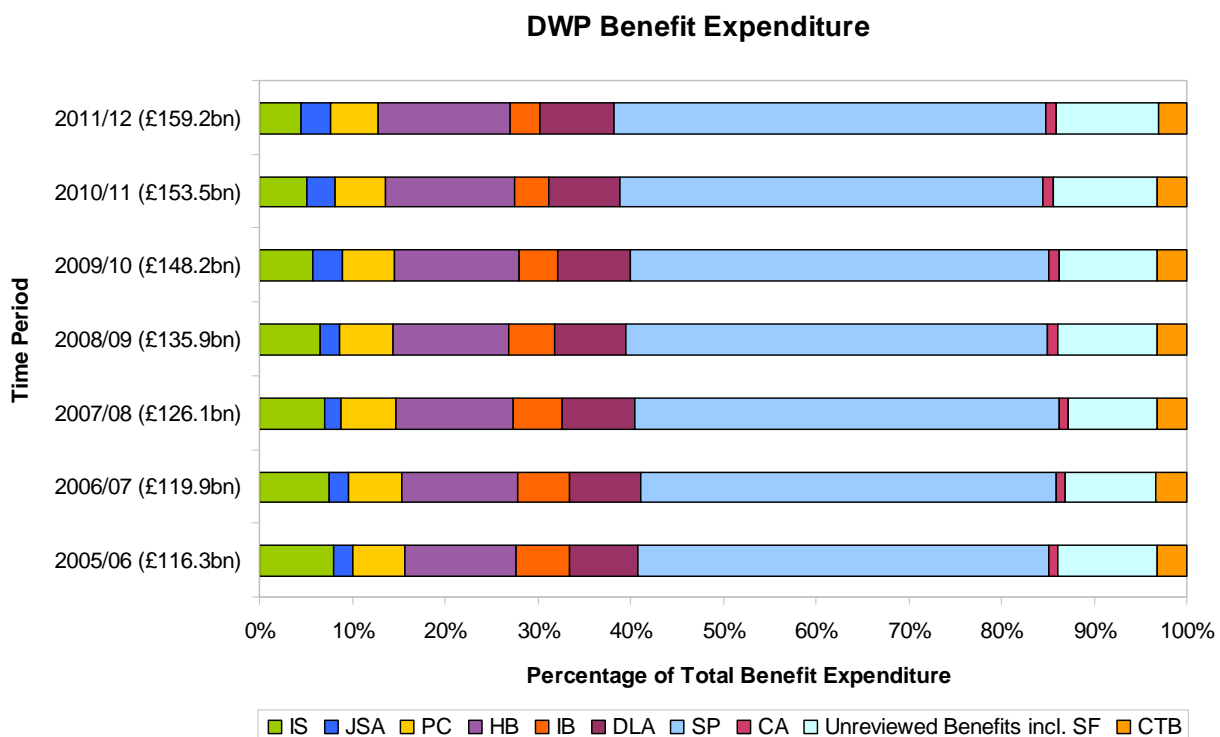
### 3 Fraud and error in the benefit system over time

3.1 This section provides a comparison of DWP benefit expenditure over time and estimates of total fraud and error across all benefits over time for both overpayments and underpayments.

#### Total Benefit Expenditure since 2005/06

3.2 Figure 3.1 below shows total annual gross<sup>2</sup> benefit expenditure since 2005/06.

**Figure 3.1: Total nominal benefit expenditure by benefit type since 2005/06<sup>3</sup>**



3.3 DWP benefit payments have gradually increased over time from £116.3bn in 2005/06 to £159.2bn in 2011/12. Overall changes are driven mainly by annual benefit uprating, and also by the number and make-up of benefit claims.

3.4 Income Support expenditure has changed the most in percentage terms, dropping from 8.0% of expenditure in 2005/06 (£9.4bn) to 4.5% in 2011/12 (£7.2bn). JSA expenditure has more than doubled in monetary terms over this period, from £2.3bn to £5.0bn: it now accounts for 3.1% of the benefit expenditure (2.0% in 2005/06). Housing Benefit expenditure has increased from 12.0% to 14.3% between 2005/06 and 2011/12.

<sup>2</sup> Gross expenditure has been used for all benefits except for Social Fund benefits where net expenditure has been used.

<sup>3</sup> IS – Income Support, JSA – Jobseeker’s Allowance, PC – Pension Credit, HB – Housing Benefit, IB – Incapacity Benefit, DLA – Disability Living Allowance, SP – State Pension, CA – Carer’s Allowance, SF – Social Fund, CTB – Council Tax Benefit.

3.5 Table 3.1 and Figure 3.2 below show the time-series of total gross benefit expenditure from 2005/06, with a corresponding real expenditure based on 2011/12 prices.

**Table 3.1: Total nominal and real term benefit expenditure by benefit type between 2005/06 and 2011/12 <sup>4</sup>**

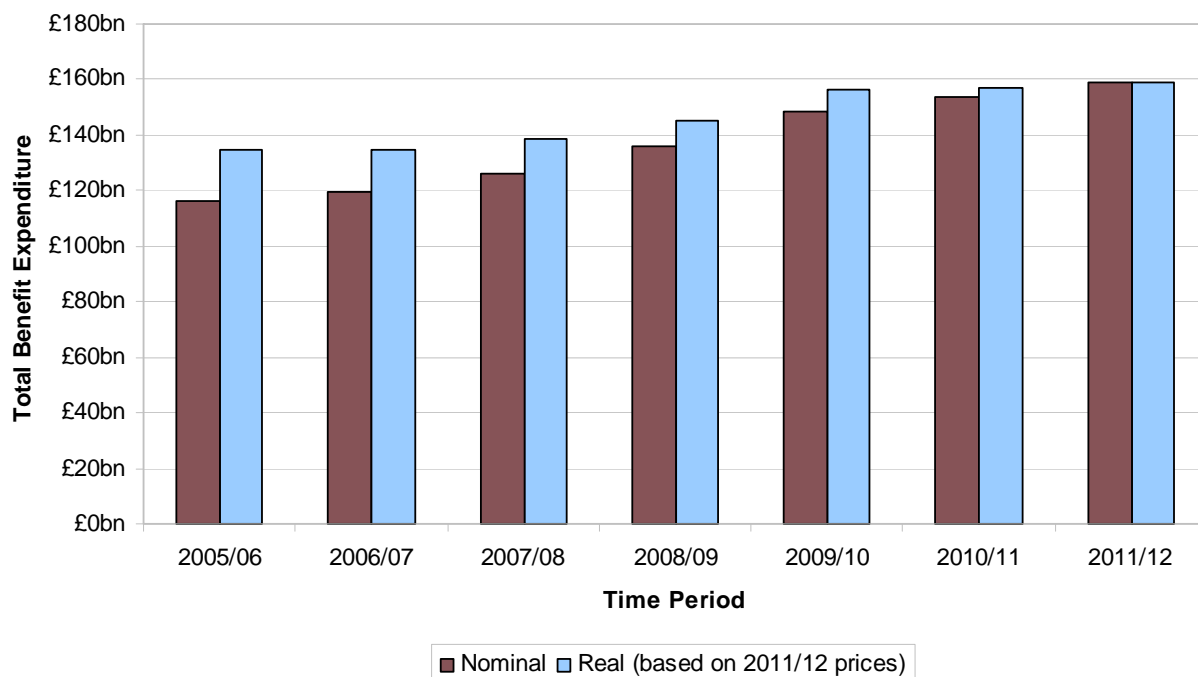
Expenditure	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
<b>Nominal</b>	£116.3bn	£119.9bn	£126.1bn	£135.9bn	£148.2bn	£153.5bn	£159.2bn
<b>Real term (based on 2011/12 prices)</b>	£134.3bn	£134.9bn	£138.4bn	£145.3bn	£156.0bn	£157.1bn	£159.2bn

Notes to table:

'Nominal' means the expenditure as it was in that year.

'Real term' means the expenditure in each year adjusted to take into account inflation based on 2011/12 prices.

**Figure 3.2: Total nominal and real benefit expenditure by benefit type since 2005/06**



<sup>4</sup> Real expenditure calculated using HM Treasury inflation deflator series, [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data\\_gdp\\_fig.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data_gdp_fig.htm).

## Total Benefit Expenditure in 2011/12

3.6 Table 3.2 below shows a breakdown of the total gross benefit expenditure for 2011/12.

**Table 3.2: Total gross benefit expenditure for 2011/12**

	Expenditure 2011/12	% of total 2011/12 expenditure
<b>Continuously Measured</b>		
Income Support	£7.2bn	5%
Jobseeker's Allowance	£5.0bn	3%
Pension Credit	£8.2bn	5%
Housing Benefit	£22.8bn	14%
<b>Occasionally Measured</b>		
Incapacity Benefit	£5.0bn	3%
Disability Living Allowance	£12.6bn	8%
State Pension	£74.2bn	47%
Carer's Allowance	£1.8bn	1%
<b>Unreviewed</b>		
Unreviewed (exc. CTB)	£17.6bn	11%
Council Tax Benefit	£4.9bn	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£159.2bn</b>	<b>100%</b>

3.7 Between 2010/11 and 2011/12, gross benefit expenditure increased by 3.7% (from £153.5bn to £159.2bn). In 2011/12 many benefits were uprated by 3.1%. Basic State Pension was uprated by 4.6%. Apart from this, changes have mainly been driven by:

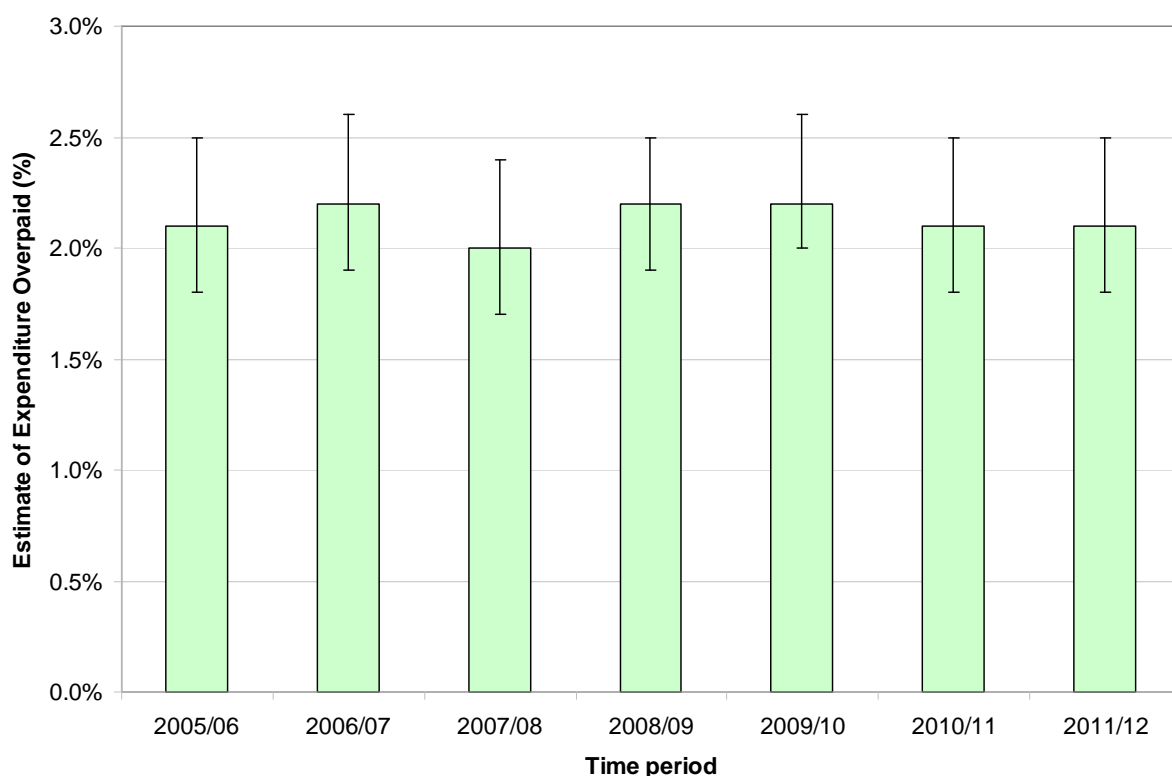
- An increase in the State Pension caseload in line with growth in the number of people reaching and over the pension age.
- A rise in Housing Benefit expenditure due to rent inflation being higher than price inflation, and a growth in the number of claimants.
- Continued growth in the Disability Living Allowance caseload, which has also caused an increase in those eligible to claim Carer's Allowance.
- An increase in Jobseeker's Allowance due to claimants being found fit for work through Incapacity Benefit migration, changes in the Income Support Lone Parent Obligation and the abolition of New Deals.
- The rise in Employment and Support Allowance expenditure. However, this is partly offset by decreases in Income Support and Incapacity Benefit due to migration of their caseload to Employment and Support Allowance.
- The main falls in expenditure have been seen for Income Support and Incapacity Benefit (for the reasons explained above); Winter Fuel Payments (paid at a lower rate than in the previous winter); and Cold Weather Payments (due to a milder winter in 2011/12).

3.8 For the 2011 and 2012 benefit rates please see <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/benefitrates2012.pdf>

## Total Overpayments since 2005/06

- 3.9 Estimates of the total overpayments across all benefits have been published as National Statistics since 2005/06. Over this period the methods used to produce these estimates were consistent so the estimates are directly comparable. The graphs in this section show the percentage of benefit overpaid over this time period.
- 3.10 The graphs include the estimates for 2011/12. These estimates are based on measurement activity from April 2011 to March 2012 for the continuously measured benefits, applied to expenditure in the 2011/12 financial year.
- 3.11 Figure 3.3 below shows the estimated percentage of total DWP benefit expenditure overpaid since 2005/06. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also illustrated by the black lines.

**Figure 3.3: Estimated percentage of expenditure overpaid since 2005/06**

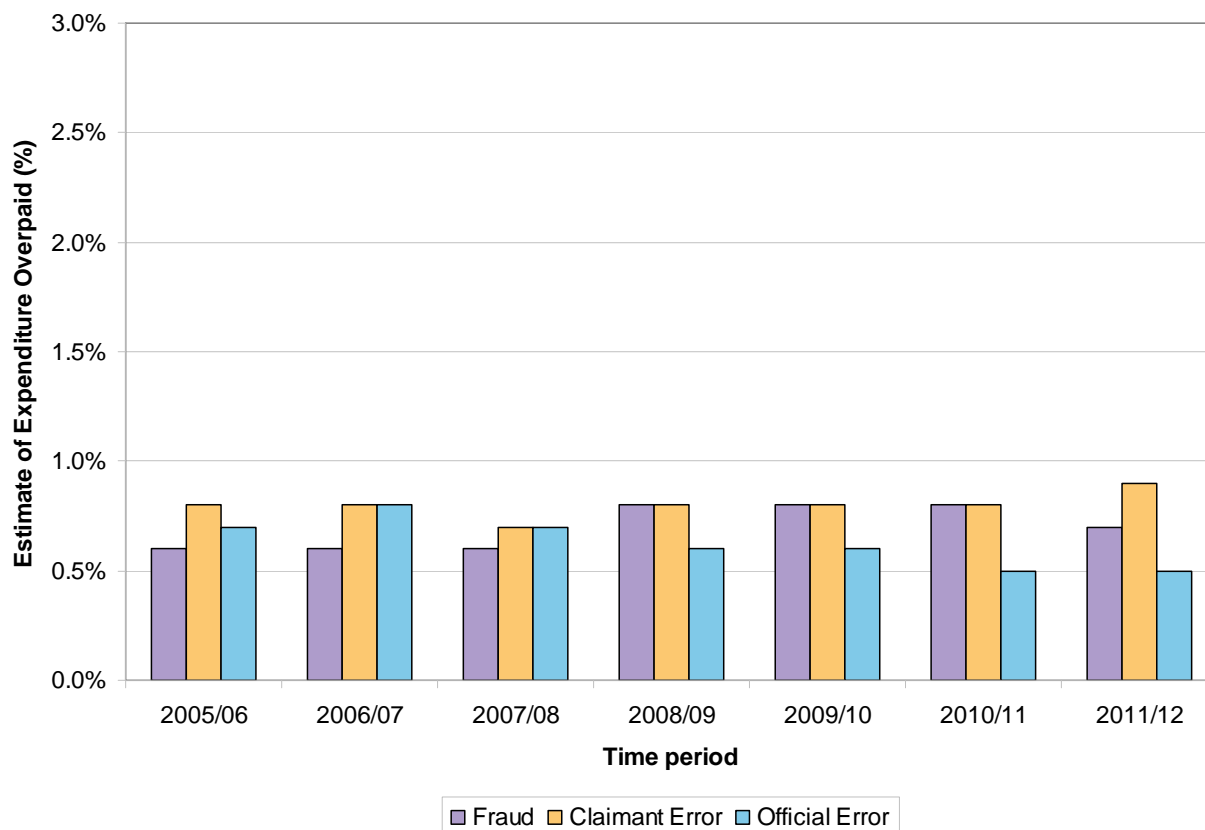


- 3.12 The estimated percentage of total expenditure overpaid due to fraud and error across all DWP benefits has changed very little over time. Between 2005/06 and the latest results, it has varied between 2.0% and 2.2%, with the latest estimate being 2.1% in the 2011/12 results. None of these changes are statistically significant, as can be observed by the overlapping confidence intervals.
- 3.13 However, DWP benefit expenditure has gradually increased over time (see paragraphs 3.1 to 3.8 above) which in turn has led to an increase in the monetary value of the overpayments from £2.5bn in 2005/06 to £3.4bn in the 2011/12 results.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

3.14 Figure 3.4 below shows the estimated percentage of total DWP benefit expenditure overpaid due to fraud, claimant error and official error since 2005/06.

**Figure 3.4: Estimated percentage of expenditure overpaid due to fraud, claimant error and official error since 2005/06**



3.15 For the 2011/12 estimates, fraud is 0.7% of the overpaid expenditure, claimant error is 0.9%, and official error is lowest at 0.5% of total overpaid expenditure.

3.16 Overpayments due to fraud increased from 0.6% (£0.6bn) of total benefit expenditure in 2005/06 to 0.8% (£1.0bn) in 2008/09, remaining there for three years until dropping to 0.7% in the 2011/12 estimates. Although we have seen a drop in the percentage estimate, in monetary terms fraud was £1.2bn in the 2011/12 results due to an overall increase in DWP benefit expenditure as explained in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.8 above. The top four contributors to the 2011/12 fraud overpayment estimate, in order of monetary value, are Housing Benefit, Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and then Pension Credit.

3.17 Claimant error overpayments were 0.8% (£1.0bn) in 2005/06 and have remained at a relatively stable level, only dropping once to 0.7% (£0.8bn) in 2007/08. In the latest 2011/12 results the estimate rose to 0.9% and the monetary value increased to £1.4bn due to an overall increase in DWP benefit expenditure as explained in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.8 above. The top four contributors to the 2011/12 claimant error overpayment estimate, in order of monetary value, are Housing Benefit, Pension Credit, Income Support and then Disability Living Allowance.

3.18 Official error has decreased from 0.7% (£0.9bn) of total DWP benefit expenditure in 2005/06 to 0.5% (£0.8bn) in the 2011/12 results. The top four contributors to

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

the 2011/12 official error overpayment estimate, in order of monetary value, are Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Disability Living Allowance and then Incapacity Benefit.

3.19 See section 5 for more details on changes for individual benefits.

3.20 Table 3.3 below shows the estimated percentage and monetary value of total DWP benefit expenditure overpaid due to fraud, claimant error and official error since 2005/06.

**Table 3.3: Estimated overpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error			
	%	£bn	%	£bn	%	£bn	%	95% CI	£bn	95% CI
2005/06	0.6%	£0.6bn	0.8%	£1.0bn	0.7%	£0.9bn	2.1%	(1.8, 2.5)	£2.5bn	(2.1, 2.9)
2006/07	0.6%	£0.8bn	0.8%	£0.9bn	0.8%	£0.9bn	2.2%	(1.9, 2.6)	£2.6bn	(2.3, 3.1)
2007/08	0.6%	£0.8bn	0.7%	£0.8bn	0.7%	£0.9bn	2.0%	(1.7, 2.4)	£2.6bn	(2.1, 3.0)
2008/09	0.8%	£1.0bn	0.8%	£1.1bn	0.6%	£0.8bn	2.2%	(1.9, 2.5)	£2.9bn	(2.6, 3.5)
2009/10	0.8%	£1.1bn	0.8%	£1.2bn	0.6%	£1.0bn	2.2%	(2.0, 2.6)	£3.3bn	(2.9, 3.9)
2010/11	0.8%	£1.2bn	0.8%	£1.3bn	0.5%	£0.8bn	2.1%	(1.8, 2.5)	£3.2bn	(2.8, 3.8)
2011/12	0.7%	£1.2bn	0.9%	£1.4bn	0.5%	£0.8bn	2.1%	(1.8, 2.5)	£3.4bn	(2.9, 3.9)

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit overpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit overpaid during the time period.

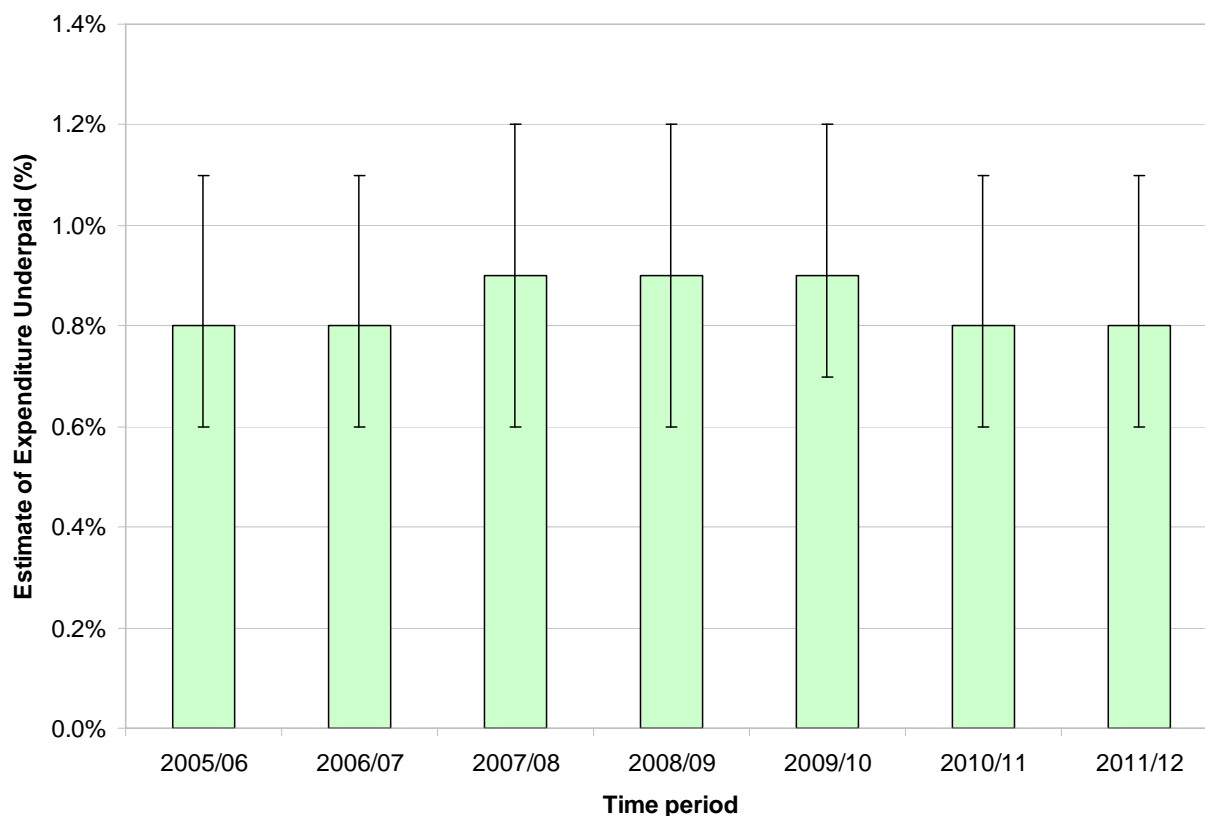
95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

Rows and columns may not sum to totals due to rounding.

## Total Underpayments since 2005/06

- 3.21 Estimates of the total underpayments across all benefits have been published as National Statistics since 2005/06. Over this period the methods used to produce these estimates were consistent so the estimates are directly comparable. The graphs in this section show the percentage of benefit underpaid over this time period.
- 3.22 The graphs include the estimates for 2011/12. These estimates are based on measurement activity from April 2011 to March 2012 for the continuously measured benefits, applied to expenditure in the 2011/12 financial year.
- 3.23 Figure 3.5 below shows the estimated percentage of total DWP benefit expenditure underpaid since 2005/06. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the black lines.

**Figure 3.5: Estimated percentage of expenditure underpaid since 2005/06**

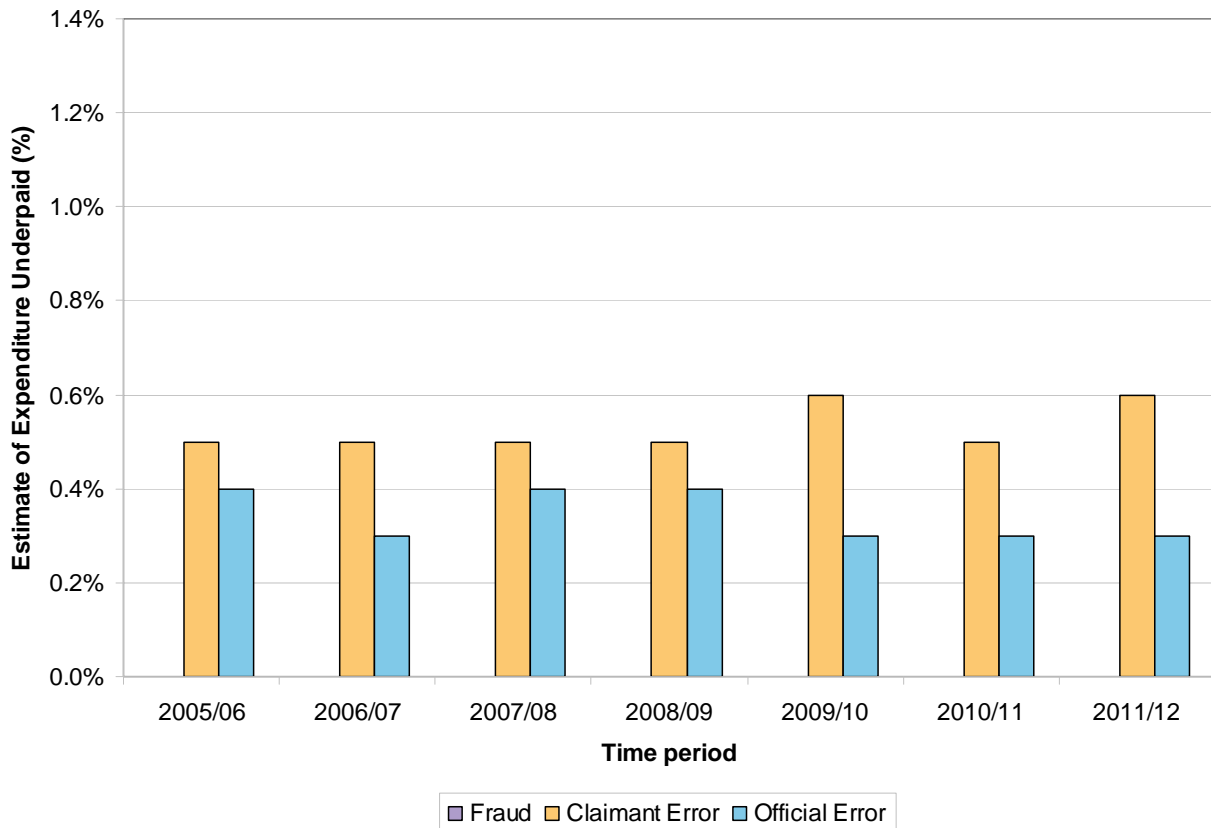


- 3.24 The estimated percentage of total DWP benefit expenditure underpaid has varied only marginally from 2005/06 to the current 2011/12 estimates. It was 0.8% in 2005/06, increased to 0.9% in 2007/08 before decreasing to 0.8% again in 2010/11 and the 2011/12 estimates. None of these changes are statistically significant, as can be observed by the overlapping confidence intervals.
- 3.25 However, DWP benefit expenditure has gradually increased over time (see paragraphs 3.1 to 3.8 above) which in turn has led to an increase in the monetary value of the underpayments from £1.0bn in 2005/06 to £1.3bn in the 2011/12 results.



