



Benefit Sanctions Statistics

Data to June 2017

Quarterly

Published: 15 November 2017
Great Britain

Official & Experimental Statistics

If you don't meet one or more conditions of your benefit claim, without good reason, your benefit could be stopped or reduced. This is a benefit sanction.

This release includes Official and Experimental Statistics about sanctions for Universal Credit (UC), Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Group (ESA WRAG) and Income Support (IS).

Sanction statistics between benefits are not directly comparable as the policies for each benefit are very different.

Main stories

- 6.9% of Universal Credit claimants were receiving less benefit because they were being sanctioned in March 2017. 0.4% of Jobseeker's Allowance claimants and 0.3% of Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Group claimants were receiving less benefit because they were being sanctioned in March 2017.
- A decision can be made to sanction or not. For the period April to June 2017, 51,000 (57%) of all Universal Credit decisions were to sanction, Jobseeker's Allowance decisions to sanction were 20,000 (53%), Employment and Support Allowance were 3,200 (28%), and Income Support were 3,000 (87%).
- For the period April to June 2017, 71% of decisions to sanction in Universal Credit were for Failing to Comply with a Work-Focussed Interview (WFI). 65% of Jobseeker's Allowance decisions made were for Failing to Participate in the Work Programme.

Universal Credit

Rate of sanctions up 3.4 percentage points on previous quarter

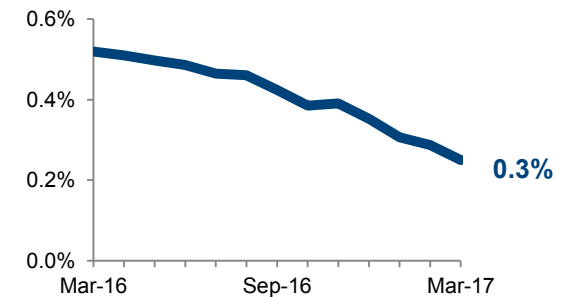
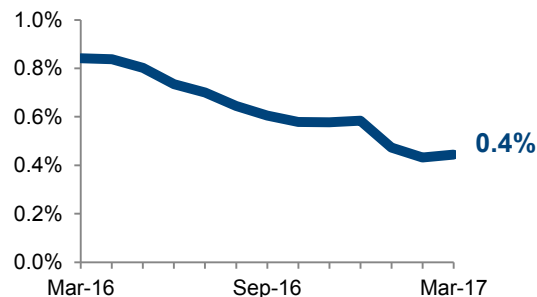
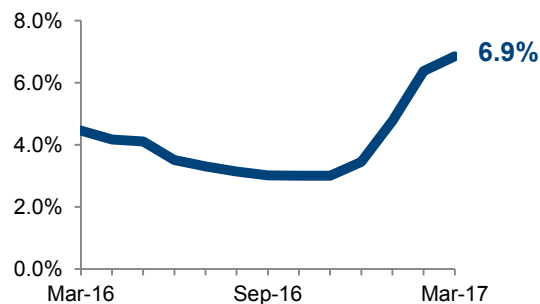
Jobseeker's Allowance

Rate of sanctions down 0.2 percentage points on previous quarter

Employment and Support Allowance

Rate of sanctions down 0.1 percentage point on previous quarter

Experimental rate of claimants receiving less benefit due to a sanction



Experimental median sanction duration (Aug 15- Mar 17)

28 days

Experimental median sanction duration (Oct 12- Mar 17)

28 days

Experimental median sanction duration (Dec 12- Mar 17)

28 days

At a glance

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Lead Statistician: Tracy Hills

tracy.hills@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

DWP Press Office: 0203 267 5144

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What you need to know

If you don't meet one or more conditions of your benefit claim without good reason, your benefit could be stopped or reduced. This is a benefit sanction. Not all sanction referrals will result in a sanction as a decision can be made not to sanction a claimant. For ESA claimants, sanctions only apply to the Work-Related Activity Group (WRAG), not the Support Group. Where a claimants' benefit is reduced, the claimant may be eligible for a hardship payment.

Benefit sanction statistics are primarily sourced from data originally collected via administrative systems and were published as part of the [Quarterly Statistical Summary](#) up to August 2017. From November 2017, they are published in the [Benefits Sanction Statistics](#) publication which will be released every quarter in February, May, August, and November. Please note that Sanction statistics between benefits are not directly comparable as the policies for each benefit are very different.

This release is a summary of the latest Official and Experimental Statistics on Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity Group (ESA WRAG), Universal Credit (UC) and Income Support (IS) benefit sanctions.

Users can also:

- Produce their own tables and access demographic breakdowns using [Stat-Xplore](#)
- Access [supporting tables](#)
- Find further information about the sanctions process, source of these statistics and the publication rounding policy in the [Background Information and Methodology](#) documents.

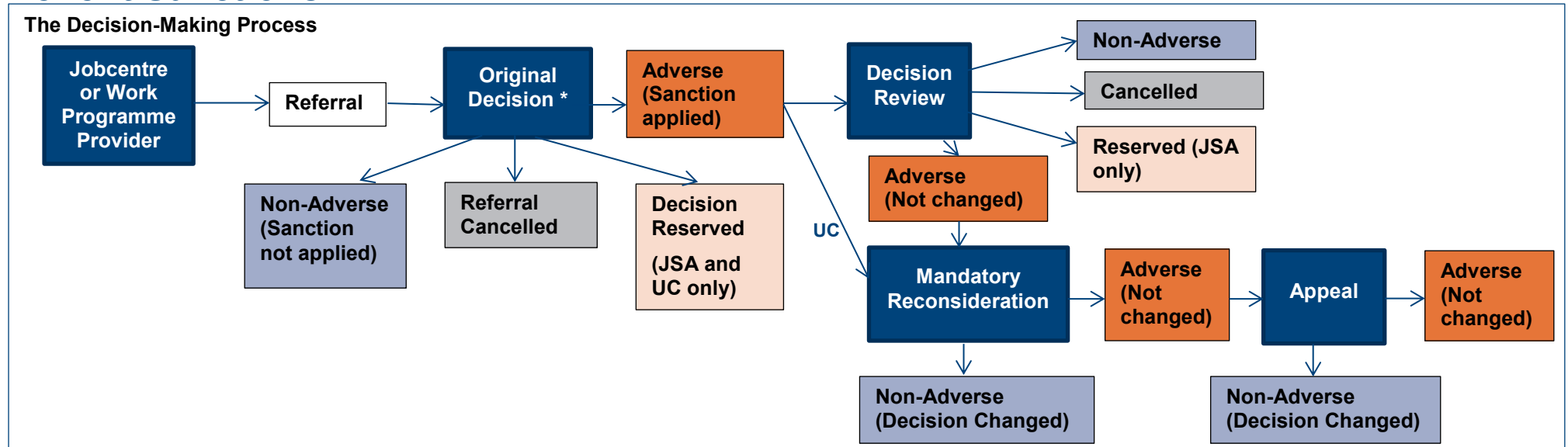
This publication comprises both Official and Experimental Statistics. Statistics are developed in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Act and are designated as Experimental whilst the methodology used to produce them is being refined. Once the methodology has been finalised, the statistics are designated as Official statistics.

The data in this publication is the latest available for each set of statistics.

- JSA sanction statistics date from April 2000 or the [regime change](#) in October 2012 when new rules were brought in
- ESA sanction statistics date from October 2008 or the [regime change](#) in December 2012 when new rules were brought in
- UC sanction statistics date from August 2015
- IS sanction statistics date from October 2016, when the data became robust enough to use, which is why there is currently only a small amount of information available.