3.26 Figure 3.6 below shows the estimated percentage of total DWP benefit expenditure underpaid due to fraud, claimant error and official error since 2005/06.

**Figure 3.6: Estimated percentage of expenditure underpaid due to fraud, claimant error and official error since 2005/06**



3.27 For the 2011/12 estimates, 0.6% of expenditure (£0.9bn) is underpaid due to claimant error. Claimant error underpayments have remained relatively stable over the period, being estimated at either 0.5% or 0.6% of total expenditure. The top four contributors to the 2011/12 claimant error underpayment estimate, in order of monetary value, are Disability Living Allowance, Housing Benefit, Pension Credit and then Income Support.

3.28 For the 2011/12 estimates, just 0.3% of expenditure (£0.4bn) is underpaid due to official error. The official error underpayments have also changed very little since 2005/06, varying between 0.3% and 0.4%. The top four contributors to the 2011/12 official error underpayment estimate, in order of monetary value, are State Pension, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit and then Incapacity Benefit.

3.29 The level of underpayments due to fraud is always very low, but can occur on certain benefits (see section 5 for more details).

3.30 See section 5 for more details on changes for individual benefits.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

3.31 Table 3.4 below shows the estimated percentage and monetary value of total DWP benefit expenditure underpaid due to fraud, claimant error and official error since 2005/06.

**Table 3.4: Estimated underpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error			
	Percentage	£bn	Percentage	£bn	Percentage	£bn	Percentage	95% CI	£bn	95% CI
2005/06	0.0%	£0.0bn	0.5%	£0.5bn	0.4%	£0.4bn	0.8%	(0.6,1.1)	£1.0bn	(0.7,1.2)
2006/07	0.0%	£0.0bn	0.5%	£0.6bn	0.3%	£0.4bn	0.8%	(0.6,1.1)	£1.0bn	(0.7,1.4)
2007/08	0.0%	£0.0bn	0.5%	£0.6bn	0.4%	£0.4bn	0.9%	(0.6,1.2)	£1.1bn	(0.8,1.5)
2008/09	0.0%	£0.0bn	0.5%	£0.7bn	0.4%	£0.5bn	0.9%	(0.6,1.2)	£1.2bn	(0.9,1.6)
2009/10	0.0%	£0.0bn	0.6%	£0.8bn	0.3%	£0.5bn	0.9%	(0.7,1.2)	£1.3bn	(1.0,1.7)
2010/11	0.0%	£0.0bn	0.5%	£0.8bn	0.3%	£0.4bn	0.8%	(0.6,1.1)	£1.2bn	(0.9,1.6)
2011/12	0.0%	£0.0bn	0.6%	£0.9bn	0.3%	£0.4bn	0.8%	(0.6,1.1)	£1.3bn	(0.9,1.7)

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit underpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit underpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

Rows and columns may not sum to totals due to rounding.

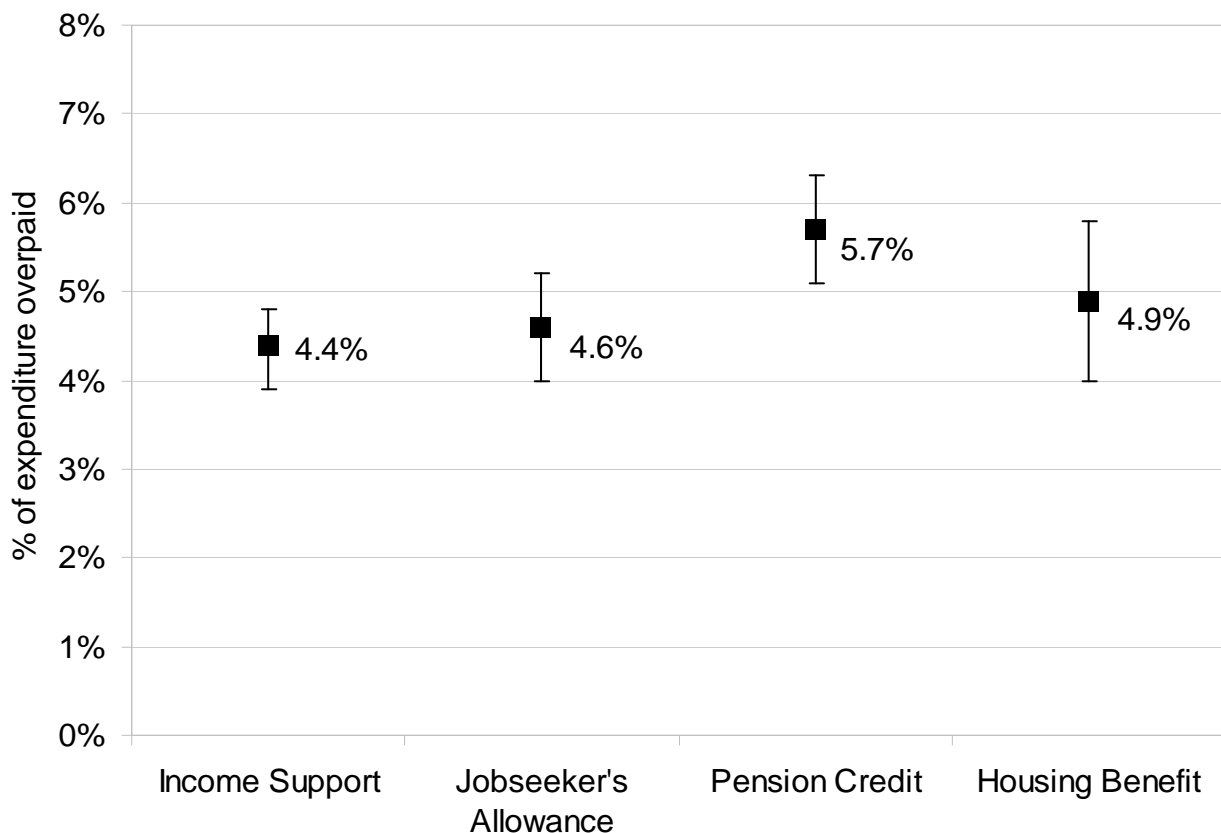
## 4 Fraud and error in the continuously measured benefits: 2011/12 estimates

- 4.1 This section gives estimates for those benefits for which fraud, claimant error and official error have been continuously measured, namely: Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit, and Housing Benefit.
- 4.2 Note that the preliminary 2010/11 report was the last report in which Incapacity Benefit was continuously measured. Please refer to this report for Incapacity Benefit estimates over time.  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_oct09\\_sep10.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_oct09_sep10.pdf)

### Overpayments

- 4.3 Figure 4.1 shows estimates of the overpayments for those benefits which are continuously measured. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also illustrated by the lines.

**Figure 4.1: Estimated expenditure overpaid for each continuously measured benefit: 2011/12 estimates**



## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

4.4 Table 4.1 shows the estimated overpayments broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error.

**Table 4.1: Estimated overpayments for each continuously measured benefit: 2011/12 estimates**

Benefit	Fraud		Claimant Error			Official Error			Total		
	Percentage	95% CI	Percentage	95% CI	Percentage	95% CI	Percentage	95% CI	Percentage	95% CI	
Income Support	2.6%	(2.1, 2.9)	1.2%	(1.0, 1.4)	0.7%	(0.5, 0.9)	4.4%	(3.9, 4.8)			
	£180m	(150, 210)	£80m	(70, 100)	£50m	(40, 60)	£310m	(280, 350)			
Jobseeker's Allowance	2.9%	(2.5, 3.5)	0.6%	(0.4, 0.8)	1.1%	(0.8, 1.4)	4.6%	(4.0, 5.2)			
	£150m	(120, 170)	£30m	(20, 40)	£50m	(40, 70)	£230m	(200, 260)			
Pension Credit	1.7%	(1.4, 2.2)	1.8%	(1.6, 2.1)	2.1%	(1.8, 2.5)	5.7%	(5.1, 6.3)			
	£140m	(110, 180)	£150m	(130, 170)	£170m	(140, 200)	£460m	(410, 520)			
Housing Benefit	1.5%	(0.9, 2.1)	2.8%	(2.2, 3.5)	0.6%	(0.3, 0.9)	4.9%	(4.1, 5.9)			
	£350m	(220, 490)	£650m	(500, 790)	£130m	(80, 210)	£1130m	(930, 1340)			

### *Notes to table:*

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit overpaid during the time period.

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of monetary amount of benefit overpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

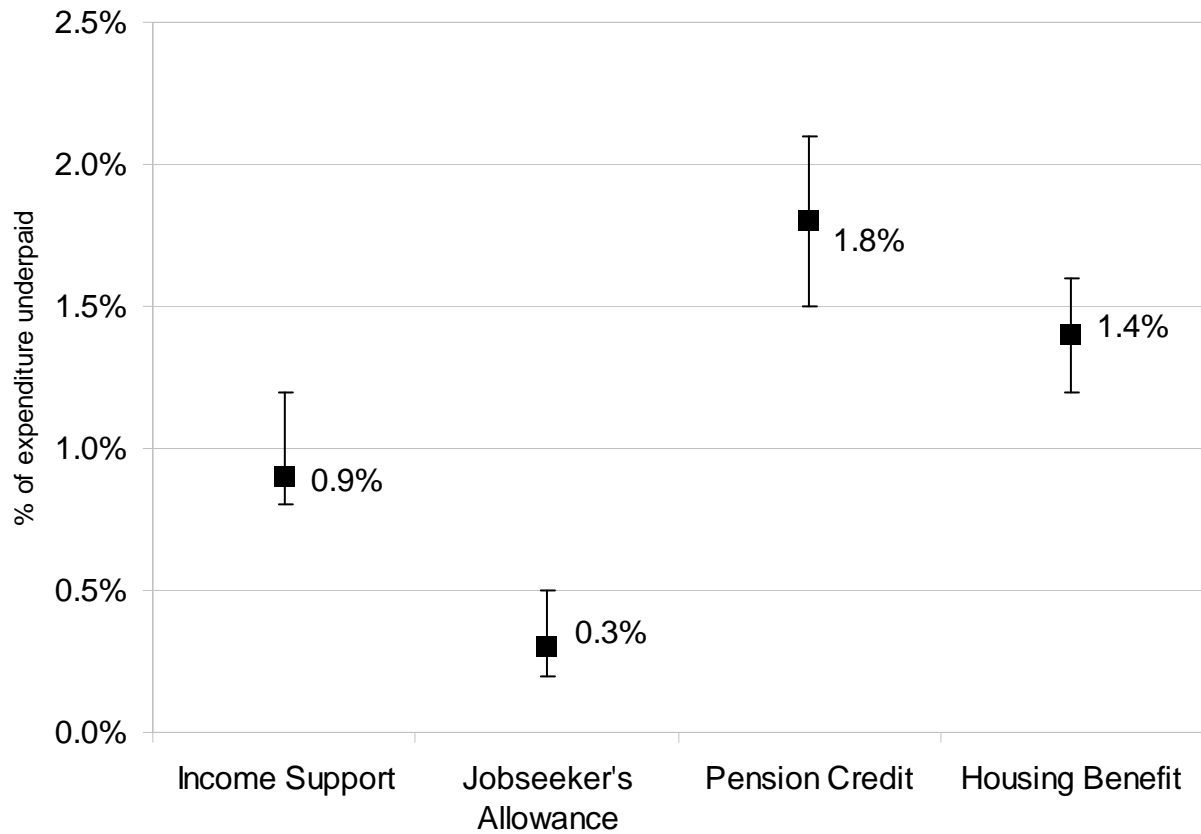
Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

4.5 Refer to Section 6 and Annex 3 for a more detailed assessment of the different reason codes for fraud, claimant error and official error overpayments.

## Underpayments

4.6 Figure 4.2 shows estimates of the underpayments for those benefits which are continuously measured. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also illustrated by the lines.

**Figure 4.2: Estimated expenditure underpaid for each continuously measured benefit: 2011/12 estimates (R)**



## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

4.7 Table 4.2 shows the estimated underpayments broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error.

**Table 4.2: Estimated underpayments for each continuously measured benefit: 2011/12 estimates (R)**

Benefit	Fraud			Claimant Error			Official Error			Total		
	0.0%	(0.0, 0.1)		0.5%	(0.4, 0.7)		0.4%	(0.3, 0.5)		0.9%	(0.8, 1.2)	
Income Support	£0m	(0, 0)		£40m	(30, 50)		£30m	(20, 40)		£70m	(60, 90)	
Jobseeker's Allowance	0.0%	(0.0, 0.1)		0.2%	(0.1, 0.3)		0.1%	(0.1, 0.2)		0.3%	(0.2, 0.5)	
	£0m	(0, 0)		£10m	(0, 10)		£10m	(0, 10)		£20m	(10, 20)	
Pension Credit	0.0%	(0.0, 0.0)		0.9%	(0.6, 1.1)		0.9%	(0.8, 1.1)		1.8%	(1.5, 2.1)	
	£0m	(0, 0)		£70m	(50, 90)		£80m	(60, 90)		£150m	(130, 170)	
Housing Benefit	0.0%	(0.0, 0.0)		1.1%	(0.9, 1.2)		0.3%	(0.2, 0.4)		1.4%	(1.2, 1.6)	
	£0m	(0, 0)		£240m	(200, 280)		£70m	(50, 90)		£310m	(270, 360)	

### *Notes to table:*

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit underpaid during the time period.

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of monetary amount of benefit underpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

4.8 Refer to Section 6 and Annex 3 for a more detailed assessment of the different reason codes for fraud, claimant error and official error underpayments.

## 5 Fraud and error in the continuously measured benefits over time

- 5.1 This section presents estimates of fraud and error overpayments and underpayments over time for the continuously measured benefits: Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit.
- 5.2 Note, the preliminary 2010/11 report was the last report in which Incapacity Benefit was continuously measured. Please refer to this report for Incapacity Benefit estimates over time.  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_oct09\\_sep10.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_oct09_sep10.pdf)
- 5.3 Improvements to the methodology used to produce the estimates were introduced in 2005/06 for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit. Within this section the graphs presented show the time series for each benefit where estimates have been produced using a consistent methodology. Tables have been provided which show the time series since 2005/06 for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit overpayments and underpayments.

### Explaining Changes in the Continuously Measured Benefit Estimates since 2005/06

- 5.4 None of the changes over time for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit are statistically significant at a 95% level of confidence, unless specifically stated within the below chart and table commentary. This suggests that any changes since 2005/06 are more than likely to be due to sampling variation. These estimates are stable over time and little change occurs year on year.
- 5.5 However, as well as sampling variation, there are many factors that may also impact on the reported levels of fraud and error and the time series presented. This section lists some of the more important events, such as departmental initiatives to combat fraud and error, important changes to the benefit regulations, the economic outlook and some benefit-specific issues. The list is not exhaustive, but provides useful information for the user on the main changes that could have had an impact on the measurement of fraud and error. It is not possible to disentangle all of these possible diverse effects and produce estimates of their individual impact on the reported levels of fraud and error.

### Departmental Initiatives to Reduce Fraud and Error since 2005/06

- 5.6 The Departmental initiatives below may have led to changes in fraud and error since 2005/06, and are presented in date order:

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- Introduction of Customer Compliance teams in 2006 focusing on the examination of cases identified by data matching as having potential discrepancies and the introduction of a comprehensive error reduction strategy in January 2007;
- From 2002/03 until end of 2006/07, DWP ran the Security Against Fraud and Error (the SAFE scheme). This provided financial rewards to Local Authorities (LAs) for finding overpayments and for sanctioning and prosecuting fraudsters. The SAFE scheme was abolished after 2006/07;
- In 2006/07, DWP re-launched the targeting fraud campaign with the aim of increasing awareness of fraud within the department resulting in more cases being considered fraudulent when incorrectness was identified;
- In April 2007 DWP introduced a new performance measure which changed the incentive to Local Authorities (LAs) to reduce claimant error by encouraging them to identify changes in claimant circumstances leading to changes in benefit entitlement. However, new government-wide guidelines for reducing the burden on LAs, introduced in 2008/09, have reduced the effectiveness of the incentive in subsequent years;
- The drop in official error on Housing Benefit from 2006/07 to 2008/09 could be due to fewer overpayments from passporting errors and from non-residency. This is probably a consequence of DWP supplying better information to Local Authorities with respect to “passporting” claimants who are no longer getting the passporting benefit;
- Another possible influence on the Housing Benefit official error levels, over the past few years in particular, may be due to the subsidy rules for official error. DWP pay LAs reduced subsidy for any HB/CTB that they pay out in error (i.e. for detected overpayments) and the amount of subsidy each LA receives for official error overpayments depends on their overall level of official error. Although these subsidy incentives have been in place for many years, over the past few years LAs have increased their efforts at maximising the amount of subsidy they receive;
- Error Reduction teams were created in 2009 to help drive down official error based on the National Statistics evidence. The targeted checking regime focused on the top causes of official error;
- Introduction of staff training and evaluation packages in 2009 to provide improved guidance for operational staff in managing their caseload;
- Since April 2009 the Customer Information System (CIS) has been available to Local Authorities. This has allowed them to access the latest DWP information on individual Housing Benefit claimants and their claims. This should tend to reduce fraud and error.



## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- In 2010 specific focused checks were introduced at the start of a benefit claim to address known areas of incorrectness. These initiatives may have contributed to a reduction in the number of incorrect claims;
- In April 2010, Pension Credit Case Cleanse 1 was introduced. This aims to reduce error within the Pension Credit caseload through the delivery of a targeted intervention approach to error reduction;
- In October 2010 Pension Centres were given access to HMRC data to mitigate against non state pension errors;
- Quality Error Reduction Checks (QERC) were introduced in October 2010 to focus Jobcentre staff on the Conditionality and Labour Market aspects of claiming JSA. Checking staff were initially managed within the groups, but in April 2011 were brigaded under a national team and movements were made in September 2011 to align to remote group checking to enhance the independent element and effectiveness of the check. Changes made since then have resulted in a more focused check with performance measured elements gaining a higher profile within management and with their staff thus resulting in a greater understanding of, and compliance with, the Labour Market activity requirements.
- In November 2010 an Income Support case cleanse exercise was launched. Regionally based teams contact claimants to review the circumstances of their claim. The primary focus is claimant error, with the potential to pick up official error and stop unreported changes from converting into fraud. Calls are targeted at high-risk claims, but over time all cases will be cleansed. Regionally located teams have now been replaced by three dedicated sites and their remit extended to include Jobseeker's Allowance;
- In April 2011 Pension Credit Case Cleanse 2 was introduced. This aims to concentrate on the most costly mistakes relating to Non-State Pensions, i.e. other Benefits, Capital, and Extra Amount for Severe Disability;
- Automated Transfers to Local Authority Systems (ATLAS) was introduced for Tax Credit notifications in July 2011 and expanded out to include DWP benefit notifications in November 2011. ATLAS provides automatic downloads of award data for DWP benefits and HMRC Tax Credits to Local Authorities systems, where there is a new award or change of award and the DWP/Tax Credit claimant is in receipt of Housing Benefit and /or Council Tax Benefit. This should decrease claimant errors on Housing Benefit, however, may also potentially lead to an increase in official error.
- Current and future initiatives (that could affect trends in the fraud and error estimates) are detailed in the Fraud and Error Strategy published in October 2010, which can be accessed here <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/tackling-fraud-and-error.pdf>, and the Strategy refresh (see pages 21-27) published in February 2012 accessible at <http://fed-conf.co.uk/documents/HMG%20Fraud%20and%20Error%20Report.pdf>

## Changes to Benefit Rules since 2005/06

- 5.7 The changes to benefit rules below may have led to changes in fraud and error since 2005/06, and are presented in date order:
- The Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) was replaced by Pension Credit in October 2003 MIG had a tight gateway at the start of the claim with extensive verification requirements. As an important target was to increase the take-up of Pension Credit, some procedures around verification were relaxed to actively encourage pensioners to claim the benefit. This may have led to an increase in fraud and error levels.
  - Equalisation of State Pension Age Pensioners are only required to tell either the DWP or the LA about a change (unlike working age). This regulation came into effect from 2006. Cases that would have been of pension age in previous years will now be working age and required to inform both DWP and the administering LA. This may slightly increase levels of claimant error, with claimants not always informing both DWP and the LA.
  - Benefit Simplification Measures Introduced in October 2007 for treatment of final earnings on new claims for working age income-related benefits and JSA(C) to align with pension age income-related benefits.
  - Pension Credit Run On From 2008/09 low-risk Pension Credit claimants had their awards extended without any intervention. The Fraud and Error statistics show that a certain amount of error was present in this group of cases.
  - Migration from Income Support to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) ESA replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of sickness and disability for new claims from 27th October 2008. This has meant that the short-term sick claimants now flow onto ESA and is resulting in a slowly declining group of long-term inactive claimants on Income Support. Some claimants will be moved to JSA or off benefit completely where their condition is found not to satisfy ESA conditionality.
  - Migration of lone parents from Income Support to JSA via Lone Parent Obligations From 24th November 2008 Lone Parents (LPs) with a youngest child aged 12 or over were no longer able to make a new or repeat claim for Income Support (IS) solely on the basis of their parental status. Existing IS LPs with a youngest child aged 12 or over had their eligibility removed over a period of time commencing 2nd March 2009. From October 2009 this policy was extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 10 or 11 and from October 2010 the policy was extended to LPs with a youngest child aged 7 or over. The Welfare Reform Act 2012 introduced further changes and from 21st May 2012 lone parents will only be eligible to claim Income Support until their youngest child is five years old.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- Housing Benefit Regulation 104A Regulation 104A was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010. This allows a Local Authority, when calculating an overpayment, to offset the HB entitlement at the new address against the overpayment from the previous property. This is expected to reduce overpayments.
- Maintenance Disregard From April 2010 maintenance paid by absent parents to claimants with children was disregarded from means-tested benefits.
- Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Caps For Housing Benefit, the Local Housing Allowance new maximum rate caps were introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. We would expect this to lead to LHA cases being re-visited as claimants adapt to the new rules.

### Wider Economic Issues

5.8 The economic downturn in 2008 led to a rapid increase in the level of unemployment and a consequent rise in the number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance and Housing Benefit. This may have led to:

- A possible increase in fraud levels from 2008 onwards due to an increase in the amount of undeclared or partially undeclared earnings as the effect of the recession began to be felt.
- In 2008 the rapid rise in the caseload led to additional pressure on staff in Jobcentre Plus resulting in an increase in official error and possibly claimant error if the claimants were unfamiliar with claiming benefits.
- The recruitment of additional staff in 2008/09 who lacked experience in administering a complex benefits system. The new staff have become more experienced and have received the "Accuracy Matters" publication. There is no evidence to suggest that new staff were more likely to make mistakes than their longer serving colleagues.
- Local Authorities received additional funding to deal with the economic downturn. However, any new staff recruited may have lacked experience in administering Housing Benefit.

### Measurement Review Issues and Methodology Changes

5.9 The National Statistics Review Officers can have difficulty gaining access to the appropriate evidence that they need to conduct their reviews. This can be due to:

- IT systems that do not allow evidence to be readily accessed;
- Process changes that mean that the same level of evidence is not available for checking;

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- Storage of papers off-site leading to retrieval issues and cases not being completed;

Particular examples worth noting are;

- Changes made to the Labour Market System (LMS) within Jobcentre Plus in 2008 led to difficulties for review officers when viewing Jobseeker's Agreements which in turn led to an increase in the recording of Labour Market Issues official error. Changes were introduced into the LMS in May 2011 that gave review officers more access to view Jobseeker's Agreements, leading to fewer whole award official errors being recorded, thus reducing the rate and monetary value of overpayments for Jobseeker's Allowance in 2011/12 compared with 2010/11.
- Changes were also made to the actively seeking employment recording process, following LEAN initiatives within Jobcentre Plus, so that only one overall element of the job search steps had to be recorded on LMS, rather than three individual elements. In 2010/11 this change led to an increase in Labour Market control activity official errors being recorded by measurement review officers who required evidence for all three steps. However, in December 2010, Performance Measurement agreed to change their methodology to accept evidence based on only one step being recorded and satisfied, thus reducing the rate and monetary value of Jobseeker's Allowance official error overpayments being recorded in 2011/12.

- 5.10 From October 2008 the Pension Credit assessed income period (AIP) became due for review by operational staff, but many of these were not reviewed. This could have led to some increases in all categories of error, especially official error. It has proved to be increasingly difficult for the review officers to obtain evidence from claimants to check that their Pension Credit awards have been correctly calculated after the expiry of their AIP.

### **Pension Credit Specific Issue**

- 5.11 In April 2011, the uprating of certain elements of Pension Credit was incorrectly applied leading to around 70,000 claimants being underpaid, with a much smaller number of overpayments. So these will be present as official error underpayments within the preliminary 2011/12 Fraud and Error estimates. A correction exercise was undertaken in January 2012.

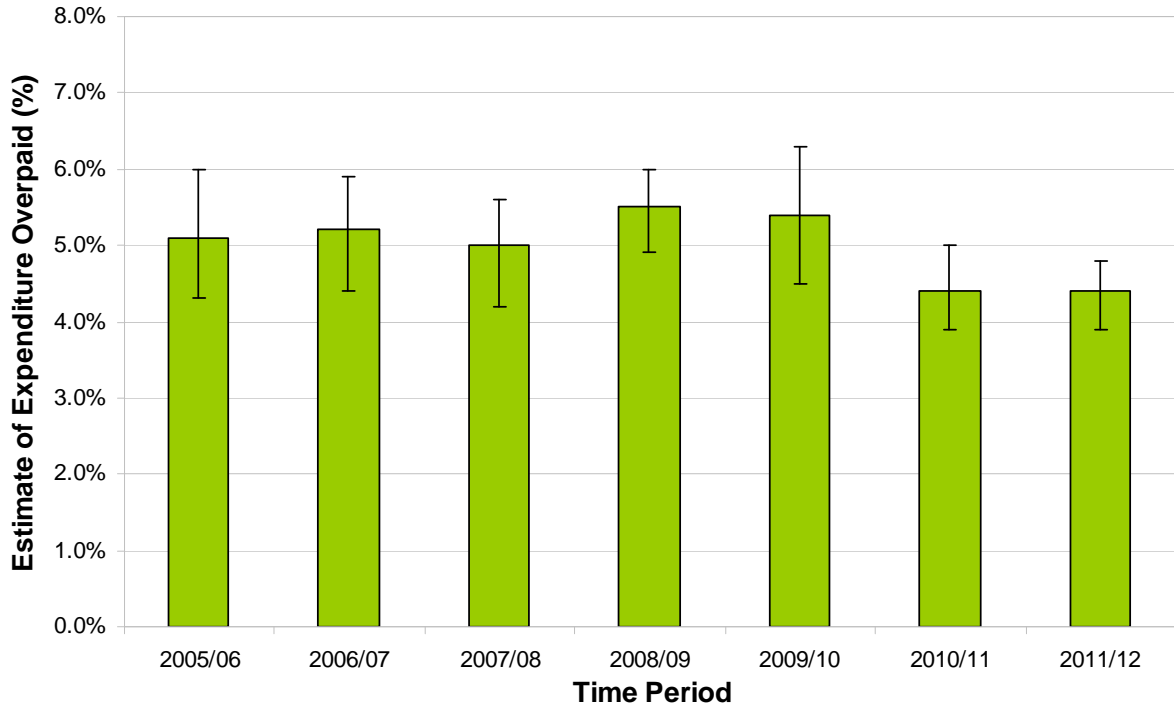
### **Changes to Calculation Methodology**

- 5.12 To improve the quality and accuracy of the estimates or to correct for known quality issues the Fraud and Error estimates have been updated since the new baseline was introduced in 2005/06. A list of these changes is shown in Annex 4 in this report. Where the alteration is estimated to result in a noticeable change, text and/or a table is normally inserted into the relevant publication to give more details on the level of change.

## Estimates for Income Support overpayments over time

5.13 The estimated Income Support percentage of expenditure overpaid since 2005/06 is shown in Figure 5.1 below. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the black lines, alongside the regular annual estimates.

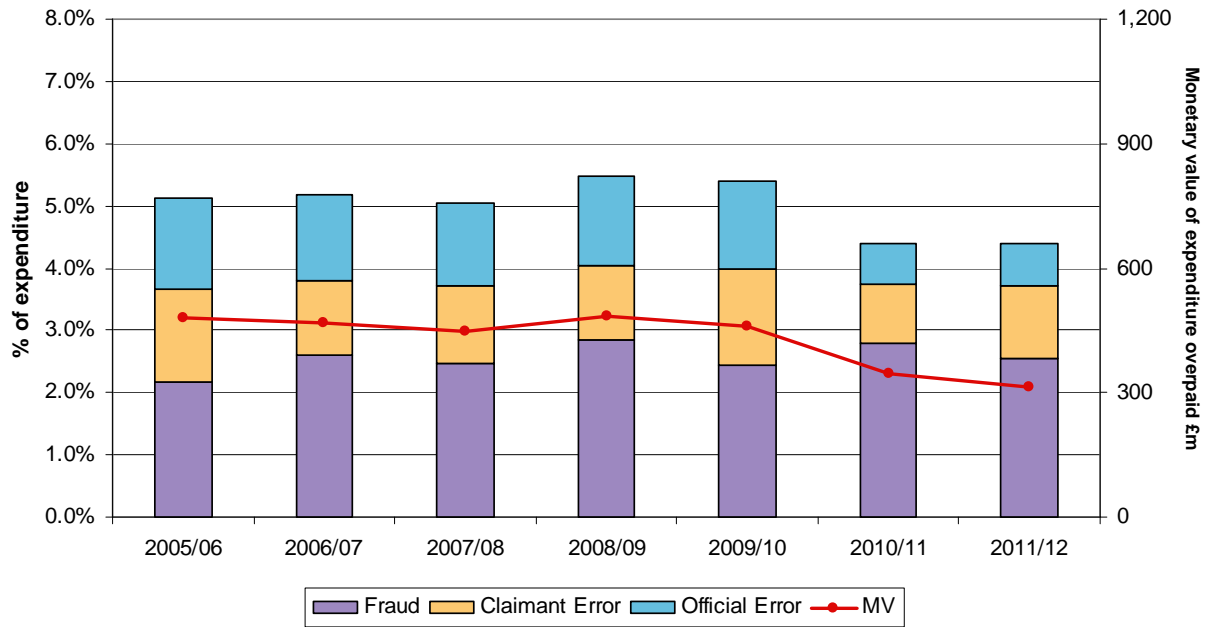
**Figure 5.1: Estimated IS total overpayments since 2005/06**



5.14 The estimated percentage of Income Support expenditure overpaid in 2005/06 totalled 5.1%. In 2008/09 this rose to a peak of 5.5%. For 2010/11, estimated overpayments of Income Support were 4.4% of total expenditure and remained at this percentage, the lowest observed level in the time series, in the 2011/12 results.

5.15 Figure 5.2, below, illustrates the estimated percentage of IS expenditure overpaid broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error along with the estimated monetary value of the overpayments.

**Figure 5.2: Estimated IS overpayments due to fraud, claimant error and official error plus monetary value (MV) of overpayments since 2005/06**



5.16 In 2005/06, 2.2% of Income Support expenditure was estimated to be overpaid due to fraud. By 2008/09 this had risen to a high of 2.9%, before falling back to 2.4% in 2009/10 and then increasing to 2.8% for 2010/11. In the 2011/12 results, 2.6% of Income Support expenditure was estimated to be overpaid due to fraud.

5.17 Estimated overpayments of Income Support as a result of claimant error were 1.5% of expenditure for 2005/06. This dropped to 1.2% in 2006/07 to 2008/09, but then increased to 1.5% in 2009/10. In 2010/11 this fell to a low of 1.0%. Overpayments of Income Support due to claimant error were estimated to have increased from the previous year's level to 1.2% in the 2011/12 results.

5.18 In 2005/06, an estimated 1.4% of Income Support expenditure was overpaid due to official error. This fell to 1.3% in 2007/08 before returning to 1.4% in 2008/09 and 2009/10. After dropping to 0.6% in 2010/11, estimated official error overpayments had risen to 0.7% of expenditure in 2011/12.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

5.19 Table 5.1 shows the estimates for IS overpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06.

**Table 5.1: Estimated IS overpayments since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error					
	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	95% CI	Percentage	95% CI	£m	95% CI
2005/06	2.2%	£200m	1.5%	£140m	1.4%	£140m	5.1%	(4.3% 6.0%)	£480m	(£400m £560m)		
2006/07	2.6%	£240m	1.2%	£110m	1.4%	£130m	5.2%	(4.4% 5.9%)	£470m	(£400m £540m)		
2007/08	2.5%	£220m	1.2%	£110m	1.3%	£120m	5.0%	(4.2% 5.6%)	£450m	(£380m £500m)		
2008/09	2.9%	£250m	1.2%	£110m	1.4%	£130m	5.5%	(4.9% 6.0%)	£480m	(£430m £530m)		
2009/10	2.4%	£210m	1.5%	£130m	1.4%	£120m	5.4%	(4.5% 6.3%)	£460m	(£380m £530m)		
2010/11	2.8%	£220m	1.0%	£80m	0.6%	£50m	4.4%	(3.9% 5.0%)	£350m	(£310m £390m)		
2011/12	2.6%	£180m	1.2%	£80m	0.7%	£50m	4.4%	(3.9% 4.8%)	£310m	(£280m £350m)		

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit overpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit overpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

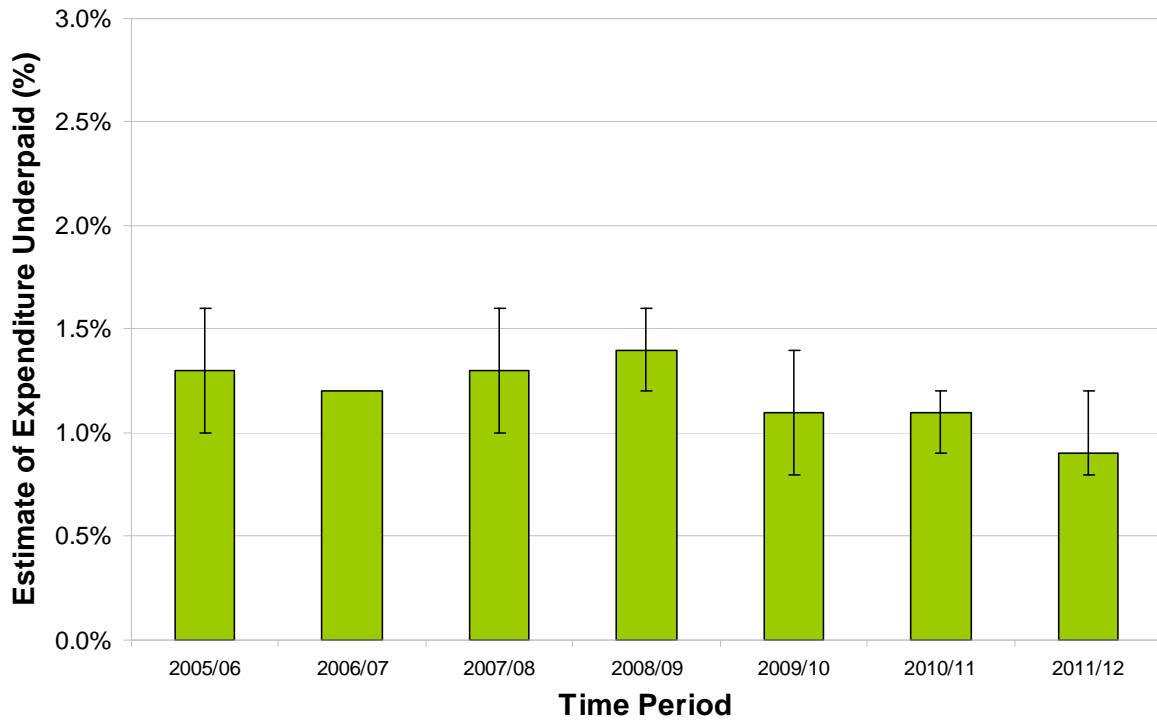
Where confidence intervals are not available a "-" is presented.

Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

## Estimates for Income Support underpayments over time

5.20 The estimated Income Support percentage of expenditure underpaid since 2005/06 is shown in Figure 5.3 below. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the black lines.

**Figure 5.3: Estimated IS total underpayments since 2005/06 (R)**



*Note to Figure:*

Underpayment confidence intervals are not available for 2006/07

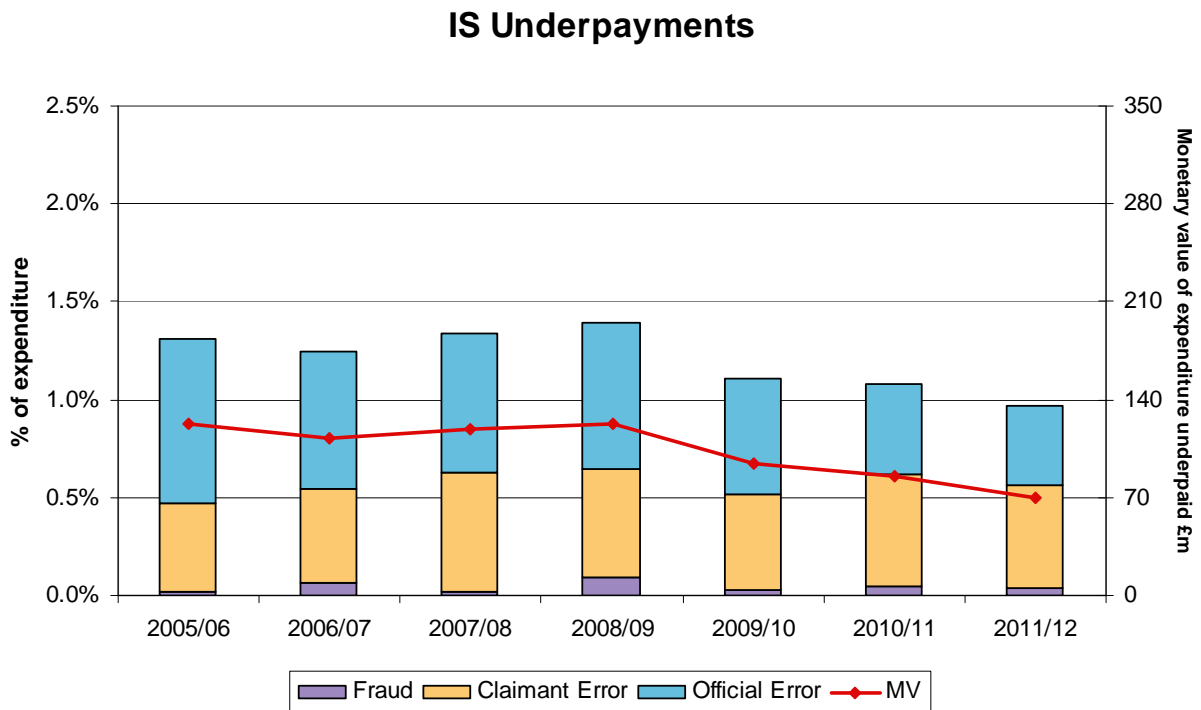
5.21 The estimated percentage of Income Support expenditure underpaid in 2005/06 was 1.3%. By 2008/09 this had risen to 1.4% before decreasing to 1.1% in 2009/10 and 2010/11. In 2011/12 IS underpayments have fallen to 0.9% of expenditure, its lowest estimated level.



5.22 Figure 5.4 shows the estimated percentage of Income Support expenditure underpaid broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error along with the estimated monetary value of the underpayments.

5.23 Underpayments due to fraud can occur on Income Support because the methodology takes into account the true financial impact of the fraud by recognising entitlement to an alternative benefit when the one in payment is being paid erroneously. However, they are extremely rare. More details on this methodology is available within the technical appendix at: [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_tec\\_app.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_tec_app.pdf)

**Figure 5.4: Estimated IS underpayments due to fraud, claimant error and official error plus monetary value (MV) of underpayments since 2005/06 (R)**



5.24 Estimated underpayments of Income Support as a result of claimant error were 0.5% of benefit expenditure in 2005/06 and 2006/07. This rose to 0.6% in 2007/08, dropped back to 0.5% in 2009/10 and then rose to 0.6% in 2010/11. In 2011/12 the estimated proportion of Income Support expenditure underpaid due to claimant error was back at 0.5%.

5.25 In 2005/06 the underpayments level on Income Support due to official error was estimated to be 0.8% of expenditure. This dropped to 0.7% in the following year, decreasing to a low of 0.4% by the 2011/12 results.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

5.26 Table 5.2 shows the estimates for IS underpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06.

**Table 5.2: Estimated IS underpayments since 2005/06 (R)**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error					
	0.0%	£0m	0.5%	£40m	0.8%	£80m	1.3%	(1.0%	1.6%)	£120m	(£90m	£150m)
2005/06	0.0%	£0m	0.5%	£40m	0.8%	£80m	1.3%	(1.0%	1.6%)	£120m	(£90m	£150m)
2006/07	0.1%	£10m	0.5%	£40m	0.7%	£60m	1.2%	( -	- )	£110m	( -	- )
2007/08	0.0%	£0m	0.6%	£50m	0.7%	£60m	1.3%	(1.0%	1.6%)	£120m	(£90m	£150m)
2008/09	0.1%	£10m	0.6%	£50m	0.7%	£70m	1.4%	(1.2%	1.6%)	£120m	(£100m	£140m)
2009/10	0.0%	£0m	0.5%	£40m	0.6%	£50m	1.1%	(0.8%	1.4%)	£90m	(£60m	£120m)
2010/11	0.0%	£0m	0.6%	£40m	0.5%	£40m	1.1%	(0.9%	1.2%)	£90m	(£70m	£100m)
2011/12	0.0%	£0m	0.5%	£40m	0.4%	£30m	0.9%	(0.8%	1.2%)	£70m	(£60m	£90m)

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit underpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit underpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

Where confidence intervals are not available a “-” is presented.

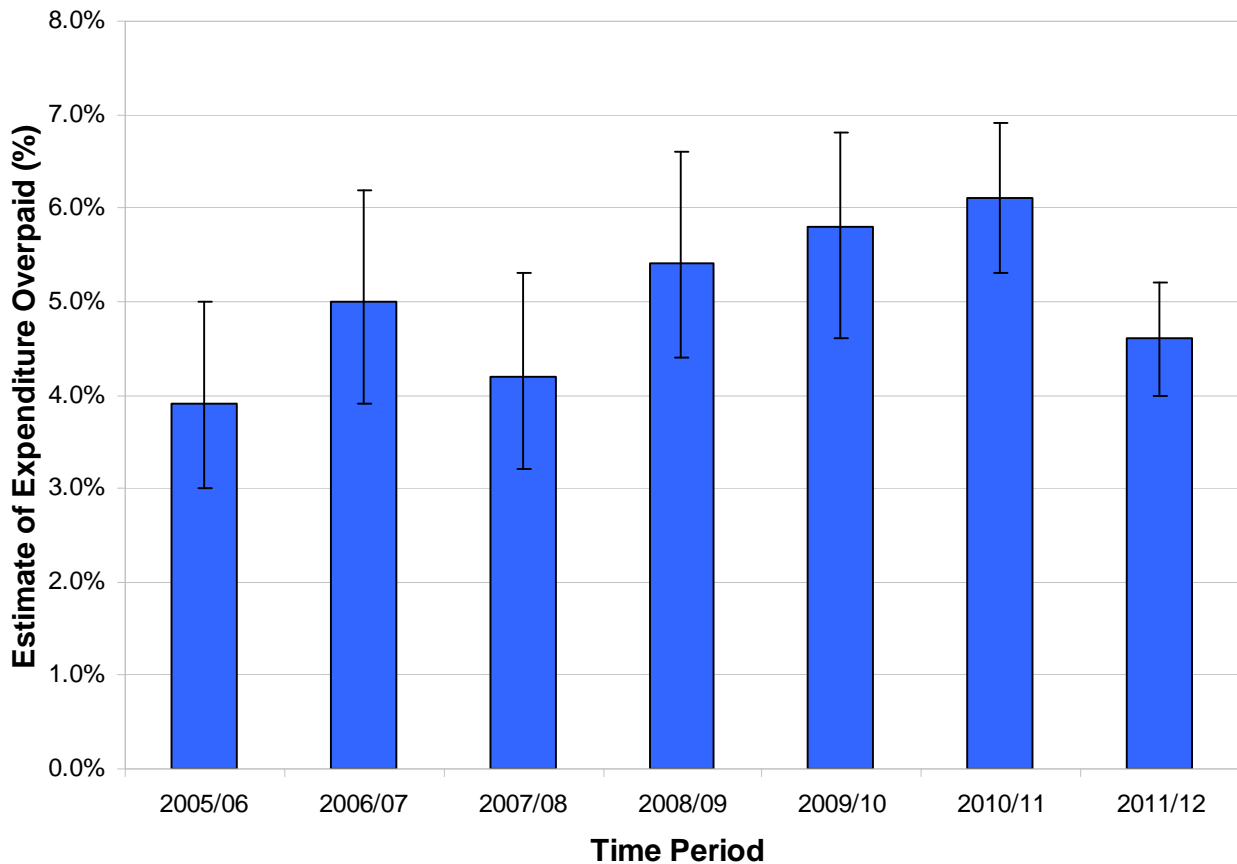
Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Underpayments due to fraud can occur on IS, JSA and PC. The most common occurrence is fraud on an IS or PC claim, but the claimant is entitled to JSA instead. More details on this methodology is available in the technical appendix at: [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_tec\\_app.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_tec_app.pdf)

## Estimates for Jobseeker's Allowance overpayments over time

5.27 The estimated Jobseeker's Allowance percentage of expenditure overpaid since 2005/06 is shown in Figure 5.5 below. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the black lines, alongside the regular annual estimates.

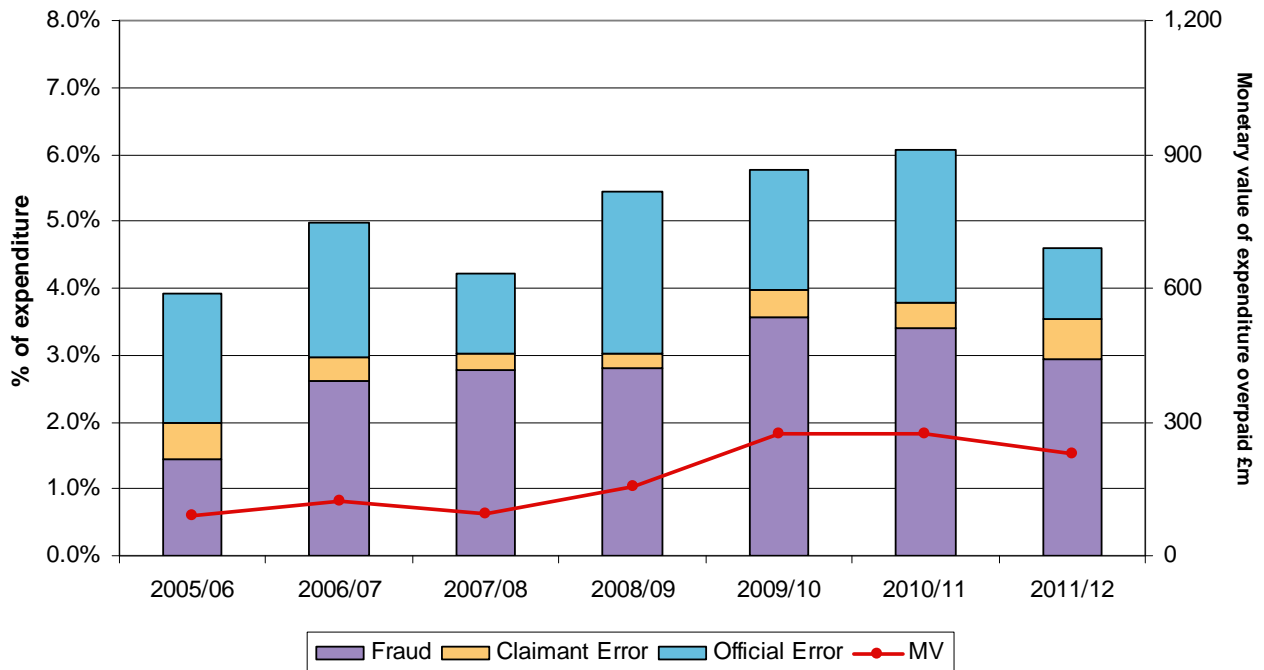
**Figure 5.5: Estimated JSA total overpayments since 2005/06**



5.28 The estimated percentage of Jobseeker's Allowance expenditure overpaid in 2005/06 was 3.9%. By 2006/07 this had risen to 5.0% and by 2010/11 it had increased to 6.1%. However, the estimated overpayments of Jobseeker's Allowance had dropped back to 4.6% of expenditure in the 2011/12 results. The change between the 2010/11 and 2011/12 result is a statistically significant change as can be seen by comparing the confidence intervals (black lines) on the above chart, which don't overlap. This change is being driven by the decrease in official error - please refer to paragraphs 5.32 and 5.33 below for further details.

5.29 Figure 5.6, below, illustrates the estimated percentage of JSA expenditure overpaid broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error along with the estimated monetary value of the overpayments.

**Figure 5.6: Estimated JSA overpayments due to fraud, claimant error and official error plus monetary value (MV) of overpayments since 2005/06**



5.30 In 2005/06, 1.4% of Jobseeker’s Allowance expenditure was estimated to be overpaid due to fraud. In 2007/08 this was estimated to have doubled to 2.8%, and by 2009/10 climbed to a peak of 3.6%. In 2011/12 estimated overpayments of Jobseeker’s Allowance from fraud had decreased to 2.9% of expenditure.

5.31 Estimated overpayments of Jobseeker’s Allowance as a result of claimant error were 0.5% in 2005/06. This fell to a low of 0.2% in 2007/08 and 2008/09, then rose to 0.4% in 2009/10 and stayed at the same level in 2010/11. By 2011/12 overpayments of Jobseeker’s Allowance as a result of claimant error had risen to 0.6%.

5.32 In 2005/06, 1.9% of Jobseeker’s Allowance expenditure was estimated to have been overpaid due to official error. After falling to 1.2% in 2007/08, this doubled to a high of 2.4% in 2008/09, and then dropped to 1.8% in 2009/10, before increasing again to 2.3% in 2010/11. In the 2011/12 results overpayments of Jobseeker’s Allowance as a result of official error were estimated to be 1.1% of expenditure (the lowest observed level since 2005/06). The change between the 2010/11 and 2011/12 result is a statistically significant change. Also, note that the monetary value has reduced from £100m in 2010/11 to £50m in 2011/12.

5.33 The main contributing factors for this statistically significant change are as follows;

- IT improvements within the Labour Market System have led to a reduction in 'Labour Market Issues' official errors between 2010/11 and 2011/12. See paragraph 5.9 above for more details of this change
- Process, IT and methodology changes around actively seeking employment evidence has led to a reduction in 'Control Activity Not Carried Out Appropriately (Labour Market)' official errors between 2010/11 and 2011/12. See paragraph 5.9 above for more details of this change;
- The introduction of Quality Error Reduction Checks, for Jobcentre staff in October 2010, on the Conditionality and Labour Market aspects of claiming Jobseeker's Allowance resulted in a more focused check with performance measured elements, thus resulting in a greater understanding of, and compliance with, the Labour Market activity requirements. This will have led to fewer Labour Market official errors being found by review officers in the 2011/12 measurement exercise compared to the 2010/11 exercise. Please see paragraph 5.6 above for more details.
- The above factors have contributed to a statistically significant reduction of £21m in 'Labour Market Issues' official errors and a statistically significant reduction of £19m in 'Control Activity Not Carried Out Appropriately (Labour Market)' official errors between 2010/11 and 2011/12. Therefore, £40m of the £50m monetary value reduction in Jobseeker's Allowance official error is due to Labour Market errors.
- Please refer to section 6 of this report for data on the individual error code breakdowns for 2010/11 and 2011/12.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

5.34 Table 5.3 shows the estimates for JSA overpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06.

**Table 5.3: Estimated JSA overpayments since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error					
	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	95% CI	Percentage	95% CI	£m	95% CI
2005/06	1.4%	£30m	0.5%	£10m	1.9%	£40m	3.9%	(3.0% 5.0%)	£90m	(£70m £120m)		
2006/07	2.6%	£60m	0.4%	£10m	2.0%	£50m	5.0%	(3.9% 6.2%)	£120m	(£90m £150m)		
2007/08	2.8%	£60m	0.2%	£10m	1.2%	£30m	4.2%	(3.2% 5.3%)	£90m	(£70m £120m)		
2008/09	2.8%	£80m	0.2%	£10m	2.4%	£70m	5.4%	(4.4% 6.6%)	£160m	(£130m £190m)		
2009/10	3.6%	£170m	0.4%	£20m	1.8%	£80m	5.8%	(4.6% 6.8%)	£270m	(£220m £320m)		
2010/11	3.4%	£150m	0.4%	£20m	2.3%	£100m	6.1%	(5.3% 6.9%)	£270m	(£240m £310m)		
2011/12	2.9%	£150m	0.6%	£30m	1.1%	£50m	4.6%	(4.0% 5.2%)	£230m	(£200m £260m)		

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit overpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit overpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

Where confidence intervals are not available a "-" is presented.

Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

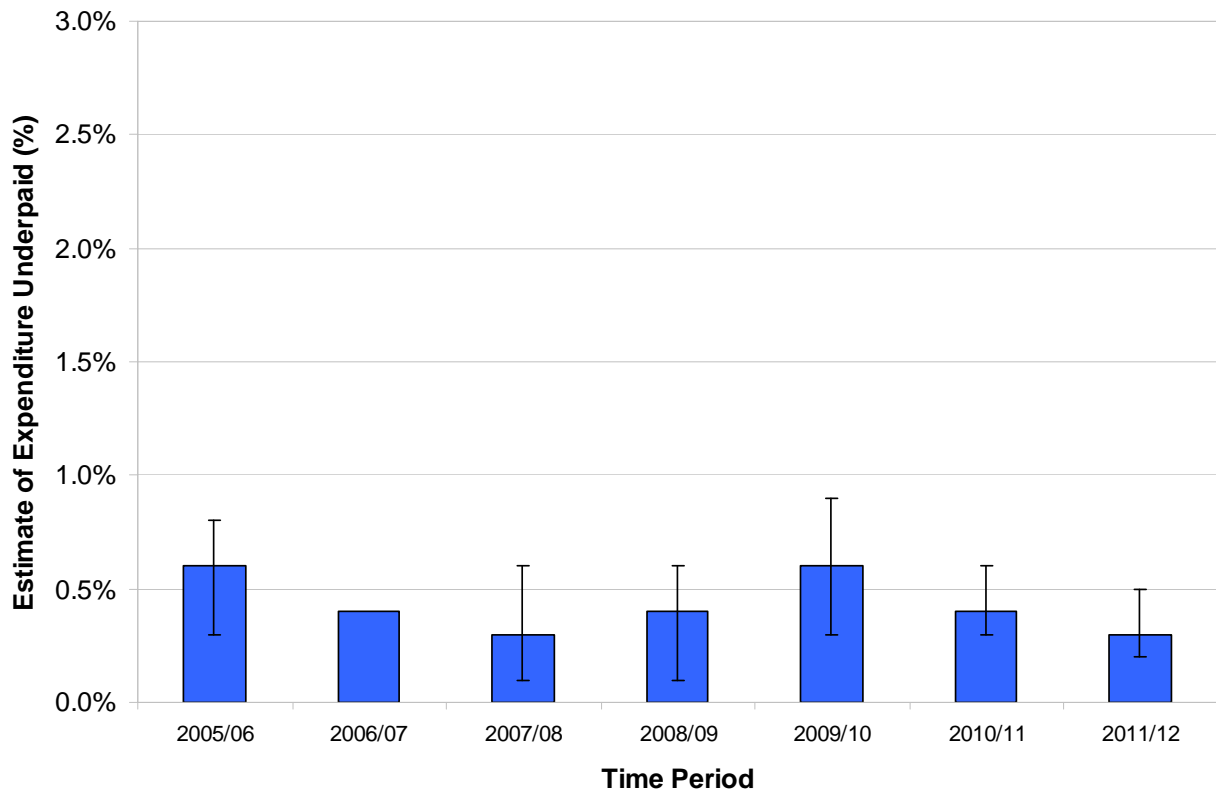
For the 2008/09 estimates, there were external factors that affected the data collection for JSA for a specific type of error that introduced a bias into the data collection process. An adjustment was implemented to deal with the issue based on existing methods where there is incomplete information and so there is not a discontinuity in the time series and comparisons can still be made.

It has been discovered that some errors cases within the Labour Market Issues category should have been classified as either correct or incomplete cases. These cases have been corrected or classified as incomplete in the 2009/10 and subsequent reports, but remain classified as errors up to the 2008/09 report. Due to this change, comparisons of Labour Market Issues between this and other reports should be treated with caution.

## Estimates for Jobseeker’s Allowance underpayments over time

5.35 The estimated Jobseeker’s Allowance percentage of expenditure underpaid since 2005/06 is shown in Figure 5.7 below. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the black lines.