Universal Credit sanction statistics for both full and live service are presented in this publication. Full service is available to all claimant types but only in certain areas of the country at present. Live service is available in all parts of the country to single working age claimants only, in areas where full service has not yet rolled out. More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-full-service-and-live-service>

Benefit Sanctions



Sanction Decisions

A claimant is referred to a sanction Decision Maker when they do not meet a condition of their benefit. The decision they can make can be:

- Adverse - They decide to sanction the claimant
- Non-Adverse - They decide not to sanction the claimant
- Cancelled - They cancel the referral
- Reserved - The decision is made to sanction the claimant but the claimant is not currently on benefit so the sanction cannot be applied. The claimant will be re-referred if they begin to claim the benefit again.

Many sanction decisions can be made during the course of a claim where the claimant has failed to meet the conditions of their benefit claim more than once.

Sanction stages

Each JSA, ESA-WRAG or IS sanction decision can have a maximum of four stages: Original Decision, then if the claimant does not agree that their benefit should be reduced, Decision Review, Mandatory Reconsideration, and Appeal. UC has a maximum of three stages as there is no Decision Review.

In the statistics, only the latest decision is kept, meaning that any previous decisions for each sanction referral are updated with every publication.

Durations

We count the length of time that a claimant is receiving less benefit because they were being sanctioned and calculate the median. The median is the middle number when all of the sanction lengths have been arranged from smallest to largest. Durations are counted up to and including the last month in which a deduction is taken. If someone has multiple sanctions which are served without a break in deductions, this will be counted as one sanction in the statistics. The underlying figures can be found in the [supporting tables](#).

Sanction rates

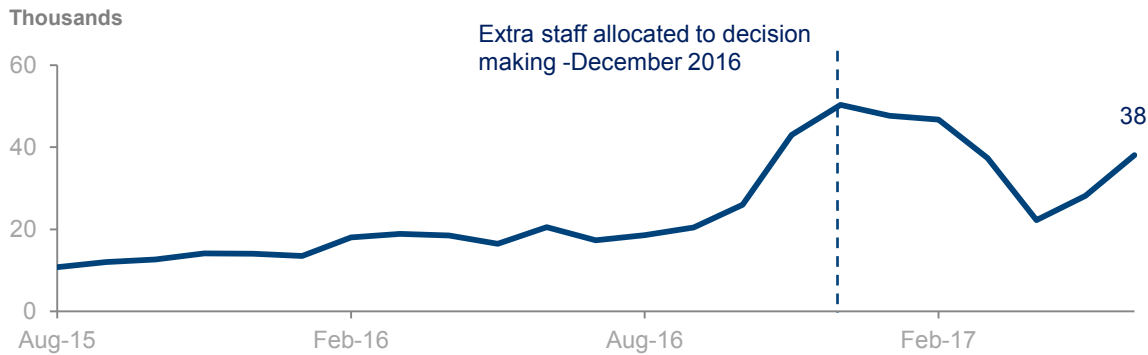
We calculate the number of people who are receiving less benefit because they were sanctioned as a proportion of people in receipt of each benefit at a point in time. The underlying figures can be found in the [supporting tables](#).

Benefit destinations

What happens to claimants after they receive an Original, adverse sanction decision*. The figures show the amount of time spent on different working age benefits (JSA, UC, ESA and IS) in the 180 day period following the decision. Further information can be found in the [destinations methodology document](#).

1.1 Sanction decisions and reasons: Universal Credit live service – Experimental Statistics

Total Number of UC sanction decisions: Great Britain: August 2015 to June 2017



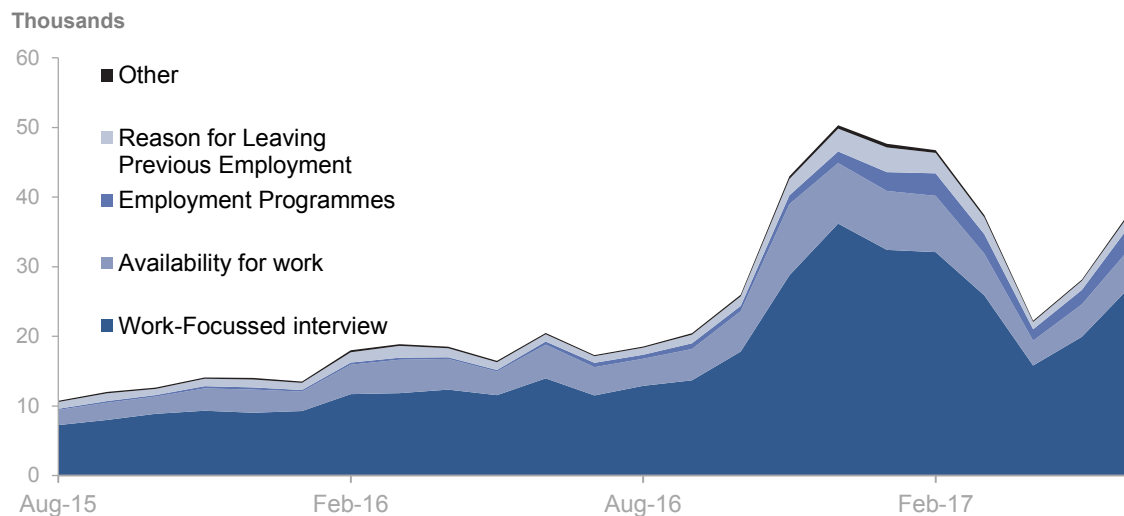
The number of monthly decisions has varied since August 2015 with a peak of 50,000 in December 2016, followed by a decrease in later months to 22,000 in April 2017. This has been followed by a rise again to 38,000 in June 2017.

The peak in sanctions decisions in December 2016 is because more Decision Maker staff were allocated to the sanctions referrals. This increased the number of decisions that were taken though not necessarily the number of referrals to sanction.

The figures show all decisions made, which include adverse, non-adverse, reserved, and cancelled decisions.

Most sanction decisions were for Work-Focused Interview referral reasons: 69% of sanction decisions in the last year.

Sanction decisions by reason group: Great Britain: August 2015 to June 2017

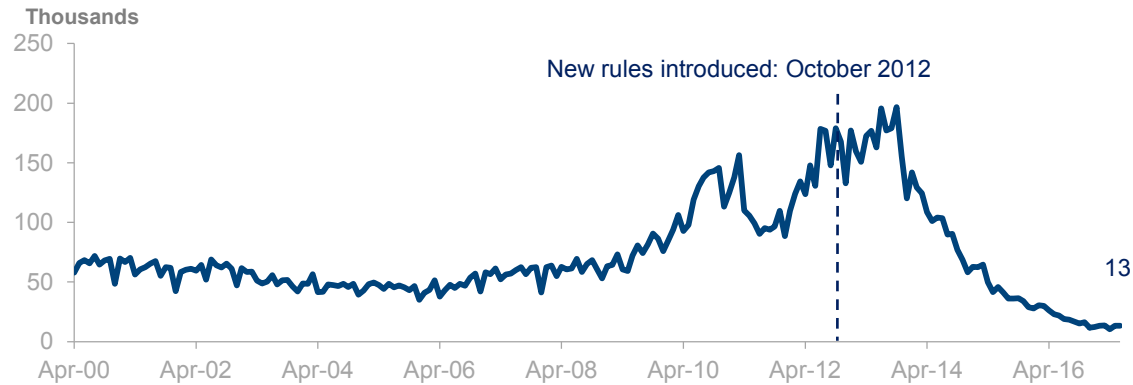


All decisions made by reason group	Year to Date (Thousands)	Year to Date %	Latest Quarter (Thousands)	Latest Quarter %
Work-Focused Interviews	274.1	69.3	62.9	71.2
Availability for Work	73.5	18.6	13.8	15.6
Employment Programmes	21.4	5.4	7.0	7.9
Reason for Leaving Previous Employment	23.1	5.8	4.0	4.6
Other	3.5	0.9	0.6	0.7
Total	395.7	100.0	88.4	100.0

A breakdown of the referral reasons that make up the reason groups can be found in the [Background & Methodology document](#)