**Figure 5.7: Estimated JSA total underpayments since 2005/06**



*Note to Figure:*

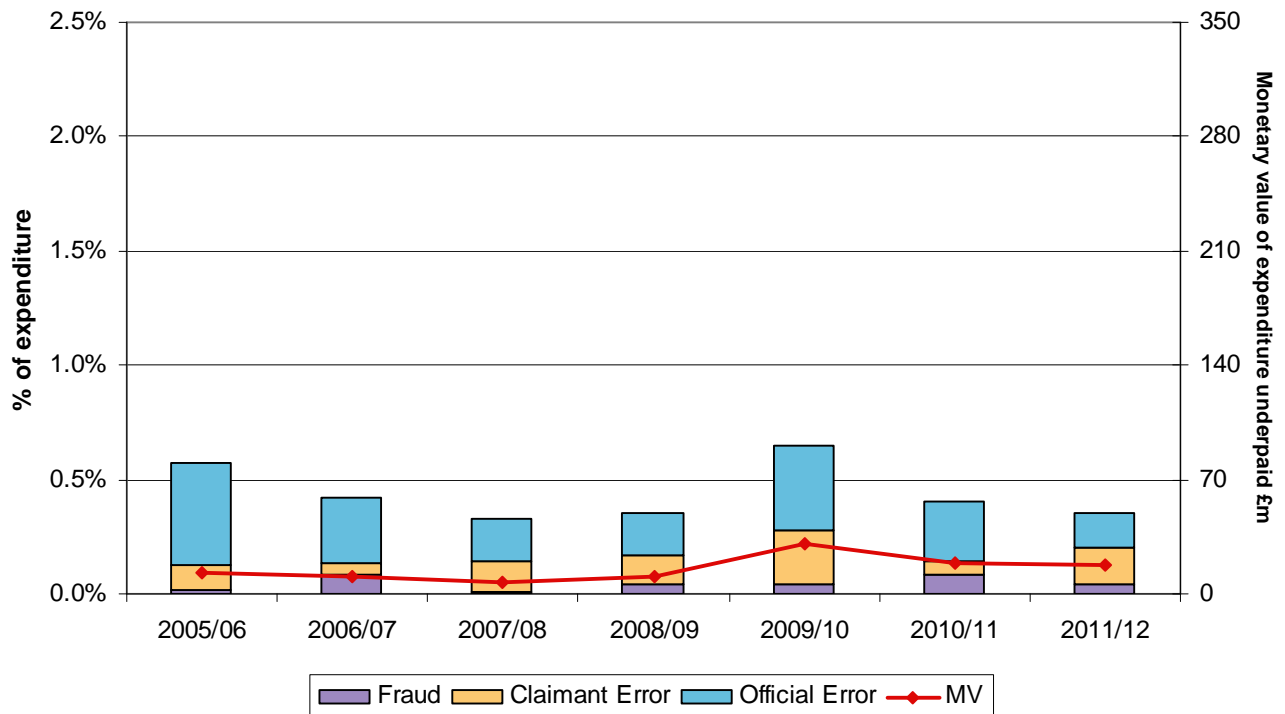
Underpayment confidence intervals are not available for 2006/07

5.36 The estimated percentage of Jobseeker’s Allowance underpaid in 2005/06 was 0.6% and by 2007/08 this had declined to a low of 0.3%. It rose to 0.6% in 2009/10 before decreasing again to 0.4% by 2010/11. In 2011/12 it has returned to its lowest level of 0.3%.

5.37 Figure 5.8 shows the estimated percentage of JSA expenditure underpaid broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error along with the estimated monetary value of the underpayments.

5.38 Underpayments due to fraud can occur on Jobseeker’s Allowance because the methodology takes into account the true financial impact of the fraud by recognising entitlement to an alternative benefit when the one in payment is being paid erroneously. However, they are extremely rare. More details on this methodology is available within the technical appendix at: [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_tec\\_app.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_tec_app.pdf)

**Figure 5.8: Estimated JSA underpayments due to fraud, claimant error and official error plus monetary value (MV) of underpayments since 2005/06**



5.39 Estimated underpayments of Jobseeker’s Allowance as a result of claimant error were 0.1% of benefit expenditure in 2005/06. In 2006/07 the numbers were low enough to round to zero. For 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2010/11 underpayments resulting from claimant error were estimated as being 0.1% of Jobseeker’s Allowance benefit expenditure, although for 2009/10 and again in 2011/12 it was at its highest level of 0.2%.

5.40 In 2005/06 the level of underpayments of Jobseeker’s Allowance due to official error was estimated to be 0.4% of expenditure. This dropped to 0.2% in both 2007/08 and 2008/09. After a rise in 2009/10 back to 0.4%, the level of underpayments of Jobseeker’s Allowance due to official error has been decreasing to its all time low of 0.1% in 2011/12.



## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

5.41 Table 5.4 shows the estimates for JSA underpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06.

**Table 5.4: Estimated JSA underpayments since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error					
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	(%)	(%)	£m	(£m)	(£m)
2005/06	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£0m	0.4%	£10m	0.6%	(0.3%)	0.8%	£10m	(£10m)	£20m
2006/07	0.1%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.3%	£10m	0.4%	( - )	( - )	£10m	( - )	( - )
2007/08	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£0m	0.2%	£0m	0.3%	(0.1%)	0.6%	£10m	(£0m)	£10m
2008/09	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£0m	0.2%	£10m	0.4%	(0.1%)	0.6%	£10m	(£0m)	£20m
2009/10	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£10m	0.4%	£20m	0.6%	(0.3%)	0.9%	£30m	(£20m)	£40m
2010/11	0.1%	£0m	0.1%	£0m	0.3%	£10m	0.4%	(0.3%)	0.6%	£20m	(£10m)	£30m
2011/12	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£10m	0.1%	£10m	0.3%	(0.2%)	0.5%	£20m	(£10m)	£20m

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit underpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit underpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

Where confidence intervals are not available a “-” is presented.

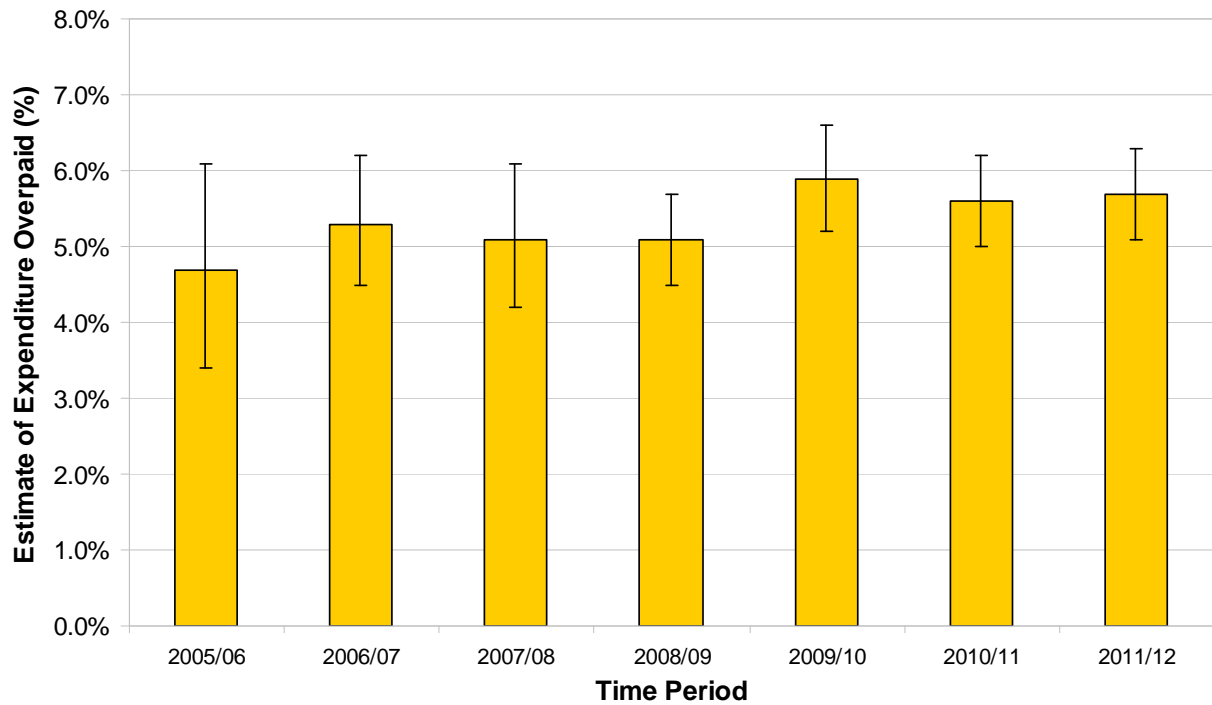
Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Underpayments due to fraud can occur on IS, JSA and PC. The most common occurrence is fraud on an IS or PC claim, but the claimant is entitled to JSA instead. More details on this methodology is available in the technical appendix at: [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_tec\\_app.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_tec_app.pdf)

## Estimates for Pension Credit overpayments over time

5.42 The estimated Pension Credit percentage of expenditure overpaid since 2005/06 is shown in Figure 5.9 below. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the black lines.

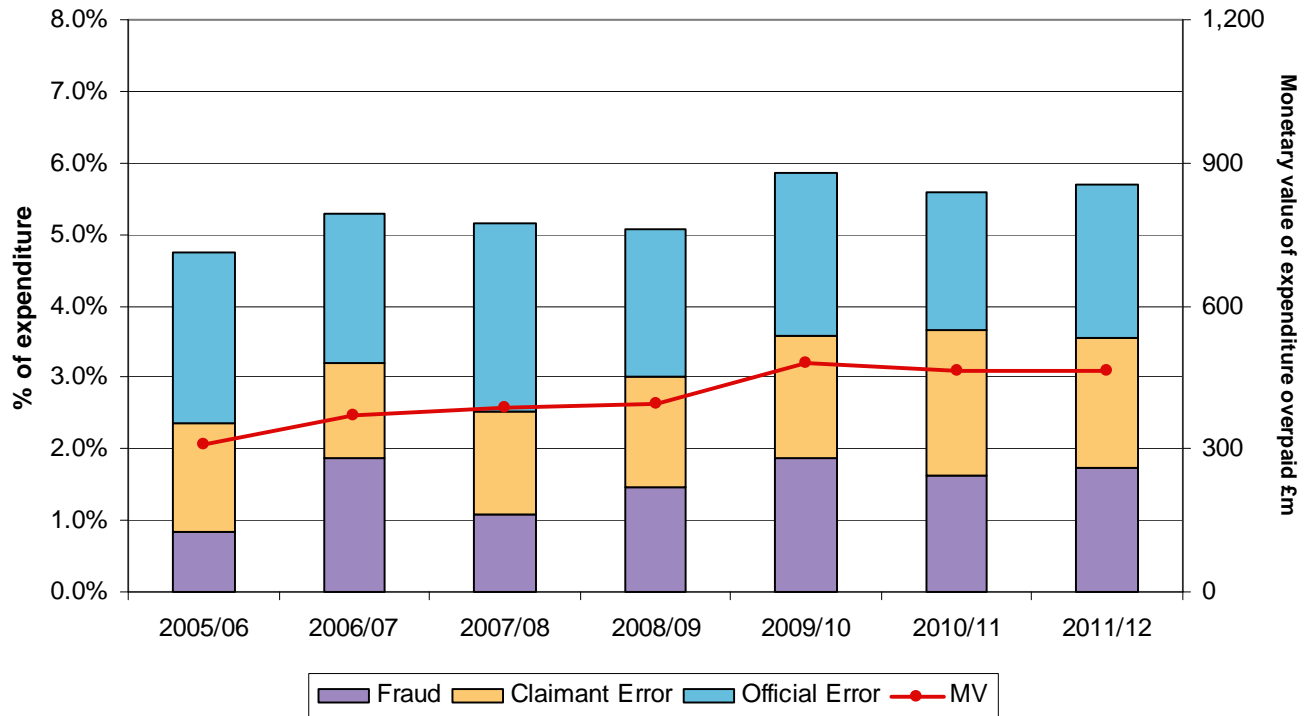
**Figure 5.9: Estimated Pension Credit total overpayments since 2005/06**



5.43 The estimated percentage of Pension Credit expenditure overpaid in 2005/06 was 4.7%. By 2006/07 this had risen to 5.3%, but then fell back to 5.1% in 2007/08. In 2009/10 the level had risen to a high of 5.9% before falling to 5.6% of expenditure overpaid in 2010/11 and increasing to 5.7% in 2011/12.

5.44 Figure 5.10 shows the estimated percentage of Pension Credit expenditure overpaid broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error along with the estimated monetary value of the overpayments.

**Figure 5.10: Estimated PC overpayments due to fraud, claimant error and official error plus monetary value (MV) of overpayments since 2005/06**



5.45 In 2005/06, 0.8% of Pension Credit expenditure was estimated to be overpaid due to fraud. In 2006/07 this had more than doubled to a high of 1.9%, although this dropped back to 1.1% in 2007/08 before increasing back to 1.9% again in 2009/10. The latest year, 2011/12, has an estimated level of overpayments due to fraud of 1.7%.

5.46 Estimated overpayments of Pension Credit as a result of claimant error were 1.5% of expenditure in 2005/06. This fell to a low of 1.3% in 2006/07. Estimated overpayments of Pension Credit due to claimant error as a percentage of expenditure then grew steadily to reach 2.0%, the highest observed value in the time series, in 2010/11, and dropped back slightly to 1.8% in 2011/12.

5.47 In 2005/06, 2.4% of Pension Credit expenditure was estimated to have been overpaid due to official error. After falling to 2.1% in 2006/07, official error overpayments rose to a high of 2.6% in 2007/08. This fell back to 2.1% in 2008/09, and then grew to 2.3% in 2009/10. After dropping to a low of 1.9% in 2010/11, Pension Credit overpayments attributed to official error are estimated to be 2.1% of expenditure in the 2011/12 results.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

5.48 Table 5.5 illustrates the estimates for Pension Credit overpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06.

**Table 5.5: Estimated Pension Credit overpayments since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error					
	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	£m	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
2005/06	0.8%	£50m	1.5%	£100m	2.4%	£160m	4.7%	(3.4%	6.1%)	£310m	(£220m	£400m)
2006/07	1.9%	£130m	1.3%	£90m	2.1%	£150m	5.3%	(4.5%	6.2%)	£370m	(£320m	£430m)
2007/08	1.1%	£80m	1.4%	£110m	2.6%	£200m	5.1%	(4.2%	6.1%)	£380m	(£310m	£450m)
2008/09	1.5%	£110m	1.5%	£120m	2.1%	£160m	5.1%	(4.5%	5.7%)	£390m	(£350m	£440m)
2009/10	1.9%	£150m	1.7%	£140m	2.3%	£190m	5.9%	(5.2%	6.6%)	£480m	(£430m	£540m)
2010/11	1.6%	£140m	2.0%	£170m	1.9%	£160m	5.6%	(5.0%	6.2%)	£470m	(£420m	£520m)
2011/12	1.7%	£140m	1.8%	£150m	2.1%	£170m	5.7%	(5.1%	6.3%)	£460m	(£410m	£520m)

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit overpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit overpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

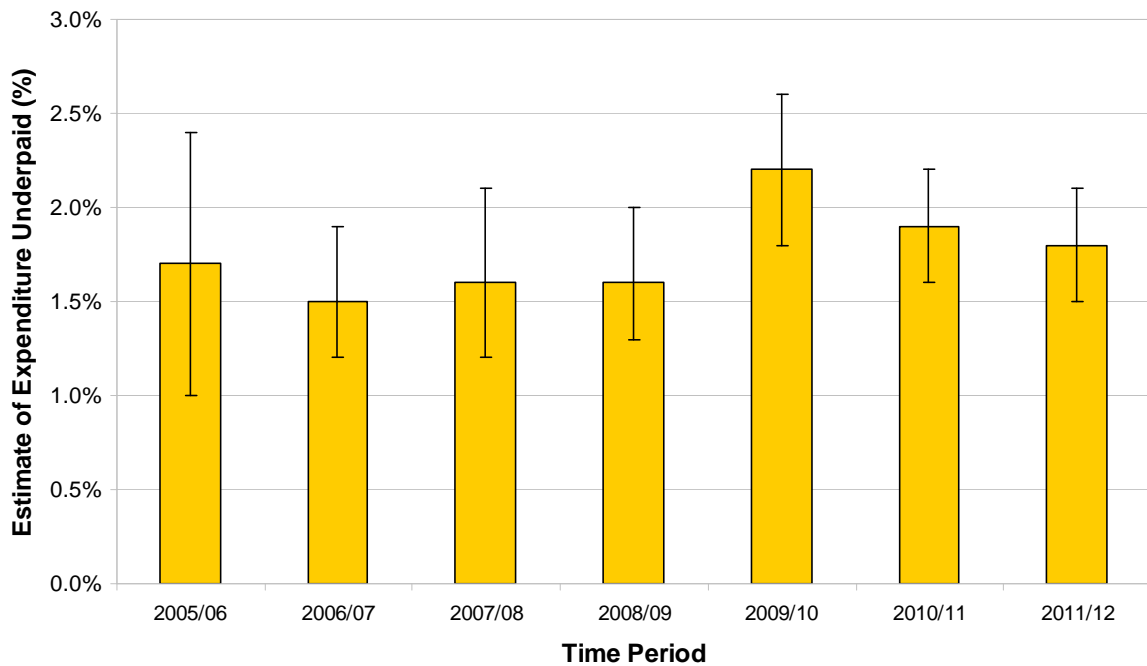
Where confidence intervals are not available a "-" is presented.

Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

## Estimates for Pension Credit underpayments over time

5.49 The estimated Pension Credit percentage of expenditure underpaid since 2005/06 is shown in Figure 5.11 below. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the black lines.

**Figure 5.11: Estimated Pension Credit total underpayments since 2005/06**

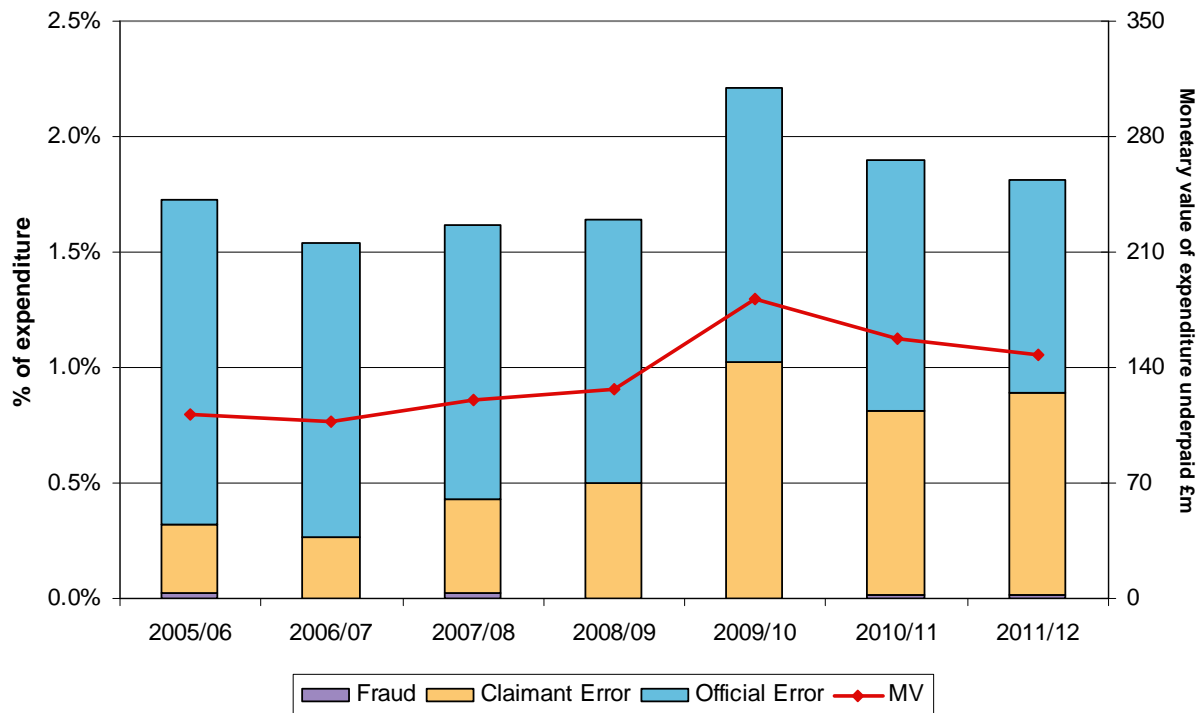


5.50 The estimated percentage of Pension Credit expenditure underpaid in 2005/06 was 1.7%, by 2006/07 this dropped to a low of 1.5%. Underpayments peaked at 2.2% in 2009/10 before declining to 1.8% for 2011/12.

5.51 Figure 5.12 shows the estimated percentage of Pension Credit expenditure underpaid broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error along with the estimated monetary value of the underpayments.

5.52 Underpayments due to fraud can occur on Pension Credit because the methodology takes into account the true financial impact of the fraud by recognising entitlement to an alternative benefit when the one in payment is being paid erroneously. However, they are extremely rare. More details on this methodology is available within the technical appendix at: [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_tec\\_app.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_tec_app.pdf)

**Figure 5.12: Estimated PC underpayments due to fraud, claimant error and official error plus monetary value (MV) of underpayments since 2005/06**



5.53 Estimated underpayments of Pension Credit as a result of claimant error were 0.3% of benefit expenditure in 2005/06 and 2006/07. These estimated levels grew and then peaked at 1.0% in 2009/10 and have fallen slightly to 0.9% of expenditure in the 2011/12 results.

5.54 In 2005/06 the level of underpayments of Pension Credit due to official error was estimated to be 1.4% of expenditure. This had declined to 1.1% by 2008/09, rising to 1.2% in 2009/10 and then falling back to 1.1% by 2010/11. By 2011/12 underpayments of Pension Credit as a result of official error were at a low of 0.9%.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

5.55 Table 5.6 shows the estimates for Pension Credit underpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06.

**Table 5.6: Estimated Pension Credit underpayments since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error					
	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	£m	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
2005/06	0.0%	£0m	0.3%	£20m	1.4%	£90m	1.7%	(1.0%)	2.4%)	£110m	(£70m)	£150m)
2006/07	0.0%	£0m	0.3%	£20m	1.3%	£90m	1.5%	(1.2%)	1.9%)	£110m	(£80m)	£130m)
2007/08	0.0%	£0m	0.4%	£30m	1.2%	£90m	1.6%	(1.2%)	2.1%)	£120m	(£90m)	£150m)
2008/09	0.0%	£0m	0.5%	£40m	1.1%	£90m	1.6%	(1.3%)	2.0%)	£130m	(£100m)	£150m)
2009/10	0.0%	£0m	1.0%	£80m	1.2%	£100m	2.2%	(1.8%)	2.6%)	£180m	(£150m)	£210m)
2010/11	0.0%	£0m	0.8%	£70m	1.1%	£90m	1.9%	(1.6%)	2.2%)	£160m	(£130m)	£190m)
2011/12	0.0%	£0m	0.9%	£70m	0.9%	£80m	1.8%	(1.5%)	2.1%)	£150m	(£130m)	£170m)

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit underpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit underpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

Where confidence intervals are not available a "-" is presented.

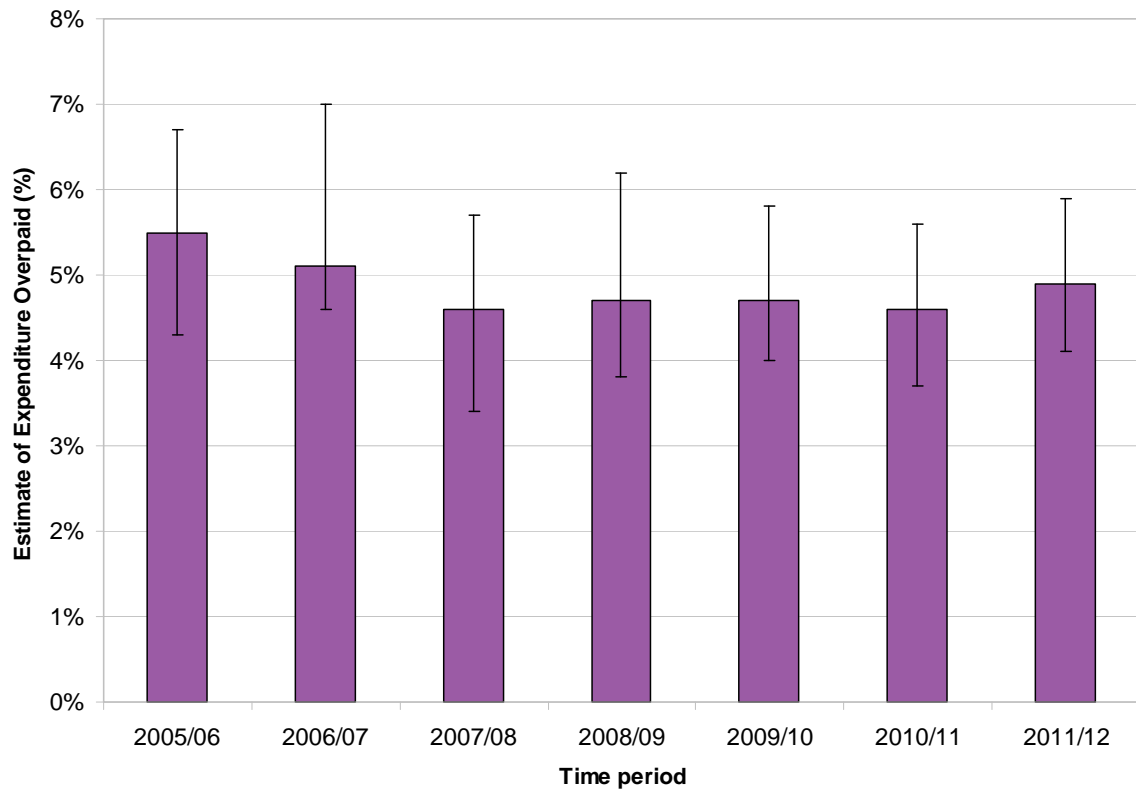
Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Underpayments due to fraud can occur on IS, JSA and PC. The most common occurrence is fraud on an IS or PC claim, but the claimant is entitled to JSA instead. More details on this methodology is available in the technical appendix at: [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_tec\\_app.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_tec_app.pdf)

## Estimates for Housing Benefit overpayments over time

5.56 Figure 5.13, below, shows the estimated Housing Benefit percentage of expenditure overpaid since 2005/06. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the vertical black lines.

**Figure 5.13: Estimated HB total overpayments since 2005/06**

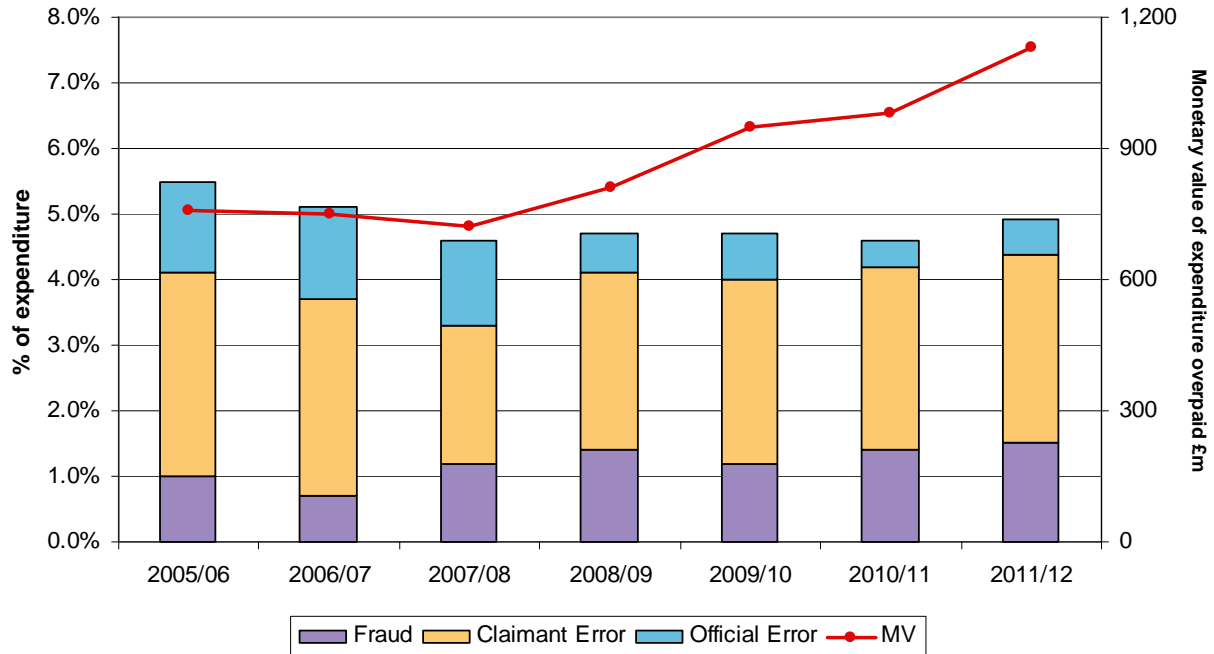


5.57 The estimated percentage of Housing Benefit expenditure overpaid in 2005/06 was at a peak of 5.5%. In 2007/08 this had dropped to 4.6% before rising slightly to 4.7% in 2008/09 and 2009/10, then returning to 4.6% in 2010/11. In 2011/12 the estimated overpayments of Housing Benefit rose to 4.9%.