1.2 Sanction decisions and reasons: Jobseeker's Allowance – Official Statistics

Total Number of JSA sanction decisions: Great Britain: April 2000 to June 2017

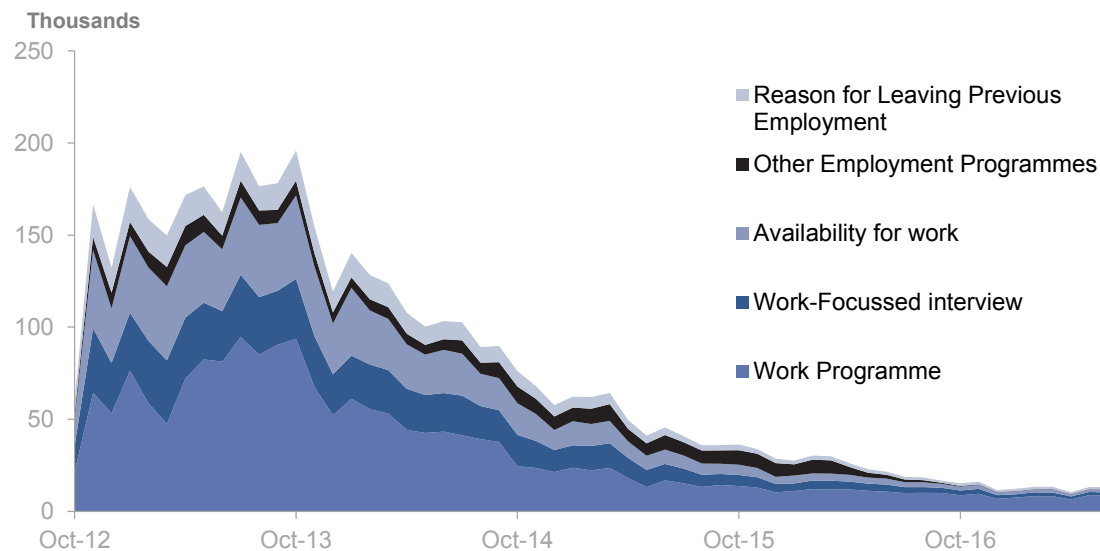


The recent fall in decisions is in part due to the fall in Jobseeker's Allowance claimants as claimants move to Universal Credit.

Over the last three years the number of decisions per month has steadily declined to 13,000 in June 2017.

The trend in JSA sanction decisions also coincides with lower numbers of JSA claimants joining the Work Programme. 60% of all JSA sanction decisions in the last year were due to Work Programme sanction referrals. These have been falling since October 2013, making the total number of JSA sanction decisions fall. The next biggest proportion was 16% for Work-Focused Interview sanction decisions.

Sanctions decisions by reason group: Great Britain: October 2012 (new rules) to June 2017



All decisions made by reason group	Year to Date (Thousands)	Year to Date %	Latest Quarter (Thousands)	Latest Quarter %
Work Programme	103.8	59.8	24.1	65.0
Work-Focussed Interview	27.2	15.7	5.0	13.5
Availability for Work	22.3	12.8	4.1	11.2
Reason for Leaving Previous Employment	14.9	8.6	3.3	8.9
Other Employment Programmes	5.1	2.9	0.5	1.3
Other	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.1
Total	173.6	100.0	37.0	100.0

A breakdown of the referral reasons that make up the reason groups can be found in the [Background & Methodology document](#)

1.3 Sanction decisions and reasons: Employment and Support Allowance – Official Statistics

Total Number of ESA sanction decisions: Great Britain: October 2008 to June 2017

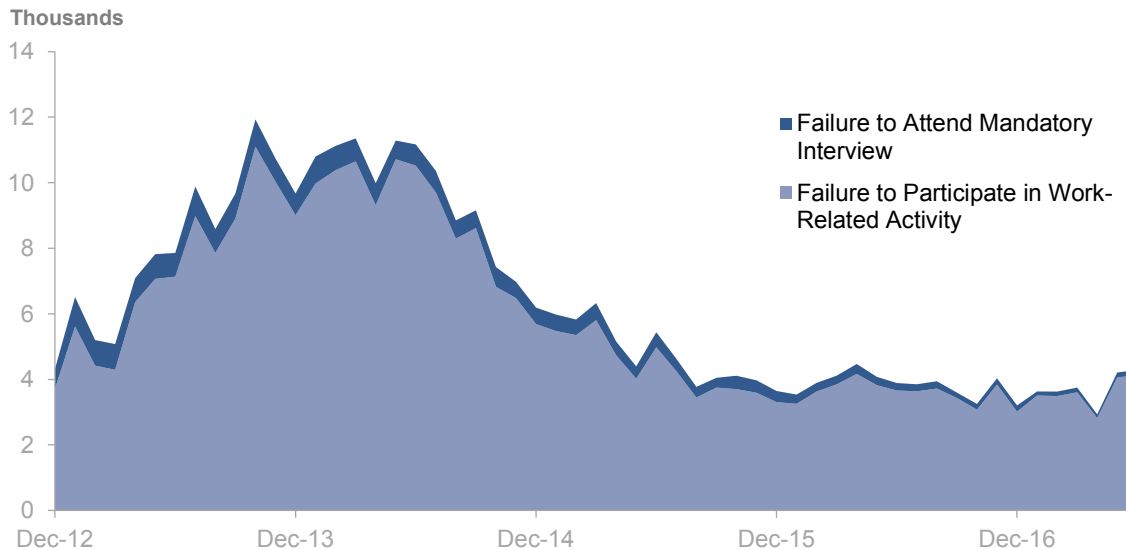


ESA sanction decisions were decreasing until September 2015, since then the numbers have remained stable. It is expected that as Universal Credit full service continues to roll out, and the claimants move from ESA to UC, the ESA sanctions will start to fall again, in-line with the fall in the number of ESA WRAG claimants.

ESA has a high proportion of decisions that are subsequently changed. As the data is overwritten by the latest decisions each quarter, the number of adverse decisions in the last month of the previous quarter can drop by over 30%.

Trends are driven by work related activity sanction decisions. More than 90% of sanction decisions for ESA relate to failure to participate in work-related activity since December 2012. In the latest quarter, over 96% of all sanction decisions were made on the failure to attend work-related activity reason.

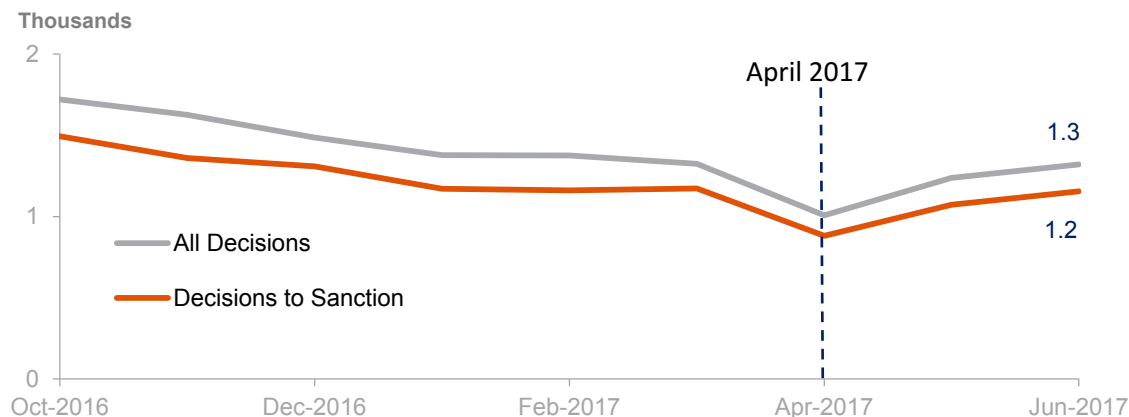
Sanctions decisions by reason group: Great Britain: December 2012 (new rules) to June 2017



All decisions made by reason group	Year to Date (Thousands)	Year to Date %	Latest Quarter (Thousands)	Latest Quarter %
Failure to Participate in Work-Related Activity	42.3	95.6	11.0	96.3
Failure to Attend Mandatory Interview	2.0	4.4	0.4	3.7
Total	44.3	100.0	11.4	100.0

1.4 Income Support Sanction decisions and reasons – Experimental Statistics

Total number of Income Support sanction decisions by month: Great Britain: October 2016 to June 2017



These figures are classified as Experimental as there are only 9 months' worth of data available.