5.58 Figure 5.14, below, illustrates the estimated percentage of HB expenditure overpaid broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error along with the estimated monetary value of the overpayments.

**Figure 5.14: Estimated HB overpayments due to fraud, claimant error and official error plus monetary value (MV) of overpayments since 2005/06**



5.59 In 2005/06, 1.0% of Housing Benefit expenditure was estimated to be overpaid due to fraud. By 2006/07 this had fallen to a low of 0.7%. However, by 2008/09, estimated overpayments of Housing Benefit from fraud had climbed to 1.4% before dropping slightly in 2009/10 then reaching the high of 1.5% in 2011/12.

5.60 Estimated overpayments of Housing Benefit as a result of claimant error were at a high of 3.1% in 2005/06. After falling to 2.1% in 2007/08, overpayments due to claimant error were 2.8% in 2009/10 and stayed at this level for 2010/11 and 2011/12.

5.61 In 2005/06 and 2006/07, 1.4% of Housing Benefit expenditure was overpaid due to official error. By 2010/11 estimated official error overpayment had fallen to its lowest level of 0.4%, but rose to 0.6% for 2011/12.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

5.62 Table 5.7 shows the estimates for overall HB overpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06.

**Table 5.7: Estimated HB overpayments since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error					
	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper	£m	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
2005/06	1.0%	£140m	3.1%	£440m	1.4%	£190m	5.5%	(4.3%	6.7%)	£760m	(£600m	£930m)
2006/07	0.7%	£100m	3.0%	£450m	1.4%	£210m	5.1%	(4.6%	7.0%)	£750m	(£690m	£1040m)
2007/08	1.2%	£190m	2.1%	£340m	1.3%	£200m	4.6%	(3.4%	5.7%)	£720m	(£540m	£890m)
2008/09	1.4%	£250m	2.7%	£470m	0.6%	£100m	4.7%	(3.8%	6.2%)	£810m	(£640m	£1060m)
2009/10	1.2%	£250m	2.8%	£560m	0.7%	£140m	4.7%	(4.0%	5.8%)	£950m	(£800m	£1150m)
2010/11	1.4%	£300m	2.8%	£590m	0.4%	£90m	4.6%	(3.7%	5.6%)	£980m	(£790m	£1190m)
2011/12	1.5%	£350m	2.8%	£650m	0.6%	£130m	4.9%	(4.1%	5.9%)	£1130m	(£930m	£1340m)

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit overpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit overpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

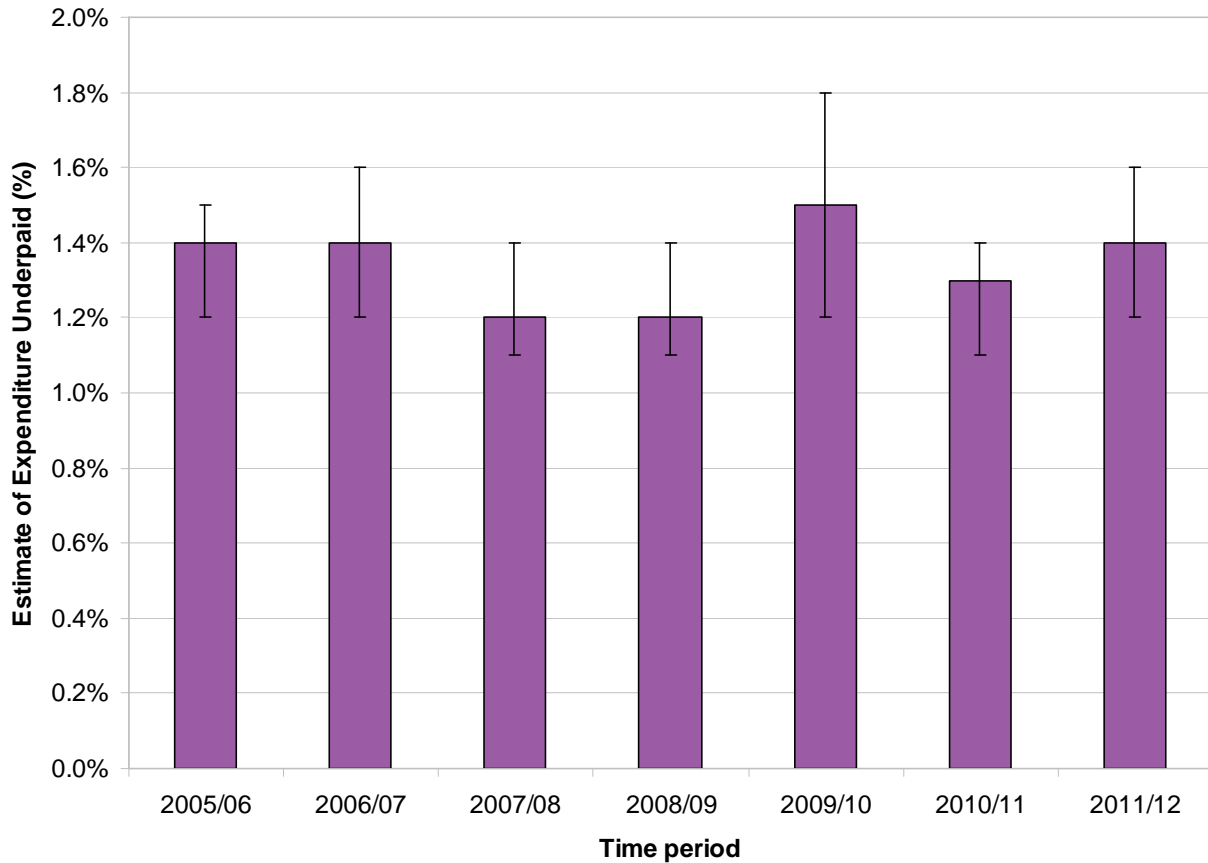
Where confidence intervals are not available a “-” is presented.

Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

## Estimates for Housing Benefit underpayments over time

5.63 Figure 5.15, below, illustrates the estimated Housing Benefit percentage of expenditure underpaid since 2005/06. Estimated 95% confidence intervals are also shown by the black lines.

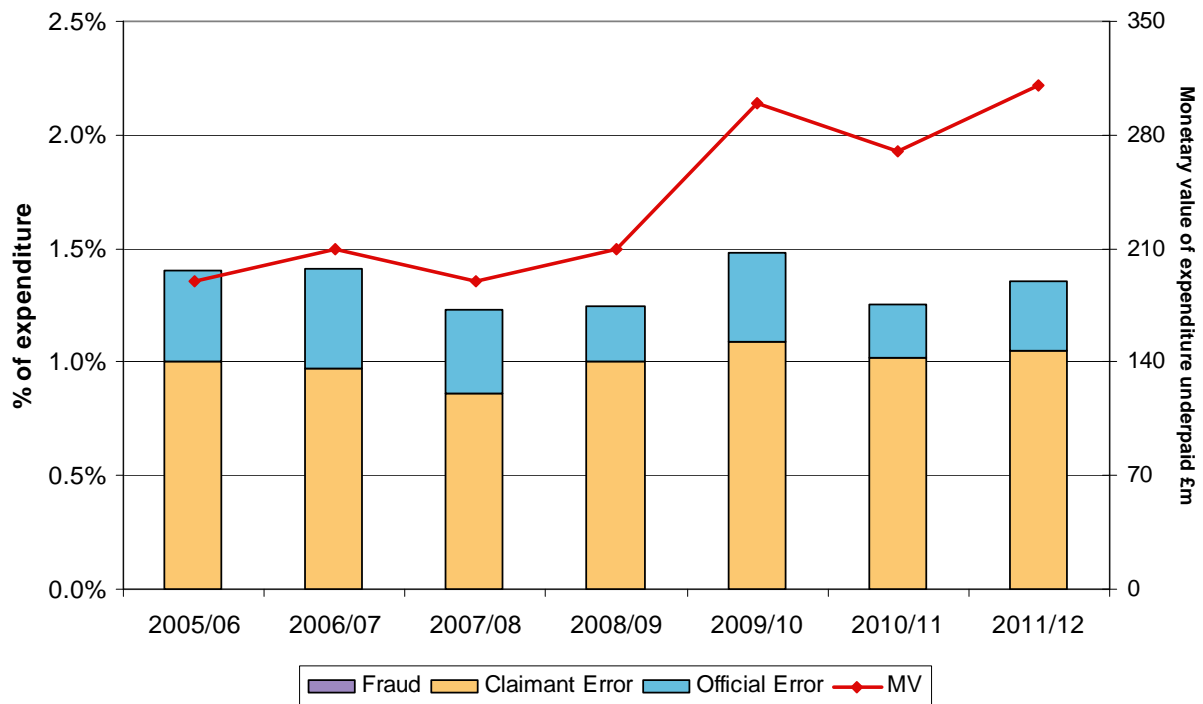
**Figure 5.15: Estimated HB total underpayments since 2005/06**



5.64 The estimated percentage of Housing Benefit expenditure underpaid in 2005/06 was 1.4%. The underpayments dropped to 1.2% in 2007/08 and 2008/09. After peaking at 1.5% in 2009/10, estimated underpayments of Housing Benefit have dropped slightly to 1.4% in the 2011/12 results.

5.65 Figure 5.16 shows the estimated percentage of HB expenditure underpaid broken down by fraud, claimant error and official error along with the estimated monetary value of the underpayments.

**Figure 5.16: Estimated HB underpayments due to fraud, claimant error and official error plus monetary value (MV) of underpayments since 2005/06**



5.66 Estimated underpayments of Housing Benefit as a result of claimant error were 1.0% of benefit expenditure in 2005/06. This fell to 0.9% in 2007/08, before going up to 1.1% in 2009/10. For 2010/11 the estimated proportion of Housing Benefit expenditure underpaid due to claimant error was 1.0%, before rising marginally to 1.1% in 2011/12.

5.67 In 2005/06 the level of underpayments of Housing Benefit due to official error was estimated to be 0.4% of expenditure; the same estimated level of error was seen in the following two years. After a decrease in 2008/09 to 0.2%, estimated underpayments of Housing Benefit from official error returned to the previous level of 0.4% in 2009/10, before reducing to the previously seen low of 0.2% in 2010/11. It went up slightly to 0.3% in 2011/12.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

5.68 Table 5.8 shows the estimates for HB underpayments due to fraud and error since 2005/06.

**Table 5.8: Estimated HB underpayments since 2005/06**

Year	Fraud		Claimant Error		Official Error		Fraud and Error						
	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	£m	Percentage	95% CI	Percentage	95% CI	£m	95% CI	£m
2005/06	0.0%	£0m	1.0%	£140m	0.4%	£50m	1.4%	(1.2% 1.5%)	1.5%	£190m	(£170m £210m)		
2006/07	0.0%	£0m	1.0%	£140m	0.4%	£60m	1.4%	(1.2% 1.6%)	1.6%	£210m	(£180m £240m)		
2007/08	0.0%	£0m	0.9%	£140m	0.4%	£60m	1.2%	(1.1% 1.4%)	1.4%	£190m	(£170m £220m)		
2008/09	0.0%	£0m	1.0%	£170m	0.2%	£40m	1.2%	(1.1% 1.4%)	1.4%	£210m	(£190m £240m)		
2009/10	0.0%	£0m	1.1%	£220m	0.4%	£80m	1.5%	(1.2% 1.8%)	1.8%	£300m	(£240m £370m)		
2010/11	0.0%	£0m	1.0%	£220m	0.2%	£50m	1.3%	(1.1% 1.4%)	1.4%	£270m	(£240m £300m)		
2011/12	0.0%	£0m	1.1%	£240m	0.3%	£70m	1.4%	(1.2% 1.6%)	1.6%	£310m	(£270m £360m)		

### *Notes to table:*

Percentage figures refer to an estimate of the percentage of benefit underpaid during the time period.

Monetary values refer to an estimate of the amount of benefit underpaid during the time period.

95% confidence intervals are indicated by the figures within brackets. These indicate the range within which we can be 95% sure that the true value lies for each of the estimates presented.

Where confidence intervals are not available a “-“ is presented.

Rows may not sum to totals due to rounding.

## 6 Error codes within the continuously measured benefits

- 6.1 This section presents breakdowns of the 2011/12 estimates for the continuously measured benefits into more detailed reason codes of error. Tables 6.1 to 6.4 present breakdowns of the estimated amount overpaid: by total; by fraud; by claimant error; and by official error. Tables 6.5 to 6.7 give similar breakdowns for the amount of expenditure underpaid.
- 6.2 Breakdowns for 2010/11 error codes are also given for comparison purposes – see tables 6.8 to 6.14.
- 6.3 A new error code framework was introduced in April 2010 following internal stakeholder consultation and agreement. The 2010/11 report was the first report to include these new error code breakdowns.
- 6.4 The current error code breakdowns are not comparable to error code breakdowns in reports before 2010/11.
- 6.5 The estimates are often very small percentages of expenditure, and are sometimes based on only a few sample cases. This means that the statistical uncertainties can be large relative to the size of the central estimates, and they tend not to be suitable for examining changes over time in particular codes of error. Nevertheless, they can give a useful indication of which codes of error are causing the most overpaid expenditure and how error typically enters the system.
- 6.6 Additional tables, including confidence intervals, are available for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit on the DWP website via [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/index.php?page=fraud\\_error](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/index.php?page=fraud_error)
- 6.7 A list of the Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit additional tables is given in Annex 3 of this report.

6.8 A **Glossary** of the error codes for over and underpayments is given below.

- **Abroad** – claimant left Great Britain after claim began, did not notify DWP before leaving and is confirmed to be abroad for a period that exceeds any allowable absence limit.
- **Capital** – concealed or incorrect declaration of the amount of savings in bank or building society accounts, cash, ISA/PEPs, premium bonds, other property interests or shares that exceed the minimum value for capital limits.

Official errors include incorrect calculation by DWP staff of the value of declared savings, money and other financial assets available to the claimant, or failure to correctly adjust tariff levels and amend the benefit entitlement due.

- **Conditions of entitlement** – undeclared change in personal circumstances of claimant or their partner that would end entitlement to a benefit. Examples are being in full-time education, long-term hospitalisation, imprisonment, death and assuming a false identity.

Staff failing to act on information received raising doubt on basic entitlement to benefit, e.g. single parent who reports their children leaving the household, or medical evidence expiring for sick claimants, full-time student claiming JSA, claimants who work over 16 hours per week, benefit paid based on an invalid claim form, not confirming identity or immigration status such as the right to reside or recourse to public funds. For JSA joint claims it also includes where staff fail to require both claimant and partner to sign as unemployed when appropriate.

- **Control activities not carried out appropriately** – failure of staff to conduct actions at the due time which otherwise may have changed the level of benefit payable. For example not conducting routine interviews where claimant non-participation can result in a benefit sanction, late notification of benefit disallowances or not conducting Assessed Income Period or Life Event Reviews for Pension Credit.
- **Customer Untraceable** – previously reported as “Not at Address”. Following repeated efforts by DWP staff to interview the claimant, they did not present themselves for interview and the claim was terminated. The suspicion remaining is that DWP disrupted an active, but unknown type of fraud or error.
- **Earnings/Employment** – concealment or under-declaration of full or part-time work undertaken during the claim by claimant or their partner. This work can be for an employer or self-employment.

Staff have failed to correctly calculate the amount of weekly benefit due for claimants who have declared any paid work they or their partner have undertaken during the claim.

- **Household composition** – failing to disclose changes in household composition, for example a non-dependant leaving. In older claims where Tax Credits are not being claimed, claiming incorrectly for number of children (or their specific circumstances) which increases the value of DWP benefits payable, or claiming for adult partners who leave the household.

Incorrect action by staff taken in respect of other people the claimant declared living with them. This includes a partner or dependant children incorrectly omitted or included in the assessment (with due regard to entitlement to any disability premium or benefit reductions due to long-term hospitalisation).

- **Housing costs** – DWP provides financial assistance with the costs of mortgages, ground rent and service charges. Claimants fail to disclose payment of or changes to housing costs, for example service charges, or fail to declare sale of property, or a change of address which would end the extra amounts payable.

DWP can also inaccurately calculate the mortgage interest, ground rent or service charges, or incorrectly calculate awards of extra benefit to help with mortgage payments due to wrong start dates or by ignoring mortgage protection policies.

- **Income - Occupational and Personal Pensions** – concealed or under-declaration of income received from a non-state pension, obtained through contributions paid in past employment schemes, annuities or personal investments.

DWP staff fail to take into account the correct amount of non-state pensions declared by the claimant.

- **Income - Other benefits** – DWP IT systems or staff have failed to take into account the correct value of other social security benefits currently paid to the claimant or partner, including benefits paid by a foreign state.
- **Income - Other** – concealed or under-declaration of income coming into the household from sources such as HMRC Tax Credits, sick pay from work, spousal maintenance, partner's student income, unemployment or similar insurance policy payments.

Failure by staff to correctly identify or record other money coming into the household, such as HMRC Tax Credits, Child Benefit, sick pay from work, spousal maintenance, partner's student income, unemployment or similar insurance policy payments.

- **Labour Market Issues** – lack of evidence of staff enforcement of jobseekers fulfilling legal requirements. These include actively seeking and being available for work, non-compliance with or absence of a valid Jobseeker's Agreement, not imposing sanctions when employment is refused and not following up job submissions.



## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- **Living Together** – where a claimant declares themselves to be single, but has failed to declare they actually live with another person and maintain a joint household.

Staff incorrectly award benefit despite available evidence of the claimant declaring another person in their household that might reasonably be expected to have been identified and verified as a possible partner.

- **Non-dependant deductions** – failing to report that another adult, who is not financially dependent on them (e.g. another immediate family member), lives in their household, or has left the household, or their circumstances have changed. Subject to personal income, the other person is expected to contribute to household expenses, reducing any benefit payable to the claimant.
- **Other** – this covers a range of different cases not covered in the categories above or below.
- **Passporting** – relevant to Housing Benefit only. Working age claimants are required to inform the Local Authority paying Housing Benefit of any changes in their circumstances, including when DWP benefits end. Failure to do so can result in HB continuing to be paid.

It includes communication failures between different IT systems that notify the termination of a claimant's means-tested DWP benefit to the Local Authority, impacting the HB award, or LA staff failing to act on the information received.

- **Premiums** – DWP can pay additional amounts in means-tested benefits when other benefits are also being paid, for example Disability or Carer's allowances. This often introduces additional criteria for staff to consider before deciding the qualification for the extra amounts, for example additional amounts related to the Guarantee Credit within Pension Credit.

Claimants also fail to report when the other benefit commences, or the rate payable changes or ceases, leading to an overpayment or underpayment of the benefit premiums.

- **Residency** – errors relating to Housing Benefit claimants only, where DWP confirms that the claimant no longer lives at the address being paid for. Residency in Great Britain is a condition of entitlement to Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit.
- **Tax Credits** – errors where the amount or existence of tax credits results in an incorrect award of a DWP benefit.

## 2011/12 Error Code Breakdowns

- 6.9 Detailed below are the 2011/12 error code breakdown estimates for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Housing Benefit.
- 6.10 Accompanying each table is a pie chart illustrating the top three error codes by benefit. Please note that more detailed individual benefit pie charts showing the top three error codes, split by error type, can be found in our additional tables - see Annex 3 for more details.
- 6.11 Users should be aware that these breakdowns are based on small sample sizes and therefore any year-on-year changes are likely to have been caused by sampling variation rather than reflecting real change. In addition to this publication we publish supplementary tables (see Annex 3) which contain error code breakdown tables including confidence intervals to aid the comparison of these data.

**Table 6.1 Estimated Total Overpayments by error code: 2011/12**

	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.6%	£44m	0.3%	£13m	0.7%	£56m	0.3%	£65m	0.4%	£179m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.3%	£24m	0.5%	£24m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£44m	0.2%	£93m
Abroad	0.2%	£12m	0.0%	£2m	0.4%	£35m	0.0%	£9m	0.1%	£58m
Customer Untraceable	0.3%	£24m	0.2%	£11m	0.1%	£8m	0.4%	£93m	0.3%	£136m
Household Composition	0.3%	£25m	0.1%	£4m	0.5%	£41m	0.2%	£46m	0.3%	£116m
Housing Costs	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£10m	0.1%	£21m	0.1%	£38m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.4%	£82m	0.2%	£82m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1%	£28m	0.1%	£28m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£46m	0.1%	£46m
Earnings/Employment	0.5%	£35m	2.0%	£98m	0.5%	£45m	1.6%	£375m	1.3%	£553m
Income Other Benefits	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£12m	0.0%	£6m	0.1%	£25m
Income - Occ & Pers										
Pensions	0.2%	£15m	0.2%	£11m	1.5%	£122m	0.2%	£46m	0.5%	£194m
Income - Other	0.4%	£31m	0.2%	£10m	0.4%	£33m	0.2%	£55m	0.3%	£129m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.4%	£94m	0.2%	£94m
Living Together	1.0%	£74m	0.6%	£31m	0.2%	£17m	0.3%	£60m	0.4%	£181m
Premiums	0.1%	£9m	0.0%	£0m	0.3%	£22m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£34m
Control activities - NCO	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£4m	0.6%	£48m	0.0%	£10m	0.1%	£63m
Labour Market Issues	-	-	0.2%	£8m	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£8m
Other	0.2%	£11m	0.2%	£8m	0.2%	£16m	0.2%	£41m	0.2%	£75m
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>£310m</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>£230m</b>	<b>5.7%</b>	<b>£460m</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>£1130m</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>£2130m</b>

### Notes to Table:

Estimates are rounded to the nearest £1m and percentages to one decimal place.

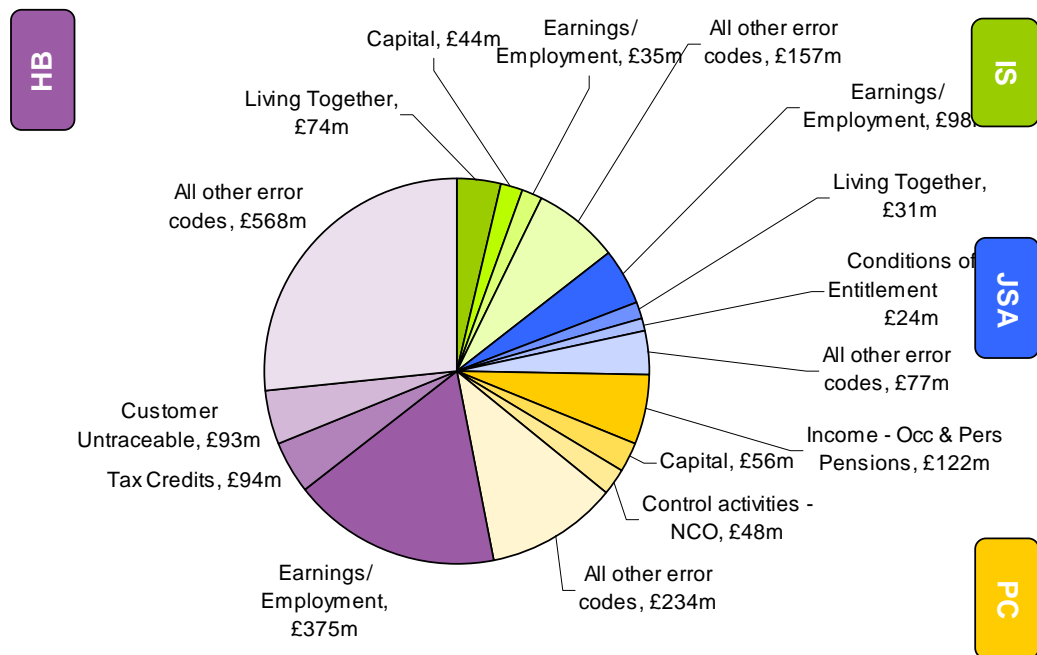
Total Estimates are rounded to the nearest £10m and percentages to one decimal place.

Columns may not sum due to rounding.

A figure of £0m indicates the unrounded estimate is less than £0.5m.

A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

**Figure 6.1 Estimated Total Overpayments by error code: 2011/12**  
 Highlighting the top 3 error codes and collating the remaining codes by benefit



- 6.12 The highest reasons for total overpayments across all continuously measured benefits are Earnings/Employment (£553m), Income – Occupational and Personal Pensions (£194m) and Living Together (£181m). These three categories account for 44% of the total fraud and error overpaid in these four benefits (£2,130m).
- 6.13 The highest recorded codes of total overpayments on Income Support (IS) are Living Together (£74m), Capital (£44m) and Earnings/Employment (£35m). These three categories account for almost half of the fraud and error on IS (£310m).
- 6.14 The highest codes of total overpayments on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) are Earnings/Employment (£98m), Living Together (£31m) and Conditions of Entitlement (£24m). These three categories account for about two thirds of the fraud and error overpaid on JSA (£230m).
- 6.15 The highest codes of total overpayments on Pension Credit (PC) are due to Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£122m), Capital (£56m) and Control Activities not being carried out (£48m). These three categories account for just under half of the fraud and error overpaid on PC (£460m).
- 6.16 The highest codes of total overpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) are due to Earnings/Employment (£375m), Tax Credits (£94m) and Customer Untraceable (£93m). These three categories account for about half of the fraud and error in HB (£1,130m). Overall, HB accounts for 53% of the total overpayments for these four benefits (£2,130m).

**Table 6.2 Estimated Fraud Overpayments by error code: 2011/12**

Fraud	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.4%	£27m	0.1%	£7m	0.2%	£20m	0.1%	£28m	0.2%	£81m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.1%	£5m	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£18m	0.1%	£27m
Abroad	0.1%	£10m	0.0%	£1m	0.4%	£35m	0.0%	£8m	0.1%	£55m
Customer Untraceable	0.3%	£24m	0.2%	£11m	0.1%	£8m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£43m
Household Composition	0.1%	£8m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£18m	0.1%	£29m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2%	£45m	0.1%	£45m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£7m	0.0%	£7m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£5m
Earnings/Employment	0.4%	£25m	1.7%	£86m	0.2%	£15m	0.5%	£121m	0.6%	£248m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.1%	£8m	0.1%	£3m	0.5%	£41m	0.1%	£17m	0.2%	£69m
Income - Other	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£5m	0.1%	£7m	0.1%	£15m	0.1%	£30m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£5m
Living Together	0.9%	£67m	0.4%	£20m	0.2%	£14m	0.2%	£56m	0.4%	£157m
Premiums	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Other	0.1%	£7m	0.1%	£7m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£18m
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.6%</b>	<b>£180m</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>£150m</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>£140m</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>£350m</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>£820m</b>

**Notes to Table:**

Estimates are rounded to the nearest £1m and percentages to one decimal place.