A dip in IS decisions can be seen in April 2017. This is due to there being a low number of working days owing to Easter, bank holidays and 5 weekends in the month. We don't yet know if many decisions get changed at a later date. Early indications are that IS sanction decisions are slowly decreasing. At this stage no further conclusions can be made from the data.

Summary of decision outcomes at each stage (Thousands)
Oct 2016 to Jun 2017

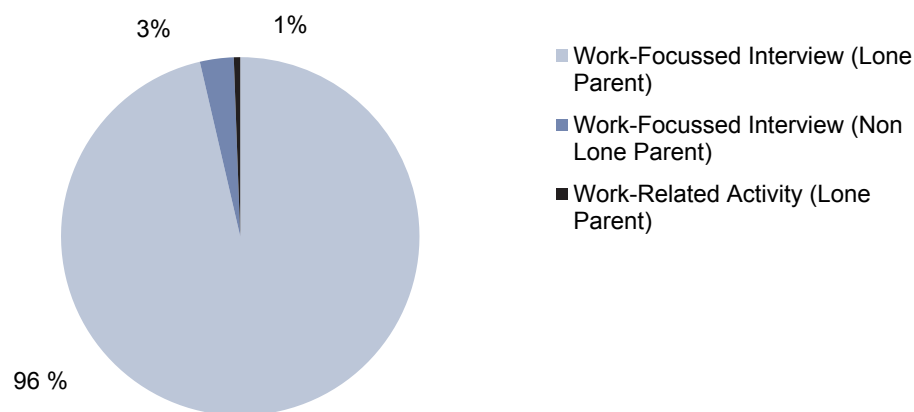
Decision Stage	Sanction	No Sanction
Original Decisions	10.71	0.27
Decision review	0.06	0.09
Mandatory Reconsideration	0.01	0.00
Appeal	0.00	0.00
Total	10.78	0.36

Decisions that are cancelled are not included in this table.

There have been a total of 11,000 decisions to apply a sanction over the last 3 quarters. Trends are driven by Lone Parent Failed to Attend or Participate in a Work-Focussed Interview sanction decisions with 96% of sanctions falling into this category

The majority of IS sanctions are imposed on IS Lone Parents (97%). IS Lone Parents have more conditions to meet than other IS claimants, and also currently make up over 60% of IS claimants.

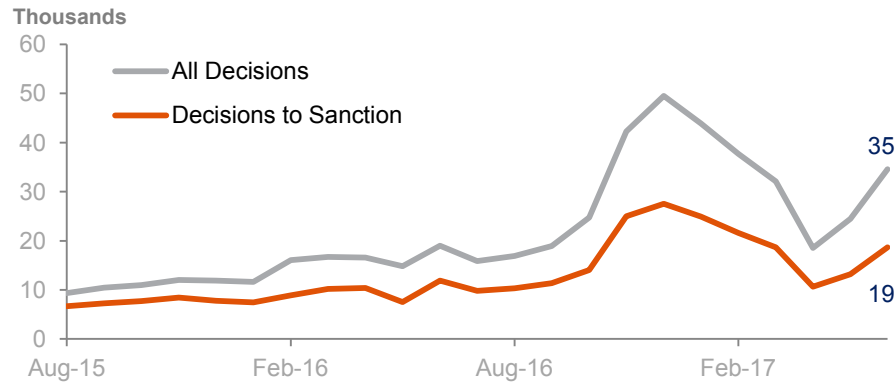
All IS Decisions by Referral Reason: Great Britain: October 2016 to June 2017



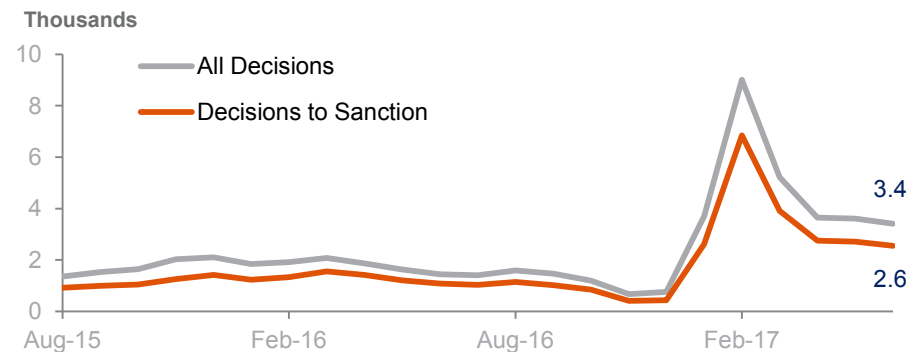
2.1 Sanction decisions process: Universal Credit live service – Experimental Statistics

All decisions and decisions to apply a sanction by stage: Great Britain: August 2015 to June 2017

**Stage 1
Original
Decisions**
A Labour Market decision maker makes the Original decision.



**Stage 2
Mandatory
Reconsiderations**
Claimants can ask DWP to reconsider the decision.



**Stage 3
Appeals**
Claimants can appeal to an Independent Tribunal after formal reconsideration

Chart not shown due to low numbers, figures are accessible via [Stat-Xplore](#)

There have been 570,000 decisions in total since August 2015. As the number of UC claimants has risen, the number of sanction decisions has also risen.

There have been a total of 340,000 decisions to apply a sanction which accounts for 60% of all decisions made. Of the remaining 40%: 23% are decisions not to apply a sanction, 12% are cancelled decisions, and 5% are reserved decisions.

In the latest quarter, there were 88,000 decisions. 51,000 of these were decisions to apply a sanction with 43,000 at the Original Decision stage. This shows that just under half of all decisions are adverse Original decisions.

Original decisions currently account for over 90% of all decisions made since August 2015, whilst less than 1% of all decisions go to Appeal stage.

Summary of decision outcomes at each stage (Thousands)

01 Aug 2015 to 30 Jun 2017

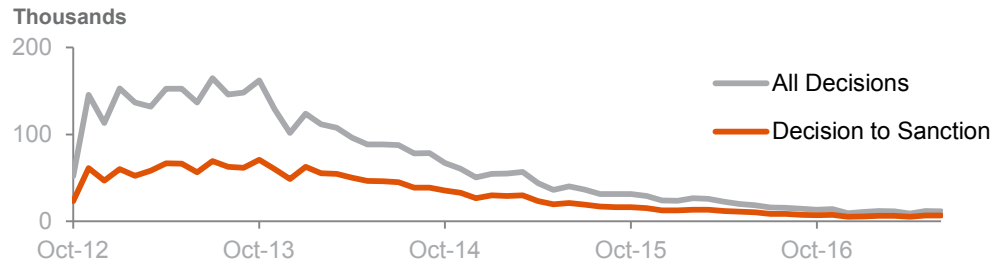
Decision Stage	Sanction	No Sanction
Original Decisions	300.2	111.0
Mandatory Reconsideration	39.8	15.4
Appeal	0.2	0.6
Total	340.3	127.0

Decisions that are reserved or cancelled are not included in this table.

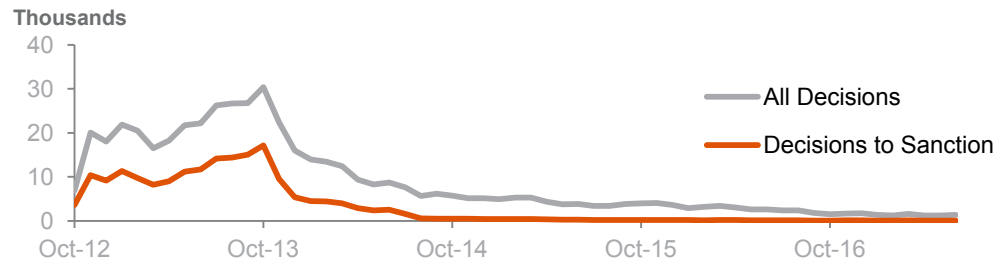
2.2 Sanction decisions process: Jobseeker's Allowance (new rules) – Official Statistics

All decisions and decisions to apply a sanction by stage: Great Britain: October 2012 to June 2017

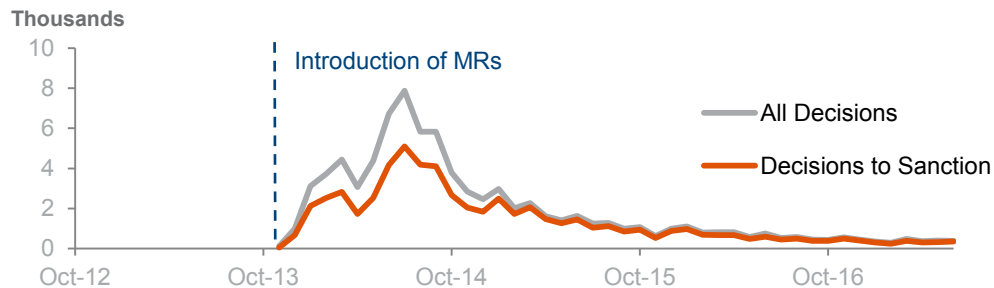
**Stage 1
Original
Decisions**
A Labour Market decision maker makes the Original decision.



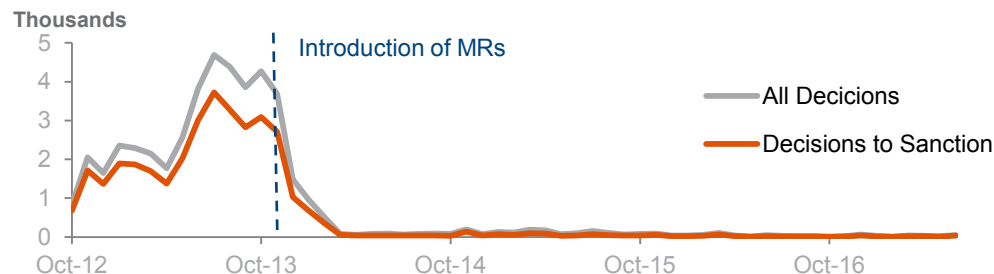
**Stage 2
Decision
Review**
Claimants can ask for the decision to be reviewed



**Stage 3
Mandatory
Reconsiderations
(MR)**
Claimants can ask DWP to reconsider the decision.



**Stage 4
Appeals**
Claimants can appeal to an Independent Tribunal after formal reconsideration



There have been 4.5 million decisions in total under the new rules since October 2012. As the number of JSA claimants has fallen, the number of sanction decisions has also fallen.

There have been a total of 2.1 million decisions to apply a sanction which accounts for 47% of all decisions made. Of the remaining 53%, 25% are decisions not to apply a sanction, 23% are cancelled decisions, and 5% are reserved decisions.

In the latest quarter, there were 37,000 decisions. 20,000 of these were decisions to apply a sanction with 18,000 at the Original Decision stage.

Original decisions currently account for 86% of all decisions made since November 2012. Since the introduction of the Mandatory Reconsideration in November 2013, Appeals have dropped from a peak of 4,700 in July 2013 to just 350 in the last year.

Summary of decision outcomes at each stage (Thousands)
22 Oct 2012 to 30 Jun 2017

Decision Stage	Sanction	No Sanction
Original Decisions	1,798.6	794.6
Decision review	190.2	301.0
Mandatory Reconsideration	60.8	22.5
Appeal	34.9	10.6
Total	2,084.5	1,128.7

Decisions that are reserved or cancelled are not included in this table.

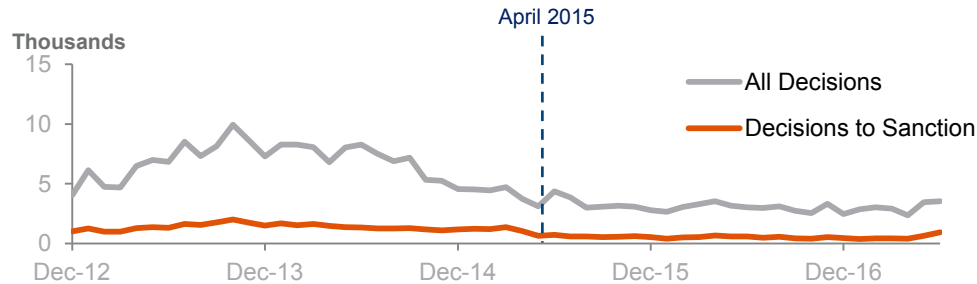
2.3 Sanction decisions process: Employment and Support Allowance (new rules) – Official Statistics

All decisions and decisions to apply a sanction by stage: Great Britain: December 2012 to June 2017

Stage 1

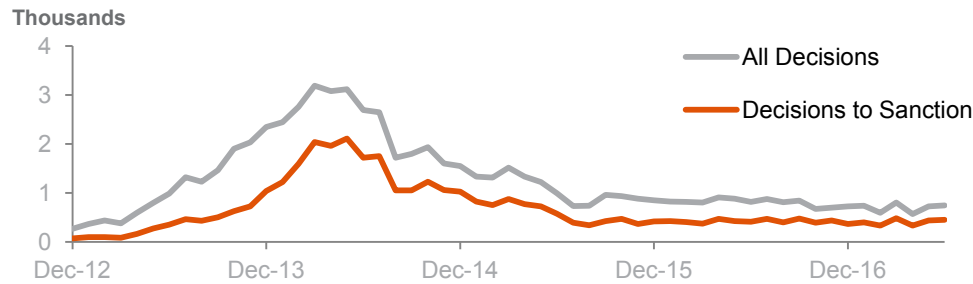
Original Decisions

A Labour Market decision maker makes the Original decision.



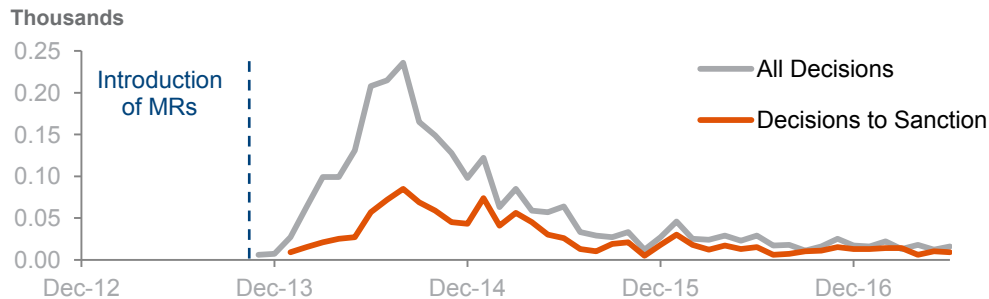
Stage 2 Decision Review

Claimants can ask for the decision to be reviewed



Stage 3 Mandatory Reconsiderations

Claimants can ask DWP to reconsider the decision.



Stage 4 Appeals

Claimants can appeal to an Independent Tribunal after formal reconsideration

Chart not shown due to low numbers, figures are accessible via [Stat-Xplore](#)

There have been 340,000 decisions in total under the new rules since December 2012. The number of ESA sanction decisions fell until April 2015 when it stabilised. Since then, the sanction decision level has not varied much at the Original decision stage.