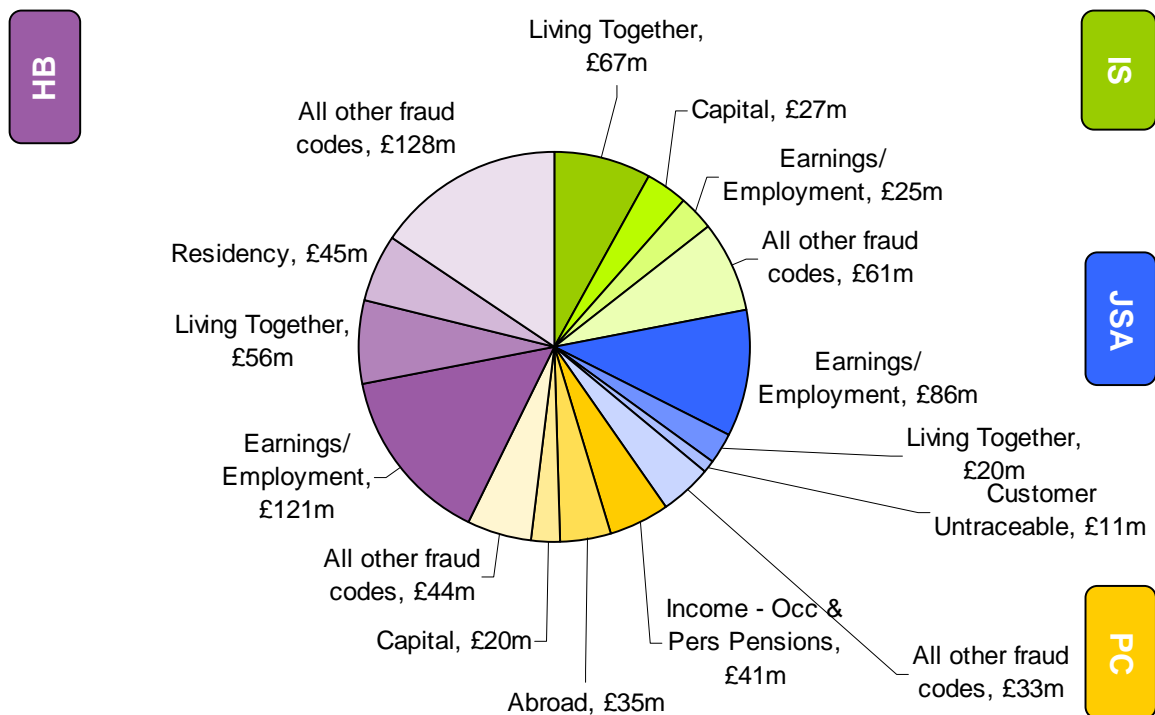
Total Estimates are rounded to the nearest £10m and percentages to one decimal place.

Columns may not sum due to rounding.

A figure of £0m indicates the unrounded estimate is less than £0.5m.

A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

**Figure 6.2 Estimated Fraud Overpayments by error code: 2011/12**  
 Highlighting the top 3 fraud codes and collating the remaining codes by benefit



- 6.17 The highest codes of fraud overpayments across all continuously measured benefits are Earnings/Employment (£248m), Living Together (£157m) and Capital (£81m). These three categories account for about 60% of the monetary value of all fraud overpayments (£820m). HB is the biggest contributor to fraud, accounting for 43% or £350m.
- 6.18 The highest codes of fraud overpayments on Income Support (IS) are due to Living Together (£67m), Capital (£27m) and Earnings/Employment (£25m). These three categories account for two thirds of the fraud on IS (£180m).
- 6.19 The highest codes of fraud overpayments on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) are in Earnings/Employment (£86m), Living Together (£20m) and Customer Untraceable (£11m). These three categories account for almost 80% of the estimated fraudulent overpayments on JSA (£150m).
- 6.20 The highest codes of fraud overpayments on Pension Credit (PC) are due to Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£41m), Abroad (when the claimant is overseas for longer than allowed at £35m) and Capital (£20m). These three categories account for over two thirds of fraud on PC (£140m).
- 6.21 The highest codes of fraud overpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) are Earnings/Employment (£121m – this is around half of the total fraud reported against Earnings/Employment), Living Together (£56m) and Residency (£45m). These three categories account for two thirds of the fraud on HB (£350m).

**Table 6.3 Estimated Claimant Error Overpayments by error code: 2011/12**

Claimant Error	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.2%	£16m	0.1%	£6m	0.3%	£22m	0.2%	£35m	0.2%	£79m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.1%	£5m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£9m
Abroad	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£4m
Customer Untraceable	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.4%	£93m	0.2%	£93m
Household Composition	0.2%	£13m	0.0%	£2m	0.3%	£27m	0.1%	£25m	0.2%	£68m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£12m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2%	£36m	0.1%	£36m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£3m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£41m	0.1%	£41m
Earnings/Employment	0.1%	£9m	0.1%	£7m	0.2%	£17m	1.0%	£232m	0.6%	£264m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.1%	£5m	0.1%	£6m	0.5%	£44m	0.1%	£20m	0.2%	£74m
Income - Other	0.3%	£22m	0.1%	£3m	0.3%	£21m	0.1%	£27m	0.2%	£73m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.4%	£89m	0.2%	£89m
Living Together	0.0%	£4m	0.1%	£5m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£14m
Premiums	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Other	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£13m	0.1%	£32m	0.1%	£49m
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>£80m</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>£30m</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>£150m</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>£650m</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>£910m</b>

**Notes to Table:**

Estimates are rounded to the nearest £1m and percentages to one decimal place.

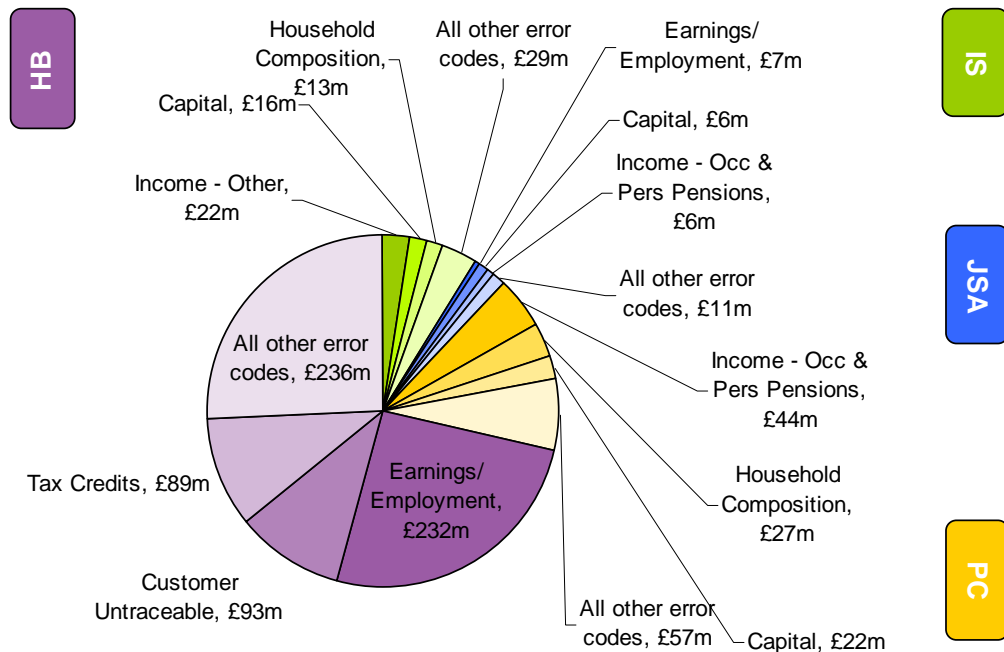
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Columns may not sum due to rounding.

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A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

**Figure 6.3 Estimated Claimant Error Overpayments by error code: 2011/12**  
 Highlighting the top 3 error codes and collating the remaining codes by benefit



- 6.22 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments across all continuously measured benefits are Earnings/Employment (£264m), Customer Untraceable (£93m) and Tax Credits (£89m). These three categories account for nearly half of the overpayments due to claimant error (£910m).
- 6.23 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments on Income Support (IS) are due to Income - Other (£22m), Capital (£16m) and Household Composition (£13m). These three categories account for almost two thirds of the claimant error on IS (£80m).
- 6.24 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) are due to Earnings/Employment (£7m), Capital (£6m) and Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£6m). These three categories account for around two thirds of claimant error on JSA (£30m). JSA has the lowest percentage of expenditure rate of overpayment due to claimant error of the four continuously measured benefits.
- 6.25 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments on Pension Credit (PC) are due to Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£44m), Household Composition (£27m) and Capital (£22m). These categories account for 62% of claimant error on PC (£150m). There is considerable movement between Premiums, Household Composition and Income - Other following recent guidance to review officers (see paragraph 6.49).
- 6.26 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) are Earnings/Employment (£232m), Customer Untraceable (£93m) and Tax Credits (£89m). These three error codes make up around 64% of the claimant error on HB. HB contributes over 70% of the claimant error out of IS, JSA, PC and HB.

**Table 6.4 Estimated Official Error Overpayments by error code: 2011/12**

Official Error	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m	0.2%	£13m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£18m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.2%	£13m	0.4%	£20m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£23m	0.1%	£56m
Household Composition	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.2%	£12m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£19m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£7m	0.1%	£15m	0.1%	£25m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1%	£17m	0.0%	£17m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Earnings/Employment	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£5m	0.2%	£13m	0.1%	£21m	0.1%	£40m
Income Other Benefits	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£12m	0.0%	£6m	0.1%	£25m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m	0.5%	£38m	0.0%	£10m	0.1%	£51m
Income - Other	0.1%	£7m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£5m	0.1%	£13m	0.1%	£26m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Living Together	0.1%	£4m	0.1%	£6m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£11m
Premiums	0.1%	£9m	0.0%	£0m	0.3%	£22m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£34m
Control activities - NCO	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£4m	0.6%	£48m	0.0%	£10m	0.1%	£63m
Labour Market Issues	-	-	0.2%	£8m	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£8m
Other	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£8m
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>£50m</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>£50m</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>£170m</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>£130m</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>£400m</b>

**Notes to Table:**

Estimates are rounded to the nearest £1m and percentages to one decimal place.

Total Estimates are rounded to the nearest £10m and percentages to one decimal place.

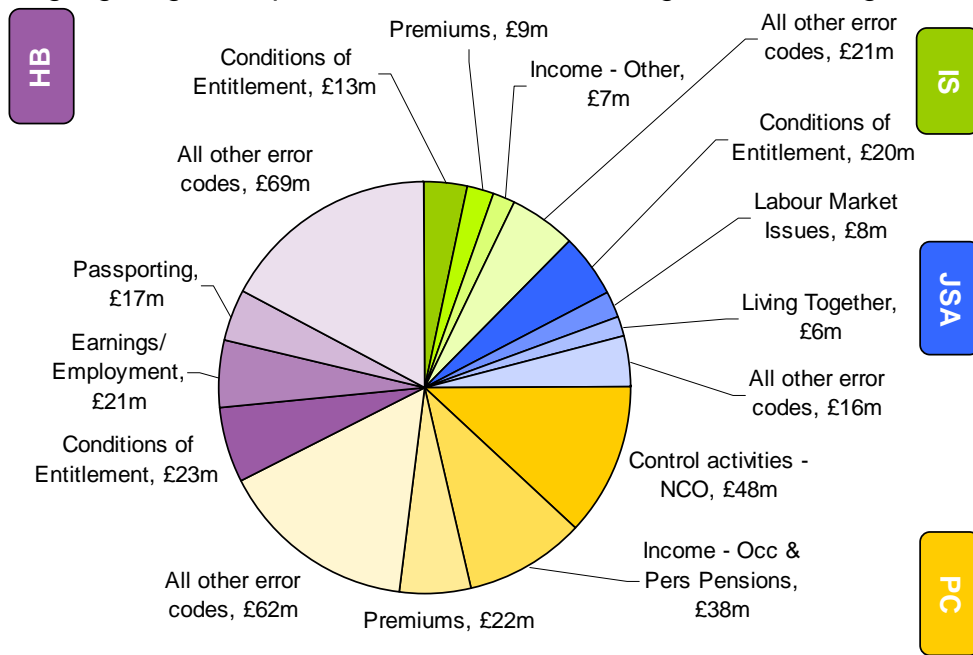
Columns may not sum due to rounding.

A figure of £0m indicates the unrounded estimate is less than £0.5m.

A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.



**Figure 6.4 Estimated Official Error Overpayments by error code: 2011/12**  
 Highlighting the top 3 error codes and collating the remaining codes by benefit



- 6.27 The highest codes of official error overpayments across all continuously measured benefits are Control Activities not being carried out (£63m), Conditions of Entitlement (£56m) and Income - Occupational and Personal Pensions (£51m). These three categories account for 43% the value of overpayments due to official error (£400m).
- 6.28 The highest codes of official error overpayments on Income Support (IS) are due to Conditions of Entitlement (£13m), Premiums (£9m) and Income – Other (£7m). These three categories account for over half (58%) of the official error on IS (£50m).
- 6.29 The highest codes of official error overpayments on Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) are due to Conditions of Entitlement (£20m), Labour Market Issues (£8m) and Living Together (£6m). These categories account for two thirds of the official error on JSA (£50m).
- 6.30 The highest codes of official error overpayments on Pension Credit (PC) are due to Control Activities not being carried out (£48m), Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£38m) and Premiums (£22m). These three categories account for nearly two thirds (64%) of overpayments due to official error on PC (£170m). Of the overall official error on the continuously measured benefits, Pension Credit accounts for 43% of overpayments.
- 6.31 Official Error overpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) are at a very low level (£130m or 12% of HB overpayments) compared to fraud (£350m or 31% of HB overpayments) and claimant error (£650m or 58% of HB overpayments). The causes of official error are fairly evenly split between several error codes with Conditions of Entitlement (£23m) and Earnings/Employment (£21m) being the top two contributors.

**Table 6.5 Estimated Total Underpayments by error code: 2011/12 (R)**

	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.0%	£3m	0.1%	£3m	0.2%	£15m	0.0%	£3m	0.1%	£25m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£5m
Abroad	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Customer Untraceable	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Household Composition	0.2%	£16m	0.0%	£2m	0.4%	£29m	0.1%	£34m	0.2%	£81m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£12m	0.1%	£17m	0.1%	£33m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£4m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£23m	0.1%	£23m
Earnings/Employment	0.1%	£4m	0.1%	£3m	0.1%	£5m	0.5%	£107m	0.3%	£119m
Income Other Benefits	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£6m	0.0%	£12m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£17m	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£22m
Income - Other	0.2%	£17m	0.0%	£1m	0.3%	£27m	0.1%	£33m	0.2%	£78m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2%	£57m	0.1%	£57m
Living Together	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£9m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£14m
Premiums	0.2%	£12m	0.0%	£2m	0.3%	£26m	0.0%	£3m	0.1%	£43m
Control activities - NCO	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£6m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£8m
Labour Market Issues	-	-	0.0%	£0m	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m
Other	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£14m	0.0%	£19m
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>£70m</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>£20m</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>£150m</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>£310m</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>£540m</b>

**Notes to Table:**

Estimates are rounded to the nearest £1m and percentages to one decimal place.

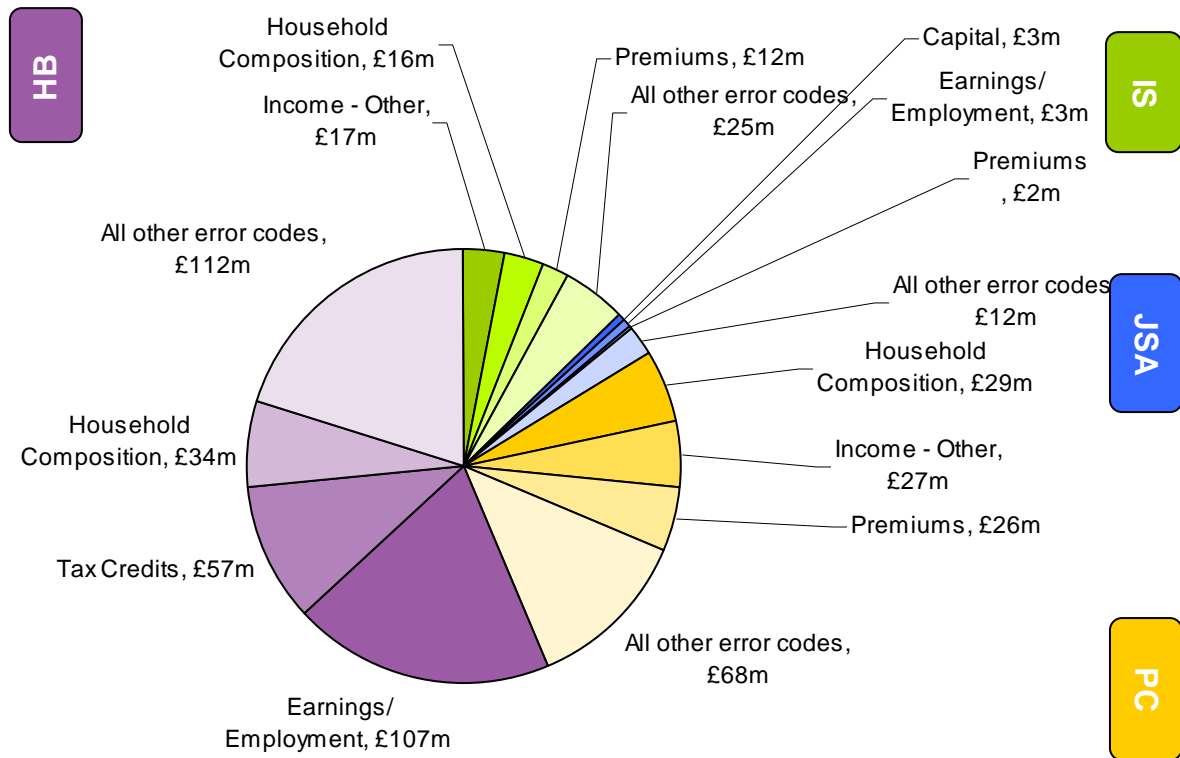
Total Estimates are rounded to the nearest £10m and percentages to one decimal place.

Columns may not sum due to rounding.

A figure of £0m indicates the unrounded estimate is less than £0.5m.

A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

**Figure 6.5 Estimated Total Underpayments by error code: 2011/12 (R)**  
 Highlighting the top 3 error codes and collating the remaining codes by benefit



- 6.32 The highest codes of total underpayments across all continuously measured benefits are Earnings/Employment (£119m), Household Composition (£81m) and Income – Other (£78m). These three categories account for around half of the total underpayments on the continuously measured benefits (£540m).
- 6.33 The highest codes of total underpayments on Income Support (IS) are due to Income – Other (£17m), Household Composition (£16m) and Premiums (£12m) and these categories account for just under two thirds of the total underpayments on IS.
- 6.34 Underpayment levels on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) are very low at only £20m or 4% of the total underpayments for the continuously measured benefits. No categories are particularly large in value.
- 6.35 The highest codes of total underpayments for Pension Credit (PC) are Household Composition (£29m), Income – Other (£27m) and Premiums (£26m). These three categories account for 55% of the underpayments on PC (£150m).
- 6.36 The highest codes of total underpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) are due to Earnings/Employment (£107m – this is 90% of all of the Earnings/Employment underpayment), Tax Credits (£57m) and Household Composition (£34m). These three categories account for 64% of the underpayments on HB (£310m). 57% of the total underpayments for the continuously measured benefits (£540m) are recorded on Housing Benefit.

**Table 6.6 Estimated Claimant Error Underpayments by error code: 2011/12**

Claimant Error	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£3m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£11m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m
Abroad	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Customer Untraceable	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Household Composition	0.2%	£13m	0.0%	£2m	0.3%	£23m	0.1%	£29m	0.2%	£67m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£7m	0.1%	£12m	0.0%	£20m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£3m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£23m	0.1%	£23m
Earnings/Employment	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£3m	0.4%	£85m	0.2%	£95m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£6m
Income - Other	0.2%	£15m	0.0%	£1m	0.3%	£26m	0.1%	£19m	0.1%	£60m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2%	£57m	0.1%	£57m
Living Together	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£7m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£8m
Premiums	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Other	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£6m
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>£40m</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>£70m</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>£240m</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>£360m</b>

**Notes to Table:**

Estimates are rounded to the nearest £1m and percentages to one decimal place.

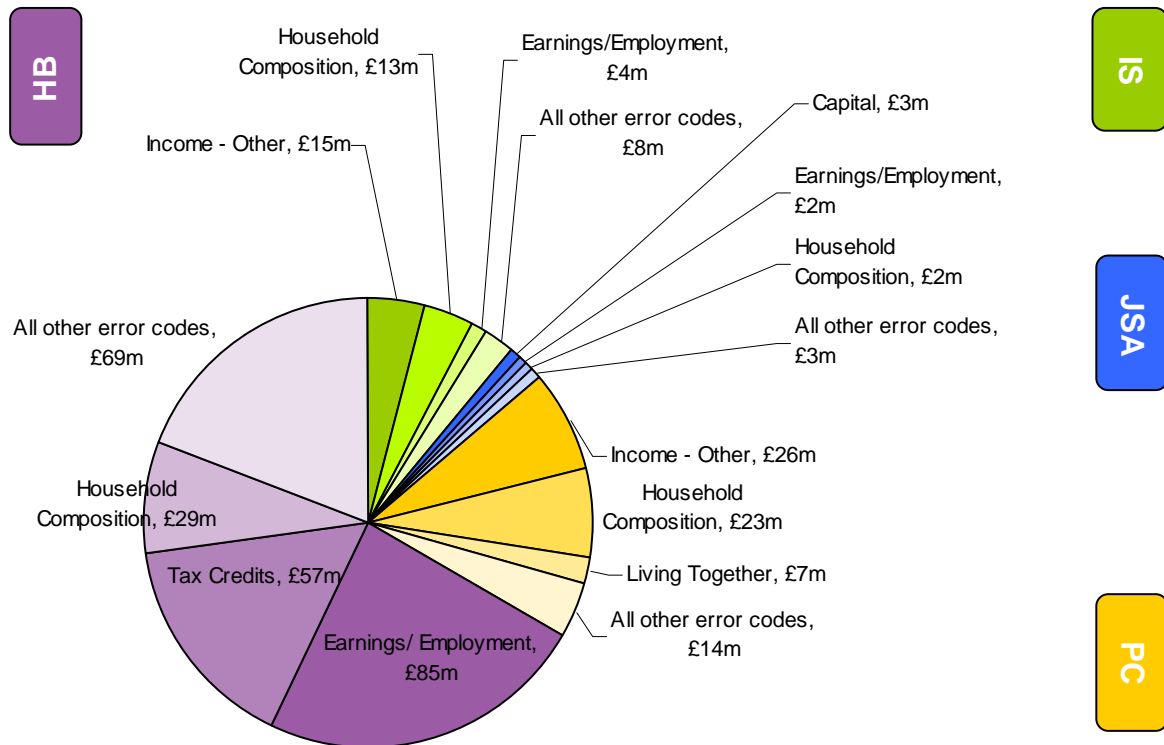
Total Estimates are rounded to the nearest £10m and percentages to one decimal place.

Columns may not sum due to rounding.

A figure of £0m indicates the unrounded estimate is less than £0.5m.

A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

**Figure 6.6 Estimated Claimant Error Underpayments by error code: 2011/12**  
 Highlighting the top 3 error codes and collating the remaining codes by benefit



- 6.37 The highest codes of claimant error underpayments across all continuously measured benefits are Earnings/Employment (£95m), Household Composition (£67m) and Income – Other (£60m). These three categories account for nearly two thirds of the underpayments due to claimant error (£360m).
- 6.38 The highest code of claimant error underpayments on Income Support (IS) are due to Income – Other (£15m), Household Composition (£13m) and Earnings/Employment (£4m) with these three categories accounting for 80% of the claimant error underpaid on IS (£40m).
- 6.39 Underpayment levels due to claimant error for Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) are relatively small and round to £10m.
- 6.40 The highest code of claimant error underpayments on Pension Credit (PC) are Income – Other (£26m), Household Composition (£23m) and Living Together (£7m). There is considerable movement between these three categories following recent guidance to review officers (see paragraph 6.49). These three categories account for 80% of all claimant error underpaid on PC (£70m).
- 6.41 Housing Benefit (HB) accounts for two thirds of the total claimant error across IS, JSA, PC and HB. The highest codes of claimant error underpayments on Housing Benefit are Earnings/Employment (£85m) Tax Credits (£57m) and Household Composition (£29m). These two error codes account for 71% of the claimant error underpayment on HB (£240m).

**Table 6.7 Estimated Official Error Underpayments by error code: 2011/12 (R)**

Official Error	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£12m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£13m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£4m
Household Composition	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£5m	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£14m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£5m	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£13m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Earnings/Employment	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£22m	0.1%	£25m
Income Other Benefits	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£6m	0.0%	£12m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£14m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£15m
Income - Other	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£14m	0.0%	£17m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Living Together	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Premiums	0.2%	£12m	0.0%	£2m	0.3%	£26m	0.0%	£3m	0.1%	£43m
Control activities - NCO	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£6m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£10m
Labour Market Issues	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	-	-	0.0%	£0m
Other	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£10m	0.0%	£13m
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>£30m</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>£80m</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>£70m</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>£180m</b>

**Notes to Table:**

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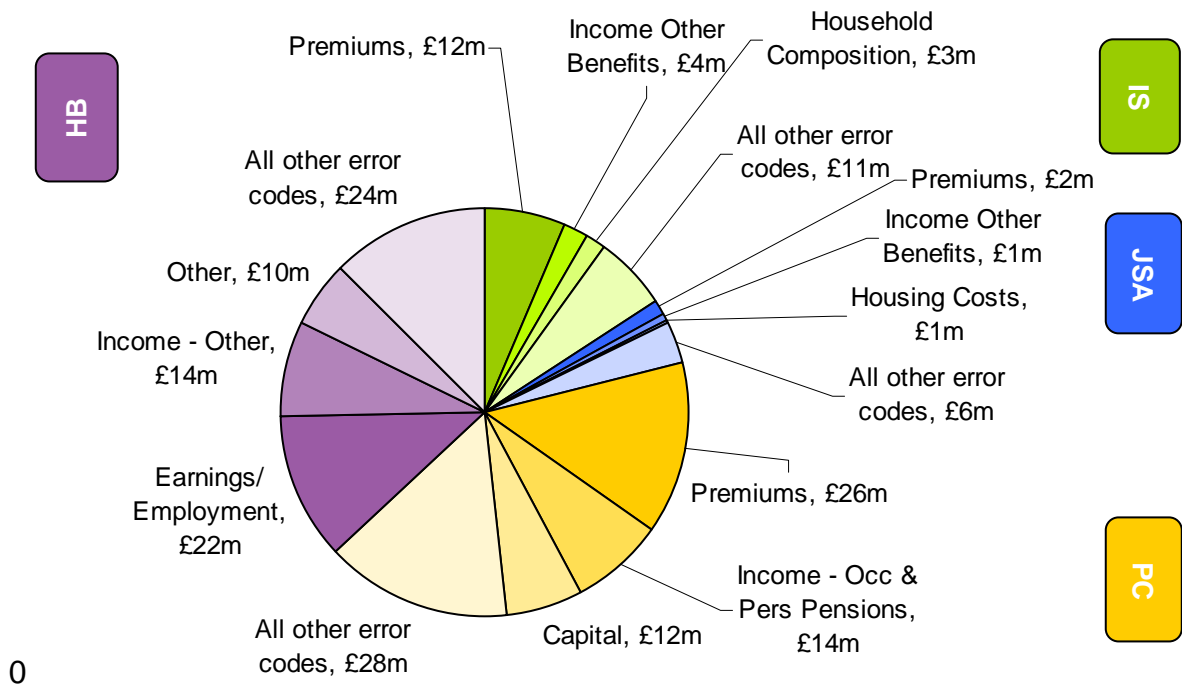
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A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

**Figure 6.7 Estimated Official Error Underpayments by error code: 2011/12 (R)**  
 Highlighting the top 3 error codes and collating the remaining codes by benefit



- 6.42 The highest codes of official error underpayments across all continuously measured benefits are Premiums (£43m), Earnings/Employment (£25m) and Income – Other (£17m). These three categories account for nearly half of the underpayments due to official error (£180m).
- 6.43 The highest code of official error underpayments on Income Support (IS) is Premiums (£12m) and this single category accounts for 40% of the official error underpayments (£30m).
- 6.44 The highest code of official error underpayments on Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) is Premiums at £2m.
- 6.45 The highest codes of official error underpayments on Pension Credit (PC) relate to Premiums (£26m), Income - Occupational and Personal Pensions (£14m) and Capital (£12m) and these three categories account for nearly two thirds of the official error underpayments on Pension Credit (£80m). Pension Credit is the largest contributor to official error underpayments.
- 6.46 Official Error underpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) are at a very low level compared to claimant error. The main causes of official error underpayment are Earnings/Employment (£22m), Income – Other (£14m) and Other (£10m). These account for nearly two thirds of the total HB official error underpayments (£70m). The remainder of the official errors are relatively evenly split across several error codes.

## 2010/11 Error Code Breakdowns

- 6.47 2010/11 breakdowns are now provided for comparison purposes with the 2011/12 breakdowns.
- 6.48 Users should be aware that these breakdowns are based on small sample sizes and therefore any year-on-year changes are likely to have been caused by sampling variation rather than reflecting real change. In addition to this publication we publish supplementary tables (see Annex 3) which error code breakdown tables including confidence intervals to aid the comparison of these data.
- 6.49 From April 2011, errors previously recorded under 'Premiums' are now being recorded under 'Household Composition' or 'Income – Other'. Due to this change, comparisons involving these error codes between this and previous reports should be treated with caution.

**Table 6.8 Estimated Total Overpayments by error code: 2010/11**

	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.6%	£44m	0.3%	£12m	0.8%	£64m	0.3%	£55m	0.4%	£175m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.5%	£37m	0.6%	£26m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£25m	0.2%	£90m
Abroad	0.3%	£21m	0.0%	£0m	0.3%	£25m	0.0%	£5m	0.1%	£52m
Customer Untraceable	0.3%	£27m	0.4%	£17m	0.3%	£28m	0.3%	£62m	0.3%	£133m
Household Composition	0.2%	£17m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£10m	0.1%	£29m	0.1%	£59m
Housing Costs	0.1%	£4m	0.1%	£4m	0.2%	£13m	0.1%	£20m	0.1%	£41m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3%	£58m	0.1%	£58m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1%	£23m	0.1%	£23m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£38m	0.1%	£38m
Earnings/Employment	0.6%	£44m	2.5%	£113m	0.5%	£44m	1.4%	£306m	1.2%	£506m
Income Other Benefits	0.1%	£8m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£12m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.1%	£8m	0.1%	£2m	1.4%	£118m	0.1%	£31m	0.4%	£159m
Income - Other	0.3%	£21m	0.2%	£10m	0.2%	£17m	0.4%	£77m	0.3%	£126m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5%	£111m	0.3%	£111m
Living Together	1.0%	£75m	0.4%	£19m	0.1%	£11m	0.4%	£76m	0.4%	£182m
Premiums	0.3%	£26m	0.1%	£3m	0.8%	£64m	0.0%	£7m	0.2%	£100m
Control activities - NCO	0.0%	£1m	0.5%	£23m	0.6%	£52m	0.0%	£6m	0.2%	£82m
Labour Market Issues	-	-	0.6%	£29m	-	-	-	-	0.1%	£29m
Other	0.2%	£15m	0.2%	£11m	0.2%	£14m	0.2%	£49m	0.2%	£89m
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>£350m</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>£270m</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>£470m</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>£980m</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>£2070m</b>

### Notes to Table:

Estimates are rounded to the nearest £1m and percentages to one decimal place.

Total Estimates are rounded to the nearest £10m and percentages to one decimal place.

Columns may not sum due to rounding.

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A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.



## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- 6.50 The highest codes of total overpayments across all continuously measured benefits were Earnings/Employment (£506m), Living Together (£182m) and Capital (£175m). These three categories accounted for over 40% of the total fraud and error overpaid in these four benefits (£2070m).
- 6.51 The highest codes of total overpayments on Income Support (IS) were Living Together (£75m), Earnings/Employment (£44m) and Capital (£44m). These three categories accounted for nearly half of the fraud and error on IS (£350m).
- 6.52 The highest codes of total overpayments on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) were Earnings/Employment (£113m), Labour Market Issues (£29m) and Conditions of Entitlement (£26m). These three categories accounted for about two thirds of the fraud and error overpaid on JSA (£270m).
- 6.53 The highest codes of total overpayments on Pension Credit (PC) were due to Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£118m), Capital (£64m) and Premiums (£64m). These three categories accounted for over half of the fraud and error overpaid on PC (£470m).
- 6.54 The highest codes of total overpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) were due to Earnings/Employment (£306m), Tax Credits (£111m) and Income – Other (£77m). These three categories accounted for about half of the fraud and error on HB.

**Table 6.9 Estimated Fraud Overpayments by error code: 2010/11**

Fraud	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.4%	£29m	0.2%	£9m	0.1%	£10m	0.1%	£22m	0.2%	£70m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.2%	£19m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£12m	0.1%	£33m
Abroad	0.2%	£19m	0.0%	£0m	0.3%	£21m	0.0%	£4m	0.1%	£44m
Customer Untraceable	0.3%	£27m	0.4%	£17m	0.3%	£28m	0.0%	£3m	0.2%	£74m
Household Composition	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£7m	0.0%	£11m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£3m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£3m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1%	£21m	0.1%	£21m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£6m	0.0%	£6m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£7m	0.0%	£7m
Earnings/Employment	0.4%	£29m	2.1%	£94m	0.2%	£21m	0.5%	£100m	0.6%	£243m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.4%	£34m	0.0%	£9m	0.1%	£48m
Income - Other	0.1%	£8m	0.1%	£4m	0.1%	£7m	0.1%	£28m	0.1%	£48m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£6m	0.0%	£6m
Living Together	0.9%	£72m	0.4%	£16m	0.1%	£10m	0.3%	£73m	0.4%	£170m
Premiums	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£5m
Other	0.1%	£8m	0.2%	£9m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£21m
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>£220m</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>£150m</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>£140m</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>£300m</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>£810m</b>

**Notes to Table:**

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Total Estimates are rounded to the nearest £10m and percentages to one decimal place.

Columns may not sum due to rounding.

A figure of £0m indicates the unrounded estimate is less than £0.5m.

A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

- 6.55 The highest codes of fraud overpayments across all continuously measured benefits were Earnings/Employment (£243m), Living Together (£170m) and Customer Untraceable (£74m). These three categories accounted for about 60% of the monetary value of all fraud overpayments (£810m).
- 6.56 The highest codes of fraud overpayments on Income Support (IS) were due to Living Together (£72m), Earnings/Employment (£29m) and Capital (£29m). These three categories accounted for about 60% of the fraud on IS (£220m).
- 6.57 The highest codes of fraud overpayments on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) were in Earnings/Employment (£94m), Customer Untraceable (£17m) and Living Together (£16m). These three categories accounted for around 85% of the estimated fraudulent overpayments on JSA.
- 6.58 The highest codes of fraud overpayments on Pension Credit (PC) were due to Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£34m), Customer Untraceable (£28m) and Abroad (£21m). These three categories accounted for about 60% of fraud on PC (£140m).

Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

6.59 The highest codes of fraud overpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) were Earnings/Employment (£100m) and Living Together (£73m). These two categories accounted for 58% of the fraud on HB.

**Table 6.10 Estimated Claimant Error Overpayments by error code: 2010/11**

Claimant Error	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.1%	£12m	0.1%	£3m	0.5%	£42m	0.1%	£28m	0.2%	£85m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.1%	£10m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£6m	0.0%	£16m
Abroad	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£5m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£8m
Customer Untraceable	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.3%	£59m	0.1%	£59m
Household Composition	0.1%	£12m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£9m	0.1%	£18m	0.1%	£40m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£8m	0.0%	£13m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2%	£36m	0.1%	£36m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£6m	0.0%	£6m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£31m	0.1%	£31m
Earnings/Employment	0.2%	£12m	0.1%	£7m	0.1%	£11m	0.9%	£190m	0.5%	£220m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£1m	0.5%	£45m	0.1%	£17m	0.2%	£66m
Income - Other	0.1%	£9m	0.1%	£4m	0.1%	£8m	0.2%	£37m	0.1%	£59m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5%	£105m	0.2%	£105m
Living Together	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£10m
Premiums	0.1%	£11m	0.0%	£0m	0.4%	£37m	0.0%	£3m	0.1%	£52m
Other	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£6m	0.2%	£43m	0.1%	£49m
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>£80m</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>£20m</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>£170m</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>£590m</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>£850m</b>

*Notes to Table:*

Estimates are rounded to the nearest £1m and percentages to one decimal place.

Total Estimates are rounded to the nearest £10m and percentages to one decimal place.

Columns may not sum due to rounding.

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A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

- 6.60 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments across all continuously measured benefits were Earnings/Employment (£220m), Tax Credits (£105m) and Capital (£85m). These three categories accounted for nearly half the overpayments due to claimant error (£850m).
- 6.61 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments on Income Support (IS) were due to Earnings/Employment, Capital and Household Composition which all contribute £12m each. These three categories accounted for nearly half of the claimant error on IS.
- 6.62 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) were due to Earnings/Employment (£7m), Income – Other (£4m) and Capital (£3m) and these categories account for 70% of the claimant error on JSA. JSA claimant error was by far the lowest of the four continuously measured benefits.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

6.63 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments on Pension Credit (PC) were due to Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£45m), Capital (£42m) and Premiums (£37m) and these categories accounted for nearly three quarters of claimant error on PC.

6.64 The highest codes of claimant error overpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) were Earnings/Employment (£190m) and Tax Credits (£105m). These two error codes made up 60% of the claimant error on HB.

**Table 6.11 Estimated Official Error Overpayments by error code: 2010/11**

Official Error	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£12m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£19m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.1%	£9m	0.5%	£24m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£6m	0.1%	£41m
Household Composition	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£8m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£9m	0.1%	£12m	0.1%	£25m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1%	£11m	0.0%	£11m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Earnings/Employment	0.0%	£3m	0.3%	£12m	0.1%	£12m	0.1%	£16m	0.1%	£43m
Income Other Benefits	0.1%	£8m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£13m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m	0.5%	£39m	0.0%	£5m	0.1%	£45m
Income - Other	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£12m	0.0%	£20m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Living Together	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£3m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£3m
Premiums	0.2%	£13m	0.1%	£3m	0.3%	£24m	0.0%	£4m	0.1%	£44m
Control activities - NCO	0.0%	£1m	0.5%	£23m	0.6%	£52m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£76m
Labour Market Issues	-	-	0.6%	£29m	-	-	-	-	0.1%	£29m
Other	0.1%	£6m	0.0%	£2m	0.1%	£7m	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£19m
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>£50m</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>£100m</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>£160m</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>£90m</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>£400m</b>

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Columns may not sum due to rounding.

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A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

6.65 The highest codes of official error overpayments across all continuously measured benefits were Control Activities not being carried out (£76m), Income - Occupational and Personal Pensions (£45m) and Premiums (£44m). These three categories accounted for over 40% of the value of overpayments due to official error (£400m).

6.66 The highest codes of official error overpayments on Income Support (IS) were due to Premiums (£13m), Conditions of Entitlement (£9m) and Income from Other Benefits (£8m). These three categories accounted for 60% of the official error on IS (£50m).

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- 6.67 The highest codes of official error overpayments on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) were due to Labour Market Issues (£29m), Conditions of Entitlement (£24m) and Control Activities not being carried out (£23m). These categories accounted for over three quarters of official error on JSA (£100m).
- 6.68 The highest codes of official error overpayments on Pension Credit (PC) were due to Control Activities not being carried out (£52m), Income from Occupational and Personal Pensions (£39m) and Premiums (£24m). These three categories accounted for 72% of overpayments due to official error on PC (£160m).
- 6.69 Official Error overpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) were at a very low level compared to fraud and claimant error. Earnings/Employment is the largest error code with (£16m) followed by Housing Costs (£12m) and Income – Other (£12m). These three error codes accounted for nearly 45% of the total HB official error (£90m).

**Table 6.12 Estimated Total Underpayments by error code: 2010/11**

	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£3m	0.2%	£18m	0.0%	£3m	0.1%	£25m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m
Abroad	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Customer Untraceable	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Household Composition	0.2%	£13m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£7m	0.1%	£32m	0.1%	£51m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£1m	0.2%	£18m	0.1%	£15m	0.1%	£37m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£18m	0.0%	£18m
Earnings/Employment	0.1%	£5m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£3m	0.3%	£64m	0.2%	£73m
Income Other Benefits	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£11m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£17m	0.0%	£7m	0.1%	£23m
Income - Other	0.1%	£11m	0.1%	£4m	0.1%	£12m	0.1%	£28m	0.1%	£55m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3%	£71m	0.2%	£71m
Living Together	0.1%	£4m	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£9m
Premiums	0.5%	£41m	0.0%	£1m	0.9%	£72m	0.1%	£14m	0.3%	£128m
Control activities - NCO	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£9m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£12m
Labour Market Issues	-	-	0.0%	£0m	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m
Other	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£12m	0.0%	£16m
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>£90m</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>£20m</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>£160m</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>£270m</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>£530m</b>

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A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

- 6.70 The highest codes of total underpayments across all continuously measured benefits were Premiums (£128m), Earnings/Employment (£73m) and Tax Credits (£71m). These three categories accounted for about half of the total underpayments on the continuously measured benefits (£530m).
- 6.71 The highest codes of total underpayments on Income Support (IS) were due to Premiums (£41m), Household Composition (£13m) and Income – Other (£11m) and these categories accounted for nearly three quarters of the total underpayments on IS.
- 6.72 Underpayment levels on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) were very low at only £20m and no categories were particularly large in value.
- 6.73 The highest codes of total underpayments for Pension Credit (PC) were Premiums (£72m), Housing Costs (£18m), Capital (£18m) and Income – Occupational and Personal Pensions (£17m). These four categories accounted for over three quarters of the underpayments on PC (£160m).

6.74 The highest codes of total underpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) were due to Tax Credits (£71m) and Earnings/Employment (£64m). These two categories accounted for around half of the underpayments on HB.

**Table 6.13 Estimated Claimant Error Underpayments by error code: 2010/11**

Claimant Error	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£8m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Abroad	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Customer Untraceable	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Household Composition	0.1%	£10m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£3m	0.1%	£21m	0.1%	£35m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£8m	0.0%	£8m	0.0%	£17m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£18m	0.0%	£18m
Earnings/Employment	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£2m	0.3%	£64m	0.2%	£69m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£8m
Income - Other	0.1%	£8m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£11m	0.1%	£20m	0.1%	£40m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3%	£71m	0.2%	£71m
Living Together	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m
Premiums	0.3%	£20m	0.0%	£0m	0.4%	£36m	0.0%	£9m	0.2%	£65m
Other	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£2m
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>£40m</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>£0m</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>£70m</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>£220m</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>£330m</b>

*Notes to Table:*

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Columns may not sum due to rounding.

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A "-" indicates that the category is not relevant for that benefit.

6.75 The highest codes of claimant error underpayments across all continuously measured benefits were Tax Credits (£71m), Earnings/Employment (£69m) and Premiums (£65m). These three categories accounted for nearly two thirds of the underpayments due to claimant error (£330m).

6.76 The highest code of claimant error underpayments on Income Support (IS) was due to Premiums (£20m) with this single category accounting for half of the claimant error underpaid on IS (£40m).

6.77 Underpayment levels due to claimant error for Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) were negligible and rounded to less than £5m.

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

6.78 The highest code of claimant error underpayments on Pension Credit (PC) was Premiums (£36m) with this single category accounting for half of the claimant error underpaid on PC (£70m).

6.79 The highest codes of claimant error underpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) were Tax Credits (£71m) and Earnings/Employment (£64m). These two error codes accounted for 61% of the claimant error underpayment on HB.

**Table 6.14 Estimated Official Error Underpayments by error code: 2010/11**

Official Error	Income Support		Jobseeker's Allowance		Pension Credit		Housing Benefit		Total	
	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m	%	£m
Capital	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.2%	£14m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£16m
Conditions of Entitlement	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m
Abroad	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Customer Untraceable	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Household Composition	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£7m
Housing Costs	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£1m	0.1%	£10m	0.0%	£8m	0.0%	£21m
Residency	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Passporting	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£1m
Non-Dependant Deductions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£9m	0.0%	£9m
Earnings/Employment	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£7m
Income Other Benefits	0.0%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£3m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£10m
Income - Occ & Pers Pensions	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.2%	£14m	0.0%	£8m	0.1%	£22m
Income - Other	0.0%	£3m	0.1%	£4m	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£7m
Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%	£5m	0.0%	£5m
Living Together	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£0m
Premiums	0.3%	£21m	0.0%	£1m	0.4%	£36m	0.0%	£0m	0.1%	£58m
Other	0.0%	£1m	0.0%	£2m	0.0%	£0m	0.0%	£10m	0.0%	£13m
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>£40m</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>£10m</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>£90m</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>£50m</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>£190m</b>

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6.80 The highest codes of official error underpayments across all continuously measured benefits were Premiums (£58m), Income - Occupational and Personal Pensions (£22m) and Housing Costs (£21m). These three categories accounted for over half of the underpayments due to official error (£190m).

6.81 The highest code of official error underpayments on Income Support (IS) was Premiums (£21m) and this single category accounted for half of the official error underpayments on this benefit (£40m).



## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- 6.82 The highest code of official error underpayments on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) was Income – Other, but this is only £4m from a total of £10m.
- 6.83 The highest codes of official error underpayments on Pension Credit (PC) related to Premiums (£36m), Income - Occupational and Personal Pensions (£14m) and Capital (£14m) and these three categories accounted for over 70% of the official error underpayments on Pension Credit (£90m).
- 6.84 Official Error underpayments on Housing Benefit (HB) were at a very low level (£50m) compared to claimant error (£220m). The causes of official error underpayment were relatively evenly split across several error codes.

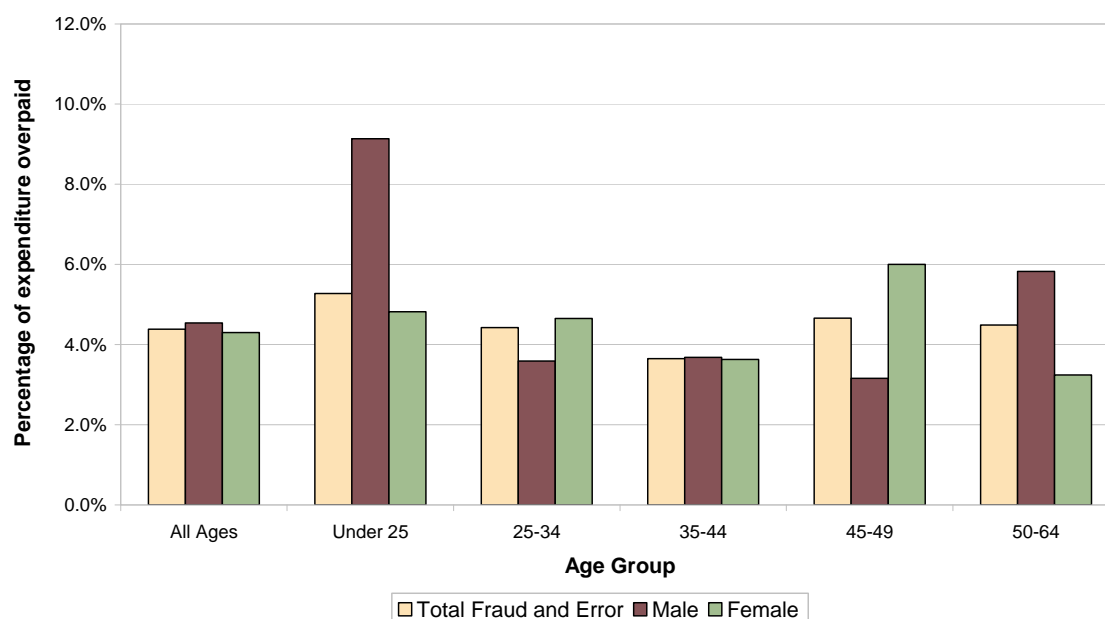
## 7 Age and gender breakdowns for the continuously measured benefits

- 7.1 This section gives 2011/12 estimates of overpayment and underpayment of the continuously measured benefits (Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit) by the claimant's gender and age.
- 7.2 This is the first report in which such breakdowns have been published.
- 7.3 Additional tables given the underlying data and additional charts for each of the benefits (split by fraud, claimant error and official error) are available on the DWP website via [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/index.php?page=fraud\\_error](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/index.php?page=fraud_error)

### Overpayments

- 7.4 Figure 7.1 below shows estimates of the expenditure overpaid to Income Support (IS) claimants by age and gender.

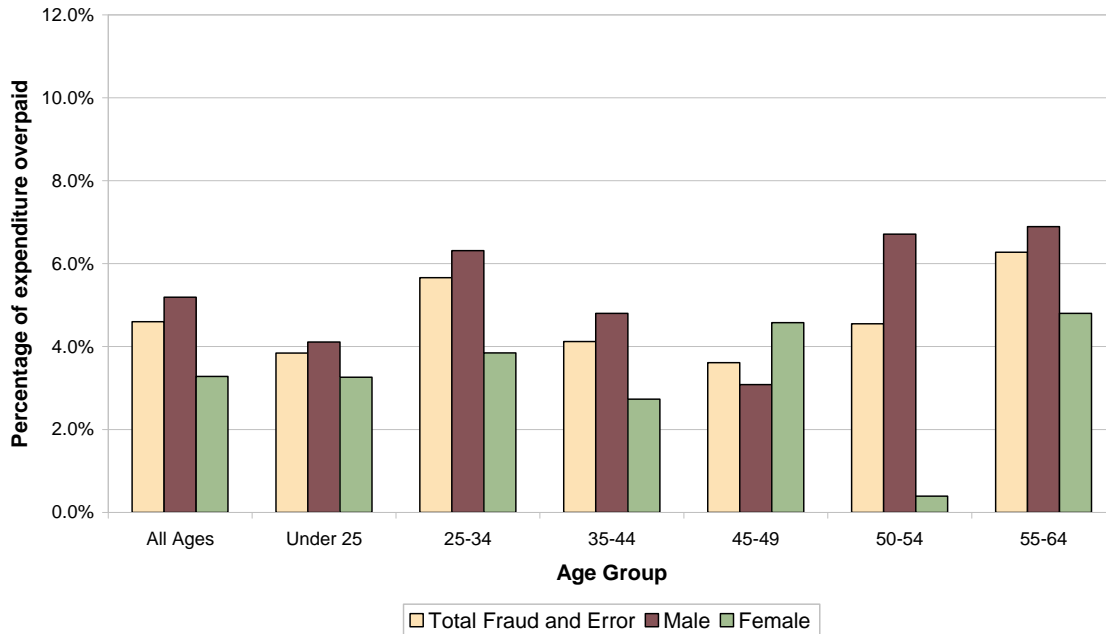
**Figure 7.1: Estimated percentage of Income Support expenditure overpaid, by age and gender: 2011/12 estimates**



- 7.5 In 2011/12, the percentage of IS expenditure overpaid to male claimants is 4.5%. This is slightly higher than the percentage overpaid to female claimants, 4.3%.
- 7.6 The percentage overpaid to male claimants is highest in the Under 25 age group with 9.1% of expenditure overpaid. For female claimants, this is highest in the 45-49 age group with 6.0% of expenditure overpaid.
- 7.7 Note, further age breakdowns within the 50-64 age group are not available due to small sample sizes.

7.8 Figure 7.2 shows estimates of the expenditure overpaid to Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimants by age and gender.

**Figure 7.2: Estimated percentage of Jobseeker's Allowance expenditure overpaid, by age and gender: 2011/12 estimates**



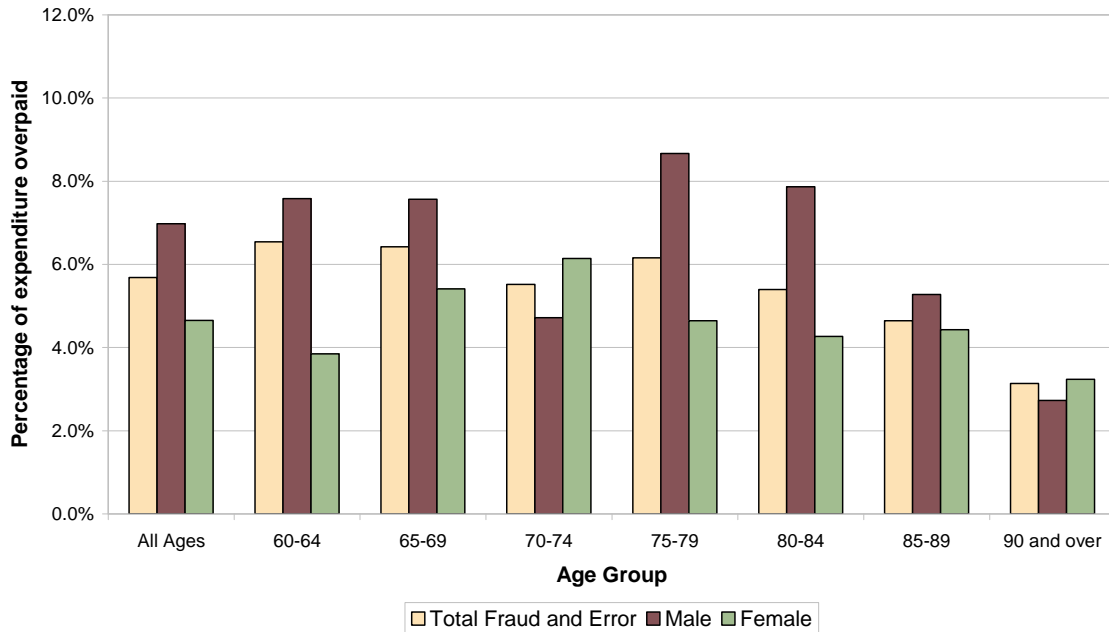
7.9 In 2011/12, the percentage of JSA expenditure overpaid to male claimants is 5.2%. This is higher than the percentage overpaid to female claimants, 3.3%.

7.10 The percentage JSA overpaid to male claimants is highest in the 55-64 age group with 6.9% of expenditure overpaid. Female claimants within the same age group also had the highest percentage of expenditure overpaid when compared to other age groups (4.8%).

7.11 Note, further age breakdowns within the 55-64 age group are not available due to small sample sizes.

7.12 Figure 7.3 below shows estimates of the expenditure overpaid to Pension Credit (PC) claimants by age and gender.

**Figure 7.3: Estimated percentage of Pension Credit expenditure overpaid, by age and gender: 2011/12 estimates**

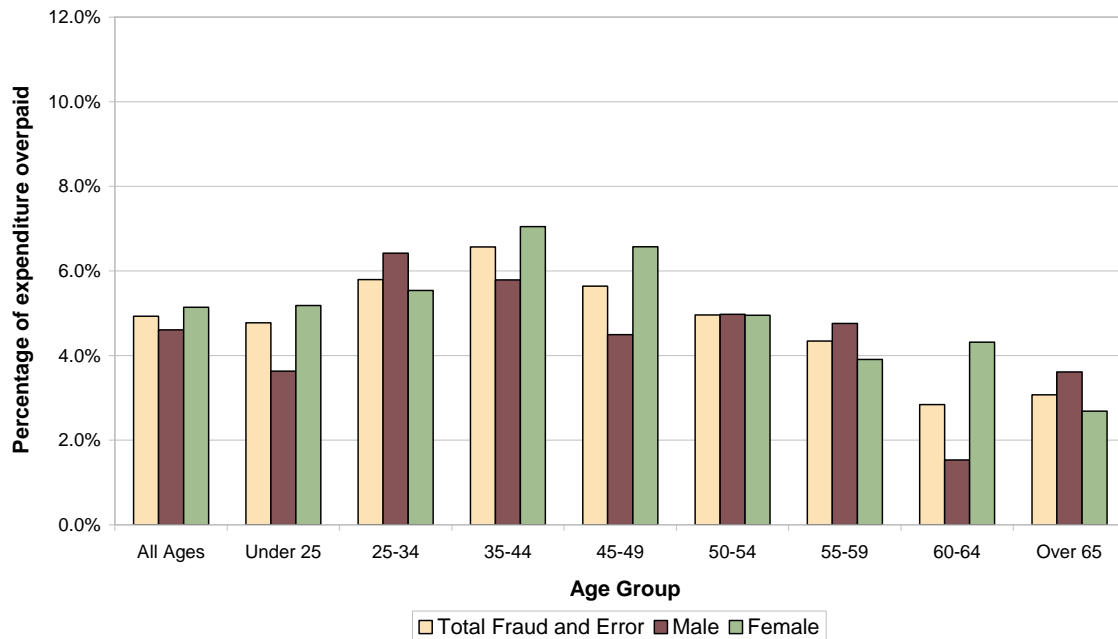


7.13 In 2011/12, the percentage of PC expenditure overpaid to male claimants is 7.0%. This is higher than the percentage overpaid to female claimants, 4.7%.

7.14 The percentage PC overpaid to male claimants is highest in the 75-79 age group (8.7%). For female claimants, the percentage of expenditure being overpaid is highest in the 70-74 age group (6.1%).

7.15 Figure 7.4 shows estimates of the expenditure overpaid to Housing Benefit (HB) claimants by age and gender.

**Figure 7.4: Estimated percentage of Housing Benefit expenditure overpaid, by age and gender: 2011/12 estimates**



7.16 In 2011/12, the percentage of HB expenditure overpaid to female claimants is 5.1%. This is slightly higher to that overpaid to male claimants, 4.6%.