There have been a total of 92,000 decisions to apply a sanction which accounts for 27% of all decisions made. Of the remaining 73%, 33% are decisions not to apply a sanction, and 40% are cancelled decisions.

In the latest quarter, there were 11,000 decisions. 3,000 of these were decisions to apply a sanction with 2,000 at the Original Decision stage.

Original decisions currently account for 79% of all decisions made since December 2012, and Decision Reviews account for a further 20%, whilst Mandatory Reconsiderations and Appeals make up 1% of all decisions made.

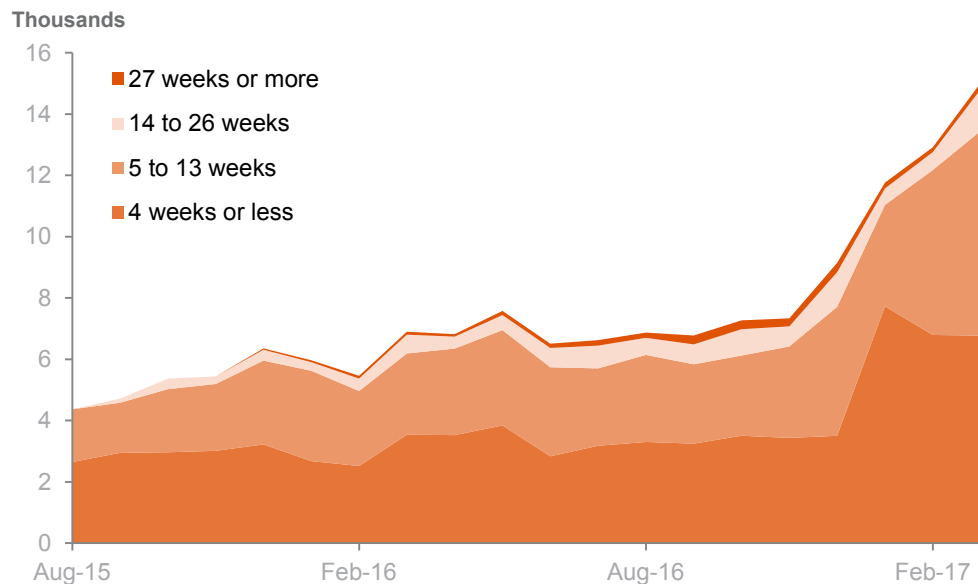
Summary of decision outcomes at each stage (Thousands)
3 Dec 2012 to 30 Jun 2017

Decision Stage	Sanction	No Sanction
Original Decisions	53.5	82.6
Decision review	37.3	30.7
Mandatory Reconsideration	1.1	1.5
Appeal	0.4	0.2
Total	92.3	115.0

Decisions that are cancelled are not included in this table.

3.1 Sanction Durations: Universal Credit (live and full service) – Experimental Statistics

Ended UC sanction durations by month: Great Britain: August 2015 to March 2017



91% of ended sanctions lasted 13 weeks or less since August 2015.

Since August 2015, half (50%) of all sanctions that ended lasted 4 weeks or less. A further 40% lasted between 5 and 13 weeks. 9% lasted over 13 weeks. However, if someone has multiple sanctions which are served without a break in deductions, this will be counted as one sanction in the statistics

Over 70% of all decisions in the last 3 months were made on the referral reason group “Work-Focussed Interviews”. For certain conditionality groups the sanction for this referral reason lasts until the claimant attends an Interview; then a sanction is applied of between 7 and 28 days. This helps to explain why such a large proportion of sanctions last 4 weeks or less.

The increase seen in the graph from November 2016 coincides with the increase in decisions made due to additional Decision Makers being available.

The median* sanction duration for March 2017 was 31 days; an increase from 28 days for the overall period August 2015 to March 2017.

Sanctions completed by length of sanction

Aug 15 to Mar 17

Length of sanction	Sanctions (Thousands)	Percentage %
4 weeks and under	75.2	50
5 to 13 weeks	60.4	40
14 to 26 weeks	11.0	7
27 weeks and over	2.7	2
Total	149.2	100



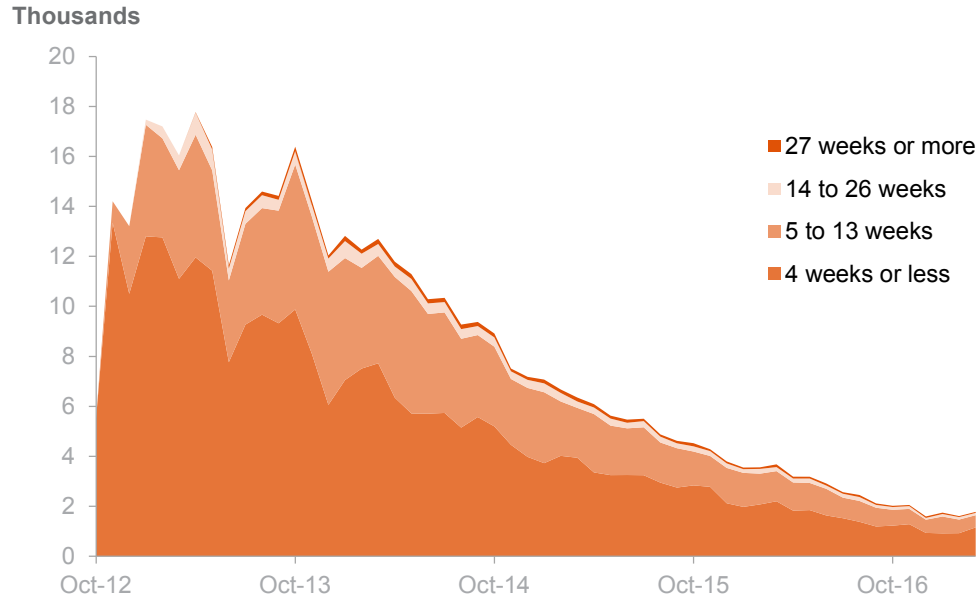
Median* UC sanction duration: (Aug 15 to Mar 17)

28 calendar days

*An explanation of the median can be found under ‘Durations’ on page 3.

3.2 Sanction Durations: Jobseeker's Allowance – Experimental Statistics

Ended JSA sanction durations by month: Great Britain: October 2012 to March 2017



Since October 2012 95% of ended sanctions lasted 13 weeks or less.

Since October 2012, almost two-thirds (63%) of all sanctions that ended lasted 4 weeks or less, a further 32% lasted between 5 and 13 weeks. 5% lasted over 13 weeks. However, if someone has multiple sanctions which are served without a break in deductions, this will be counted as one sanction in the statistics

Nearly 80% of all decisions in the last three months were made on the referral reason groups Work Programme and Work-Focussed Interviews. The sanction for these referral reasons for the first failure lasts 4 weeks. This helps to explain why such a large proportion of sanctions last 4 weeks and under.

The median* sanction duration is 28 days for the overall period October 2012 to March 2017.

Sanctions completed by length of sanction

Oct 12 to Mar 17

Length of sanction	Sanctions (Thousands)	Percentage %
4 weeks and under	279.9	63
5 to 13 weeks	139.6	32
14 to 26 weeks	16.7	4
27 weeks and over	5.4	1
Total	441.7	100

*An explanation of the median can be found under 'Durations' on page 3.

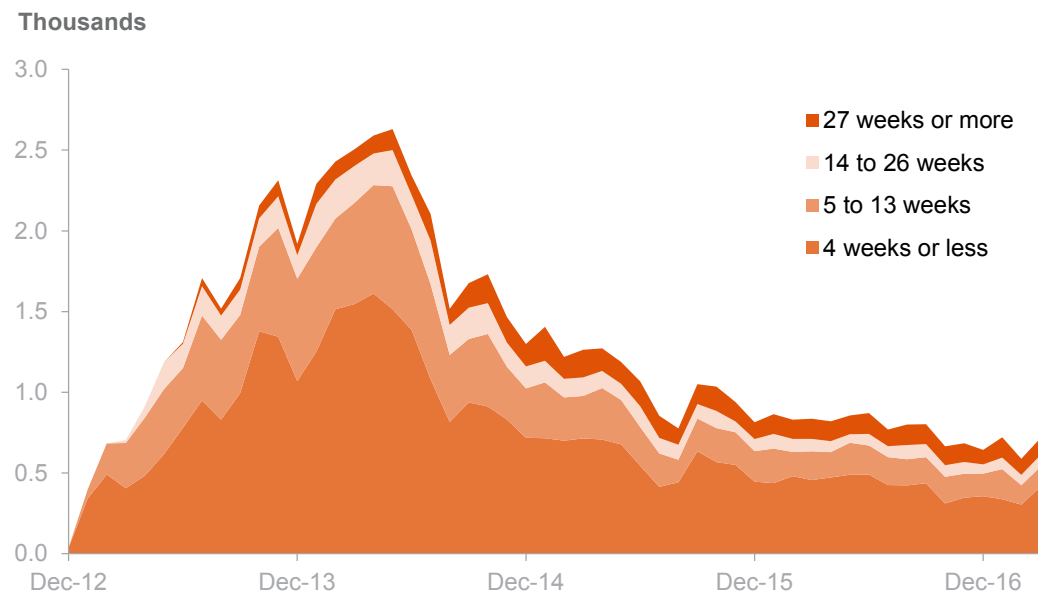


Median* JSA sanction duration: (Oct 12 to Mar 17)

28 calendar days

3.3 Sanction Durations: Employment and Support Allowance – Experimental Statistics

Ended ESA sanction durations by month: Great Britain December 2012 to March 2017



Since December 2012 82% of ended sanctions lasted 13 weeks or less

Since December 2012, over half (57%) of all sanctions that ended lasted 4 weeks or less, a further 26% lasted between 5 and 13 weeks and 18% lasted over 13 weeks.

ESA sanctions are open-ended until the claimant complies with the interview requirement or work-related activity that they failed to attend or participate in. Once the claimant re-complies, a fixed-length sanction is imposed of 1, 2 or 4 weeks. This means that a sanction of longer than 4 weeks will be due to a claimant failing to re-comply or where an individual has multiple sanctions which are served without a break in deductions. These multiple sanctions will be counted as one sanction in the statistics

The median* sanction duration is 28 days for the overall period of December 2012 to March 2017.



Median* ESA sanction duration: (Dec 12 to Mar 17)

28 calendar days

Sanctions completed by length of sanction

Dec 12 to Mar 17

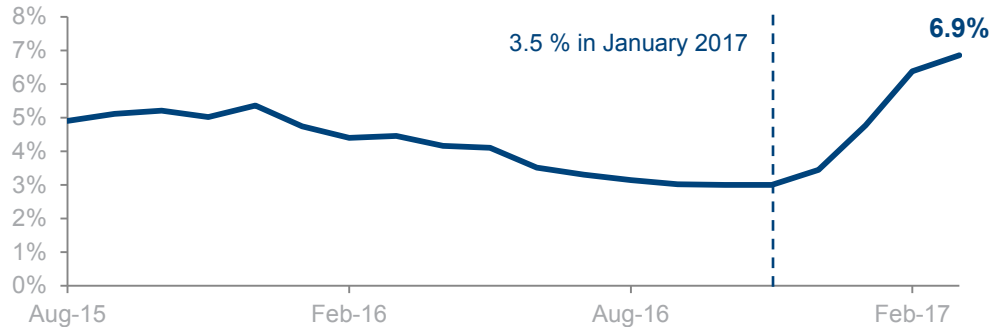
Length of sanction	Sanctions (Thousands)	Percentages %
4 weeks and under	37.1	57
5 to 13 weeks	16.7	26
14 to 26 weeks	6.2	10
27 weeks and over	5.4	8
Total	65.5	100

*An explanation of the median can be found under 'Durations' on page 3.

4.1 Benefit Sanction Rates – Experimental Statistics

The sanction rate is calculated as the proportion of people on each benefit at a point in time with a deduction from their benefit due to a sanction

All UC claimants (live and full service), with a sanction deduction, as a proportion of UC claimants: Great Britain: August 2015 to March 2017

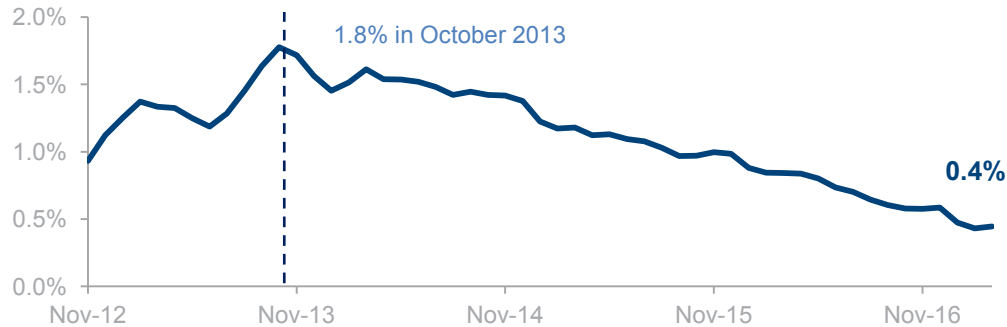


In March 2017, 6.9% of people on UC had a deduction taken from their standard allowance as a result of a sanction.

The experimental monthly rate of UC claimants (both live and full service) with a sanction deduction has increased steadily over the last quarter as a consequence of the increase in sanction decisions at the end of 2016.

This was due to the allocation of more Decision Makers, to deal with a buildup in referrals awaiting decisions.

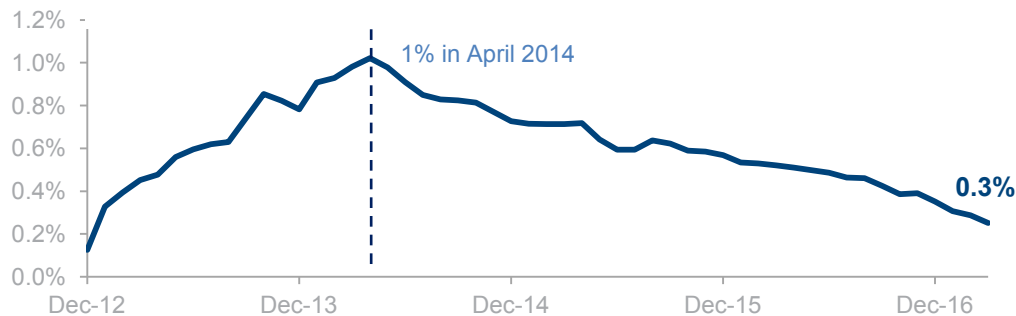
JSA claimants, with a sanction deduction, as a proportion of JSA claimants: Great Britain: November 2012 to March 2017



In March 2017, 0.4% of people on JSA had a deduction taken from their payment as a result of a sanction.

The experimental monthly rate of JSA claimants with a sanction deduction has decreased steadily over the past three years from a peak of 1.8% in October 2013, in line with the decrease in JSA sanction decisions.

ESA WRAG claimants, with a sanction deduction, as a proportion of ESA WRAG claimants: Great Britain: December 2012 to March 2017



In March 2017, 0.3% of people in the ESA WRAG had a deduction taken from their personal allowance as a result of a sanction.

The experimental monthly rate of ESA WRAG claimants with a sanction deduction has fallen steadily from its peak of 1% in April 2014.