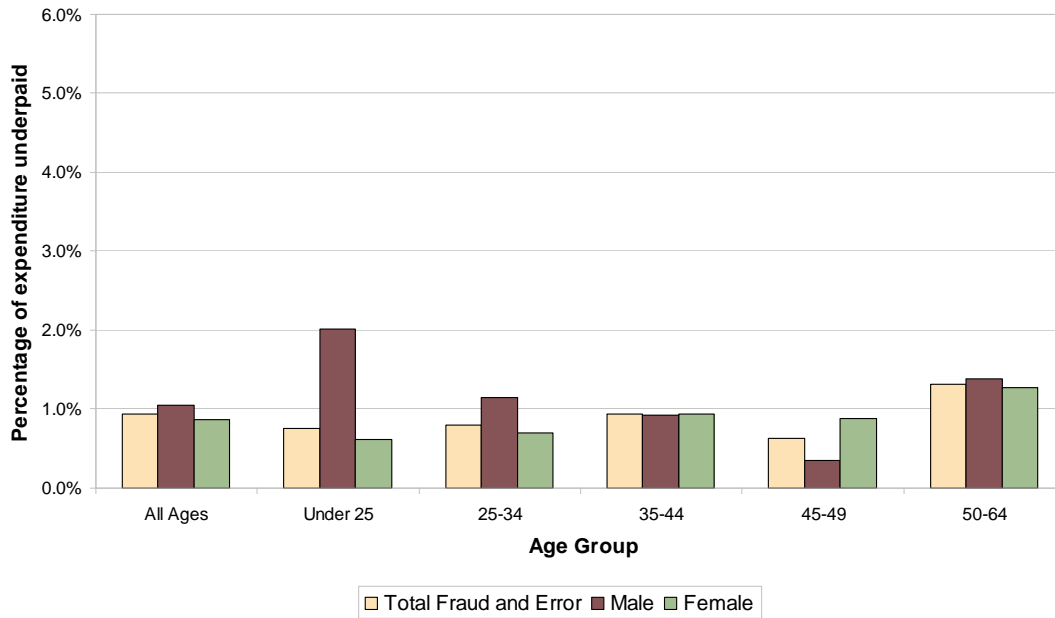
7.17 The highest percentage of HB expenditure overpaid for female claimants is within the 35-44 age group (7.0%). For male claimants, the 25-34 age group has the highest percentage of expenditure overpaid (6.4%).

7.18 For more detailed breakdowns of the age and gender overpayment estimates by error type (i.e. fraud, claimant error and official error) for the above benefits, please refer to the additional tables listed in Annex 3 of this report.

## Underpayments

7.19 Figure 7.5 below shows estimates of the expenditure underpaid to IS claimants by age and gender.

**Figure 7.5: Estimated percentage of Income Support expenditure underpaid, by age and gender: 2011/12 estimates (R)**



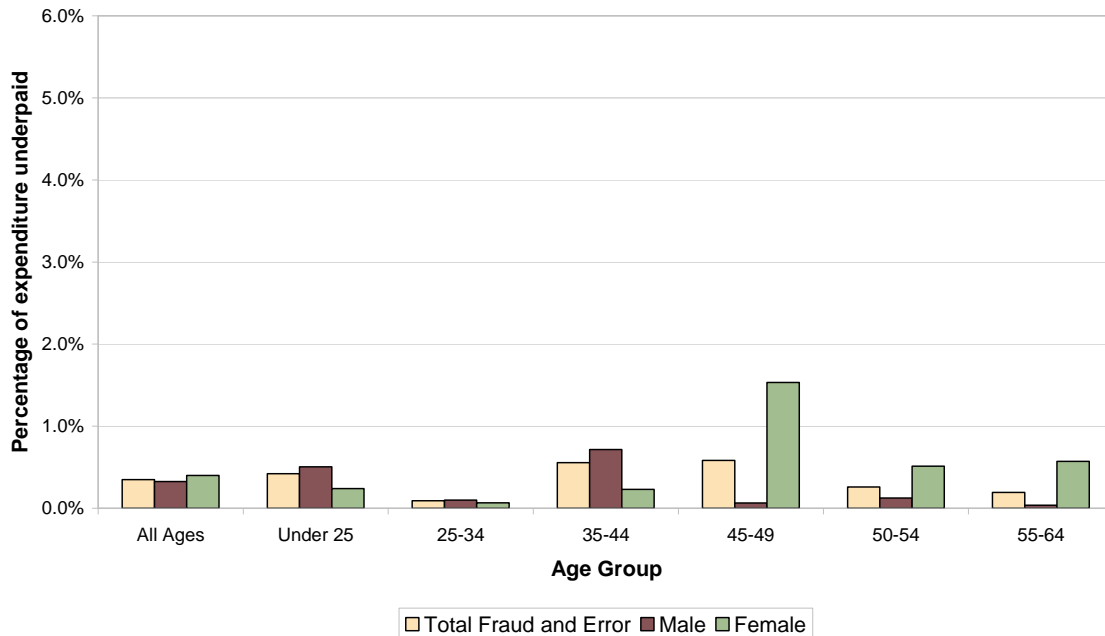
7.20 In 2011/12, the percentage of IS expenditure underpaid to the male claimant group is 1.1%. This is slightly higher than the percentage underpaid to female claimants, 0.9%.

7.21 IS underpayment to male claimants is highest within the Under-25 age group, with 2.0% of expenditure underpaid. Underpayment to female claimants is highest within the 50-64 age group, with 1.3% of expenditure underpaid.

7.22 Note, further age breakdowns within the 50-64 age group are not available due to small sample sizes.

7.23 Figure 7.6 below shows estimates of the expenditure underpaid to JSA claimants by age and gender.

**Figure 7.6: Estimated percentage of Jobseeker’s Allowance expenditure underpaid, by age and gender: 2011/12 estimates**



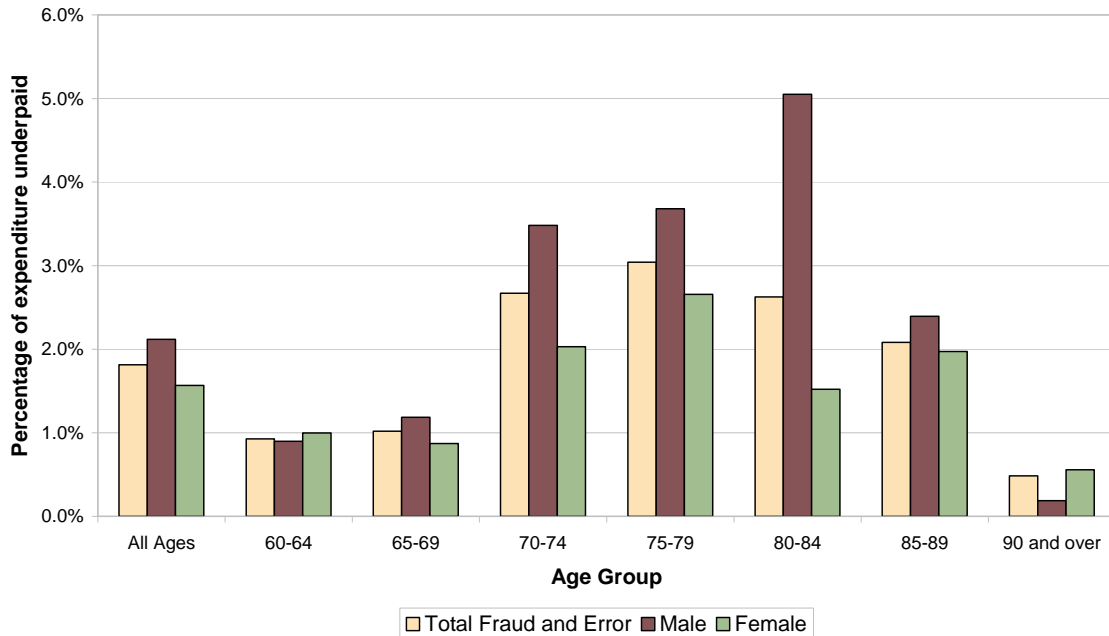
7.24 In 2011/12, the percentage of JSA expenditure underpaid to the male claimant group is 0.3%. This is slightly lower than the percentage underpaid to female claimants, 0.4%.

7.25 The percentage of JSA expenditure underpaid to female claimants is highest in the 45-49 age group, 1.5%. For male claimants, the age group with the highest underpayment rate is the 35-44 age group, 0.7%.

7.26 Note, further age breakdowns within the 55-64 age group are not available due to small sample sizes.

7.27 Figure 7.7 shows estimates of the expenditure underpaid to PC claimants by age and gender.

**Figure 7.7: Estimated percentage of Pension Credit expenditure underpaid, by age and gender: 2011/12 estimates**



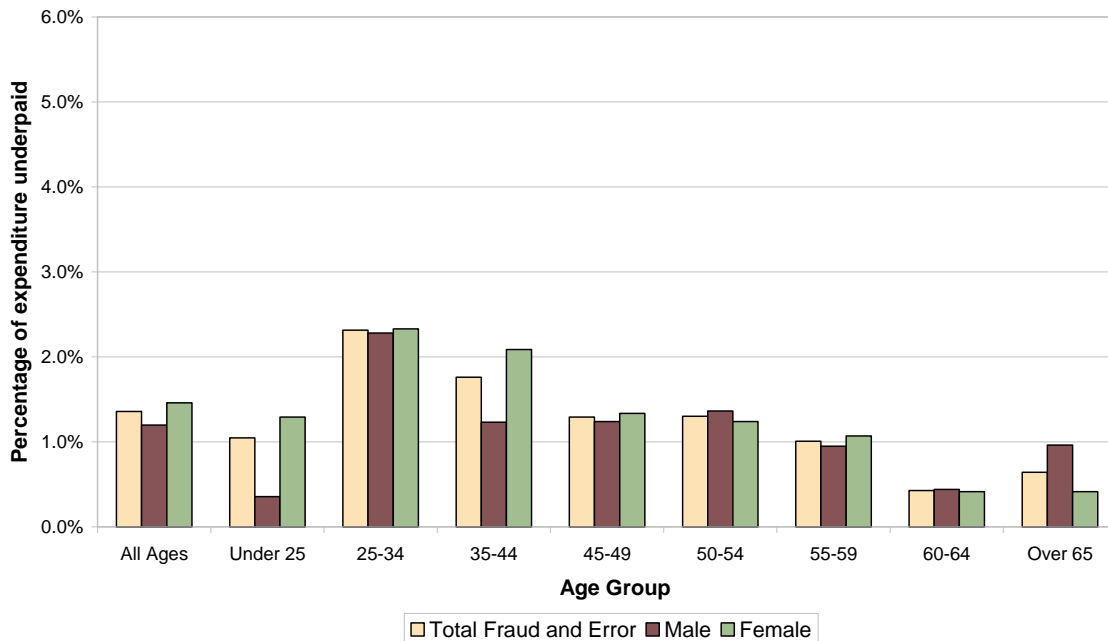
7.28 In 2011/12, the percentage of PC expenditure underpaid to the male claimant group is 2.1%. This is higher than the percentage underpaid to female claimants, 1.6%.

7.29 The percentage of PC expenditure underpaid to male claimants is highest in the 80-84 age group (5.0%). Female claimants aged between 75-79 had the highest percentage of expenditure underpaid compared to other age groups (2.7%).



7.30 Figure 7.8 below shows estimates of the expenditure underpaid to HB claimants by age and gender.

**Figure 7.8: Estimated percentage of Housing Benefit expenditure underpaid, by age and gender: 2011/12 estimates**



7.31 In 2011/12, the percentage of HB expenditure underpaid to the male claimant group is 1.2%. This is slightly lower than the percentage underpaid to female claimants, 1.5%.

7.32 The percentage of HB expenditure underpaid is highest within the 25-34 age group for both male and female claimants (2.3% for both genders).

7.33 For more detailed breakdowns of the age and gender underpayment estimates by error type (i.e. fraud, claimant error and official error) for the above benefits, please refer to the additional tables listed in Annex 3 of this report.

## 8 Further information and future reporting

### Further information

- 8.1 Further fraud and error figures and background documentation are available on the DWP website at [http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/index.php?page=fraud\\_error](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/index.php?page=fraud_error)
- 8.2 In October 2010, DWP and HM Revenue and Customs published a joint strategy on tackling fraud and error in the benefit and tax credits systems. This is available on the DWP website at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/tackling-fraud-and-error.pdf>
- 8.3 In February 2012, 'Tackling Fraud and Error in Government' was published. This is available at <http://fed-conf.co.uk/documents/HMG%20Fraud%20and%20Error%20Report.pdf>
- 8.4 Northern Ireland Fraud and Error in the Benefit System high-level statistics are published within the Social Security Agency annual reports: [http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/publications/annual\\_reports/publications-ssa-annual-reports.htm](http://www.dsdni.gov.uk/index/publications/annual_reports/publications-ssa-annual-reports.htm). Northern Ireland Fraud and Error statistics are comparable to the Great Britain statistics within this report, as their approach to collecting the measurement survey data and calculating the estimates and confidence intervals is very similar.
- 8.5 HMRC estimates of Error and Fraud in Tax Credits: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/error-fraud.htm>
- 8.6 The United Kingdom Statistics Authority maintain a release schedule of all National Statistics publications, it is available on their website at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/release-calendar/index.html>

### Future reporting

- 8.7 The next set of fraud and error statistics have a provisional publication date of May 2013. This report will provide the preliminary fraud and error estimates for 2012/13.
- 8.8 The National Statistics Code of Practice allows for revisions of figures under controlled circumstances: "Statistics are by their nature subject to error and uncertainty. Initial estimates are often systematically amended to reflect more complete information. Improvements in methodologies and systems can help to make revised series more accurate and more useful."
- 8.9 Unplanned revisions of figures in reports in this series might be necessary from time to time. Under this Code of Practice, the Department has a responsibility to ensure that any revisions to existing statistics are robust and are freely available, with the same level of supporting information as new statistics.

## Annex 1: Glossary of abbreviations

CA	Carer's Allowance
CHB	Child Benefit
CTB	Council Tax Benefit
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
DHP	Discretionary Housing Payment
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
ESA	Employment and Support Allowance
HB	Housing Benefit
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
IB	Incapacity Benefit
IS	Income Support
JSA	Jobseeker's Allowance
LA	Local Authority
LHA	Local Housing Allowance
NBR	National Benefit Review
PC	Pension Credit
SP	State Pension

## Annex 2: Statistical terms

The statistical terms used in this report are explained below.

**Confidence Interval:** The range of values within which we can be 95% sure that the true value we are trying to estimate lies. It is used as a measure of the statistical uncertainty in an estimate.

**Estimate:** An estimate is an indication of the value of an unknown quantity based on observed data. It provides information about unknown values in the population that we are trying to measure.

**Population (Caseload):** A population is any entire collection of items from which we may collect data. It is the entire group that we are interested in, which we wish to describe or to draw conclusions about (generally benefit claimants or expenditure in the context of this report).

**Sample:** A group selected (randomly in the context of this report) from a larger group (known as the “population”). Through analysing the sample we aim to draw valid conclusions about the larger group.

## Annex 3: Supporting material

### Additional tables

The latest additional results are available in this excel spreadsheet:

[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_1112.xls](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_1112.xls)

- Table 1 Estimates for Fraud and Error by Client Group and Error Type - Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Table 2 Estimates for Fraud and Error by Client Group and Error Type and Error Reason - Overpayments (2011/12)
- Table 3 Estimates for Fraud and Error by Client Group and Error Type - Overpayment Incorrectness (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Table 4 Estimates for Fraud and Error by Client Group, Error Type, Gender and Age Group - Overpayments (2011/12)
- Table 5 Estimates for Fraud and Error by Client Group and Error Type - Underpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Table 6 Estimates for Fraud and Error by Client Group and Error Type and Error Reason - Underpayments (2011/12)
- Table 7 Estimates for Fraud and Error by Client Group and Error Type - Underpayment Incorrectness (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Table 8 Estimates for Fraud and Error by Client Group, Error Type, Gender and Age Group - Underpayments (2011/12)
- 
- Chart 1 Income Support Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Chart 2 Income Support Disabled and Others Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Chart 3 Income Support Lone Parents Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Chart 4 Jobseeker's Allowance Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Chart 5 Pension Credit Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Chart 6 Housing Benefit Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Chart 7 Housing Benefit Working Age Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Chart 8 Housing Benefit Pensioners Overpayments (2005/06 to 2011/12)
- Chart 9 Income Support Overpayments by Error Type and Error Reason (2011/12)
- Chart 10 Income Support Disabled and Others Overpayments by Error Type and Error Reason (2011/12)
- Chart 11 Income Support Lone Parents Overpayments by Error Type and Error Reason (2011/12)
- Chart 12 Jobseeker's Allowance Overpayments by Error Type and Error Reason (2011/12)
- Chart 13 Pension Credit Overpayments by Error Type and Error Reason (2011/12)
- Chart 14 Housing Benefit Overpayments by Error Type and Error Reason (2011/12)
- Chart 15 Housing Benefit Working Age Overpayments by Error Type and Error Reason (2011/12)
- Chart 16 Housing Benefit Pensioners Overpayments by Error Type and Error Reason (2011/12)
- Chart 17a Income Support Overpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 17b Income Support Overpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 18a Income Support - Disabled and Others Overpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 18b Income Support - Disabled and Others Overpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 19a Income Support - Lone Parent Overpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 19b Income Support - Lone Parent Overpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 20a Jobseeker's Allowance Overpayments by Age Group (2011/12)

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

- Chart 20b Jobseeker's Allowance Overpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 21a Pension Credit Overpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 21b Pension Credit Overpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 22a Housing Benefit Overpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 22b Housing Benefit Overpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 23a Income Support Underpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 23b Income Support Underpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 24a Income Support - Disabled and Others Underpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 24b Income Support - Disabled and Others Underpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 25a Income Support - Lone Parent Underpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 25b Income Support - Lone Parent Underpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 26a Jobseeker's Allowance Underpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 26b Jobseeker's Allowance Underpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 27a Pension Credit Underpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 27b Pension Credit Underpayments by Gender (2011/12)
- Chart 28a Housing Benefit Underpayments by Age Group (2011/12)
- Chart 28b Housing Benefit Underpayments by Gender (2011/12)

## Technical Documentation for the Continuously Measured Benefits

Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit Technical Annex at:  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_tec\\_app.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_tec_app.pdf)

Housing Benefit Technical Annex at:  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem\\_tech\\_app\\_02\\_08.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_tech_app_02_08.pdf)

## Published documents relating to our National Statistics

Uses and Users Documentation  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/uses\\_users.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/uses_users.pdf)

Quality and Methods Documentation  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/quality\\_methods.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/quality_methods.pdf)

Ad-hocs and Pricing Documentation  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/ad\\_hocs\\_and\\_pricing.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/ad_hocs_and_pricing.pdf)

Variance and the Calculation of Confidence Intervals  
[http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/var\\_conf\\_levels.pdf](http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/var_conf_levels.pdf)

## Annex 4: List of methodology changes

Below is a list of the historical methodology changes that have been made since 2005/06.

Methodology change	Included in which published report	Page
Changes to sampling and calculation methods were aimed primarily at making the estimates better represent overpayments in the <i>whole</i> of IS, JSA and Pension Credit expenditure.	Fraud and Error in the Benefit System April 2005 to March 2006: Spending Review 2004 target baseline <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_new_results.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_new_results.pdf</a>	16-17
Definitional changes to what is being measured were introduced primarily to make the estimates better relate to the actual impact of fraud and error on expenditure.	Fraud and Error in the Benefit System April 2005 to March 2006: Spending Review 2004 target baseline <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_new_results.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_new_results.pdf</a>	16
Incapacity Benefit started to be continuously reviewed for Fraud and Claimant Error as well as Official Error.	Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: April 2008 – March 2009 – Revised Edition <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr08_mar09.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr08_mar09.pdf</a>	2
There was a change in this report to the calculation of the sample weightings for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit.	Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: April 2009 – March 2010 <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr09_mar10.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr09_mar10.pdf</a>	2 and Annex 4
To improve consistency across benefits and produce a more comparable time series between the preliminary and full year estimates, sample data has been refreshed so that information on sample cases that have been cleared late is included. Previously this was only done for full year reports; from now on this will also be carried out for preliminary estimates.	Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: Preliminary 2010/11 Estimates <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_oct09_sep10.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_oct09_sep10.pdf</a>	4
We now use the latest available expenditure for the financial year (April to March) to calculate all Monetary Value of Fraud and Error for individual benefits within the report. This means that the data for the individual benefits contained in sections 4, 5 and 6 of the report will now be much closer to, or the same as, the global estimates contained in section 2 of the report.	Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: Preliminary 2010/11 Estimates <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_oct09_sep10.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_oct09_sep10.pdf</a>	4
New stratifications for Pension Credit by age (over 80 and under 80): This is a sampling change that was implemented from April 2010; therefore this is the first set of statistics that is partly affected by this change. Due to the operational difficulty in finding details and reconstructing Pension Credit Assessed Income Period cases, an agreement was made with internal stakeholders to reduce the sample size for the older claimants. From this date, four claimants aged below eighty years of age were sampled and checked for every one aged eighty or over. This has had a minimal effect on the confidence intervals.	Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: Preliminary 2010/11 Estimates <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_oct09_sep10.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_oct09_sep10.pdf</a>	4
During 2011 the Fraud and Error Measurement (FEM) team have carried out a series of changes to the calculation processes and methodology in order to simplify and align these across the individual benefits.	Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2010/11 Estimates <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr10_mar11.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr10_mar11.pdf</a>	10-12

## Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

<p>This work has made our processing quicker, more efficient, robust and transparent and easier to quality assure. This in turn will reduce risk in our calculation processes and will enable our team, in the future, to make changes to the computer programs more easily, especially with the advent of Universal Credit, and be more flexible with resources. The new aligned processing system will also make it easier for our customers to interpret and compare findings across the individual benefits.</p>		
<p>We have introduced a change to the order in which Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit errors are capped within our calculation methodology. They are now capped for Fraud first, then Claimant Error, then Official Error. In previous reports they were capped for Official Error first, then Customer Fraud, then Claimant Error. This change aligns the above benefits with the Housing Benefit capping hierarchy.</p>	<p>Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2010/11 Estimates  <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr10_mar11.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr10_mar11.pdf</a></p>	<p>10-12</p>
<p>Since the introduction of Employment and Support Allowance in October 2008 no new claimants have been awarded Incapacity Benefit as they claim Employment and Support Allowance instead. In addition, all current claimants of Incapacity Benefit are being reassessed and will be moved to either Employment and Support Allowance or Jobseeker's Allowance in the near future. For this reason we have stopped measuring Incapacity Benefit for fraud and error on a continuous basis and have re-deployed resources to measure Employment and Support Allowance for Official Error instead, which will be reported for the first time in May 2013.</p> <p>For this report and after, the preliminary 2010/11 Incapacity Benefit estimates will be used in our publications and applied to the latest expenditure figures to provide the most up to date monetary values of fraud and error.</p>	<p>Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2010/11 Estimates  <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr10_mar11.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr10_mar11.pdf</a></p>	<p>10-12</p>
<p>A new error code framework was introduced in April 2010 following internal stakeholder consultation and agreement to have more meaningful information on the types of fraud and error.</p> <p>The 2010/11 publication was the first report to include these error code breakdowns.</p> <p>The breakdowns are not comparable to previously published error code breakdowns, i.e. reports before 2010/11.</p>	<p>Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2010/11 Estimates  <a href="http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr10_mar11.pdf">http://statistics.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd2/fem/fem_apr10_mar11.pdf</a></p>	<p>10-12</p>
<p>A change was made to the way in which the extrapolation adjustment was being calculated for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit to ensure it was based on up to date assumptions for these benefits.</p> <p>This change was introduced from the Preliminary 2011/12 report onwards.</p>	<p>Please see below for more details.</p>	



## **Change to Extrapolation Adjustment for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit**

Adjustments are made to overpayment levels to recognise that a certain proportion of benefit claims are too new to be included in our samples and to be reviewed in respect of fraud and customer error. These take the form of a fixed proportion being applied to a subset of the most recent benefit claims. However, changes to the benefit regulations, for Income Support in particular, has meant that we needed to revisit some of the assumptions.

Firstly, the fixed proportions are based on claim lengths, but for some benefits the average claim lengths have been changing since 2008. For Income Support the average claim length is now significantly longer than has been calculated in the past, which has led to the fixed proportions for Income Support being revised downwards.

Secondly, the reduced on-flow of new claims to Income Support has meant that the overpayment rates based on a 12 month period have become more volatile with a small number of cases having a larger impact than previously. Therefore we have combined several years of data to 'smooth' the overpayment rates and make them more stable. These smoothed overpayment rates have been introduced for Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Pension Credit.

The new fixed proportions and smoothed overpayment rates have been used in the calculation of the preliminary 2011/12 estimates.

We have also calculated new figures for 2010/11 estimates to indicate the level of change from the estimates published on 23rd February 2012. As the level of change is well within the published confidence intervals we are not revising the figures for 2010/11. Prior to 2010/11 the level of changes are very small.

### **Differences**

To estimate the effect of the change in the extrapolation methodology, the 2010/11 and preliminary 2011/12 results have been calculated twice. Firstly, using the old fixed proportions and non-smoothed overpayment rates and then using the newly updated fixed weights and smoothed overpayment rates for fraud and customer error.

The effects of introducing new methodology can be seen in the tables on the next page.

Fraud and Error in the Benefit System: 2011/12 Estimates (Great Britain)

**Differences between Estimated Overpayments using Old and New Extrapolation Adjustments: Preliminary 2011/12**

	Fraud	Customer Error	Official Error	Total
<b>IS Working Age</b>				
% benefit overpaid	-0.7%	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.7%
Amount overpaid	-£50m	+£0m	£0m	-£40m
<b>JSA</b>				
% benefit overpaid	+0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.1%
Amount overpaid	£0m	-£10m	£0m	£0m
<b>IS &amp; JSA Working Age</b>				
% benefit overpaid	-0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.4%
Amount overpaid	-£40m	£0m	£0m	-£50m
<b>Pension Credit</b>				
% benefit overpaid	+0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	+0.1%
Amount overpaid	+£10m	£0m	£0m	+£10m
<b>Global</b>				
% benefit overpaid	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.1%
Amount overpaid	-£0.1bn	£0bn	£0bn	-£0.1bn

1. A negative number in the table indicates the overpayment estimates using the new methodology are lower than the estimates using the old fixed proportions and non-smoothed overpayments.
2. Tables may not sum due to rounding.

**Differences between Estimated Overpayments using Old and New Extrapolation Adjustments: 2010/11**

	Fraud	Customer Error	Official Error	Total
<b>IS Working Age</b>				
% benefit overpaid	-0.4%	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.3%
Amount overpaid	-£30m	+£10m	£0m	-£20m
<b>JSA</b>				
% benefit overpaid	-0.1%	+0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Amount overpaid	£0m	£0m	£0m	£0m
<b>IS &amp; JSA Working Age</b>				
% benefit overpaid	-0.3%	+0.1%	0.0%	-0.2%
Amount overpaid	-£30m	+£10m	£0m	-£30m
<b>Pension Credit</b>				
% benefit overpaid	+0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Amount overpaid	£0m	£0m	£0m	£0m
<b>Global</b>				
% benefit overpaid	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Amount overpaid	-£0.1bn	£0bn	£0bn	£0bn

1. A negative number in the table indicates the overpayment estimates using the new methodology are lower than the estimates using the old fixed proportions and non-smoothed overpayments.
2. Tables may not sum due to rounding.

## Annex 5: List of benefits included in fraud and error estimates

<b>Benefits Included</b>	<b>Method of Measurement</b>
Income Support (including Minimum Income Guarantee)	Continuously Reviewed
Jobseeker's Allowance	Continuously Reviewed
Pension Credit	Continuously Reviewed
Housing Benefit	Continuously Reviewed
State Pension	Occasionally Reviewed (official error is continuously reviewed)
Disability Living Allowance	Occasionally Reviewed
Incapacity Benefit	Occasionally Reviewed
Carer's Allowance	Occasionally Reviewed
Social Fund	Unreviewed, proxy measures used (official error is continuously reviewed)
Council Tax Benefit	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Christmas Bonus	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Employment and Support Allowance	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Maternity Allowance	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Statutory Sick Pay	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Statutory Maternity Pay	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Industrial Disablement Benefit	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Industrial Death Benefit	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Other Industrial Injuries Benefits	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Attendance Allowance	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Specialised Vehicle Allowance	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Winter Fuel Payments	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Discretionary Housing Payments	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Cold Weather Payments	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Over 75 TV Licence	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Job Grant	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
New Deals	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
New Enterprise Allowance (new for 2011/12)	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Small Benefits	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Severe Disablement Allowance	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Widow's Benefit / Bereavement Benefit	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
Return-to-Work Credit	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
In-Work Credit	Unreviewed, proxy measures used
State Pension Transfers	Unreviewed, proxy measures used

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