Sanction statistics between benefits are not directly comparable as the policies for each benefit are very different.

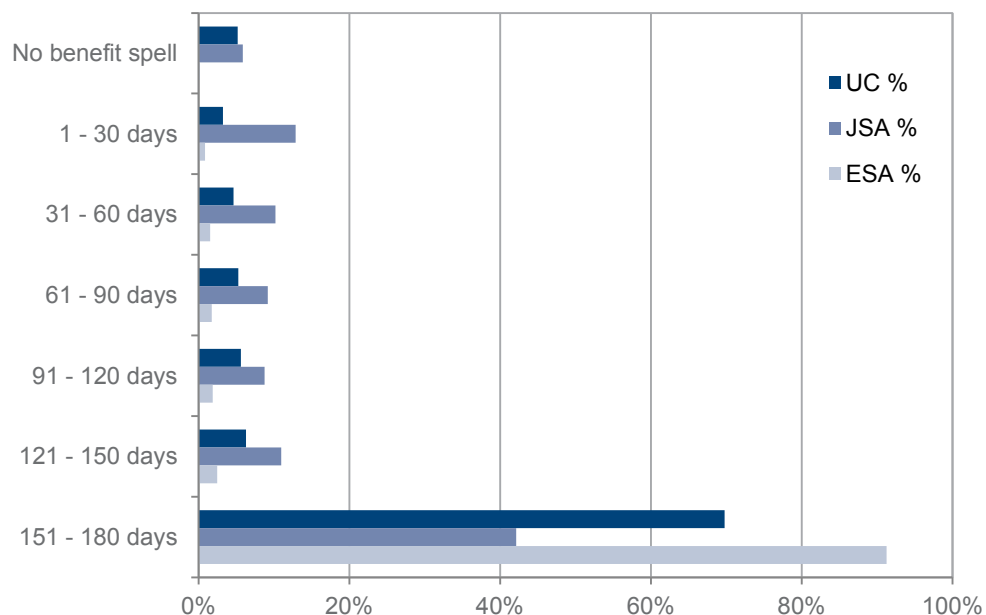
5.1 Benefit destinations of claimants receiving a benefit sanction – Experimental Statistics

Decisions made from 1st August 2015 for UC live service, 22nd October 2012 for JSA, 3rd December 2012 for ESA WRAG to 31st December 2016 are included.

Mean number of days spent on working age benefit* in the 180 days following a sanction

Sanctioned benefit	Days on sanctioned benefit	Days on other benefits*	Total days spent on benefit post-sanction	Total as % of 180 days
UC	144	2	146	81
JSA	97	14	111	62
ESA	167	4	171	95

Distribution of number of days spent on any working age* benefit in the 180 days following a sanction decision



*UC, JSA, ESA, or IS

Universal Credit – live service

After receiving a UC sanction decision, claimants spent an average of 146 days out of the following 180 days in receipt of benefit (UC, JSA, ESA or IS). On average, only 2 of the 180 days were spent on a benefit that was not UC.

In the 180 days following a UC sanction decision, 5% of claimants were not in receipt of any of the tracked benefit. Around 70% of claimants spent over 150 days in receipt of benefit and 63% of claimants spent the full 180 days in receipt of benefit.

Jobseeker's Allowance

After receiving a JSA sanction decision, claimants spent an average of 111 days out of the following 180 days in receipt of benefit (JSA, UC, ESA or IS). On average, 14 of the 180 days were spent on a benefit that was not JSA.

In the 180 days following a JSA sanction decision, 6% of claimants were not in receipt of any of the tracked benefits. Around 42% of claimants spent over 150 days in receipt of benefit and 27% of claimants spent the full 180 days in receipt of benefit.

Employment and Support Allowance (WRAG)

After receiving an ESA WRAG sanction decision, claimants spent an average of 171 days out of the following 180 days in receipt of benefit (ESA, UC, JSA or IS). On average, only 4 of the 180 days were spent on a benefit that was not ESA.

In the 180 days following an ESA sanction decision, less than 1% of claimants were not in receipt of any of the tracked benefit. Around 91% of claimants spent over 150 days in receipt of benefit and 86% of claimants spent the full 180 days in receipt of benefit.

Sanctions and processes

A sanction referral can pass through several decision-making stages before a final decision is made. Therefore, the latest months will always contain a higher proportion of sanctions which have not yet had the chance to be reviewed or appealed, and may be challenged in subsequent months.

The outcome of the sanction may change between publications due to retrospection (the updating of all changes to previous decisions with every publication). The main impact will be seen over the last three months compared to the previous publication.

Where a claimants' benefit is reduced due to a sanction, hardship payments may be available.

Sanction statistics between benefits are not directly comparable as the policies for each benefit are very different. For example, under JSA if a claimant fails to attend a meeting with their advisor and do not make contact within 5 days, their claim is terminated. Under UC, these claimants are instead referred for a sanction.

Jobseeker's Allowance Sanctions

JSA sanctions involve a removal of benefit.

There was a regime change on 22nd October 2012 that affected the duration of a sanction.

JSA sanction level durations since October 2012:

- Lower - 4 or 13 weeks
- Intermediate – Claim be ended (disallowed). The claimant will then usually have to reclaim JSA to continue their claim. This will then be followed by a 4 or 13 weeks sanction
- Higher – 13, 26, or 156 weeks

Universal Credit Sanctions

UC sanctions reduce a claimant's Universal Credit award by an amount that is not more than their standard allowance element only, and is dependent on the claimants' conditionality group.

UC covers a wider range of claimants than JSA, ESA, and IS individually as it combines the benefits, and sanctions policy is different to reflect this.

UC is now available in all Jobcentre Plus areas to single claimants (live service), and is being expanded across the country to include all claimant types via the full service. We anticipate that additional information will be included on UC as quality assurance of the data progresses.

UC figures date from August 2015. The number of UC decisions made in any month depends on a number of factors, such as: the number and complexity of the referrals, the number of people on UC, and the resource available to undertake the decision making process. This differs from the legacy benefits (JSA, ESA, and IS) as UC claims are growing as UC rolls out, replacing the legacy benefits.

UC sanction level durations:

- Lowest – Lasts until the claimant attends their Work-Focussed Interview
- Low – Until the claimant recompiles, followed by a 7, 14, or 28 day sanction
- Medium – 28 or 96 days
- High – 96, 182 or 1095 day sanction

Employment and Support Allowance Sanctions

ESA sanctions involve the removal of the Personal Allowance aspect of the benefit and only apply to the ESA claimants in the Work-Related Activity Group. There was a regime change on 3rd December 2012 that affected the duration of a sanction. ESA sanctions since December 2012 are open-ended until the claimant complies with the interview requirement or work-related activity. A fixed-length sanction of 1, 2 or 4 weeks is then applied to the claim.

Income Support Sanctions

IS sanctions involve a 20% reduction in the Personal Allowance aspect of the benefit and are open-ended until the claimant complies with the interview requirement or work-related activity.

From April 2016, IS sanction decisions started to go through the same system as ESA and JSA sanction decisions allowing standardisation across the benefits. This has enabled data on IS sanctions to be presented in a similar way to that of JSA and ESA for the first time. From October 2016, all decisions should be recorded in Decision Making and Appeals System, the system where JSA and ESA sanction decisions are recorded). For this reason, IS figures run from October 2016.

Previously IS Lone Parent sanctions have been published using a different methodology and therefore are not comparable. More information about the new methodology can be found [here](#).

For further information on the benefits and statistics, see the Background Information and Methodology documents [here](#).

About these statistics

The statistics in this publication are for Great Britain. A background and methodology document can be found [here](#)

Other National and Official Statistics

Details of other National and Official Statistics produced by the Department for Work and Pensions can be found via the following link:

- A schedule of statistical releases and a list of the most recent releases: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/statistics>

Known issues, changes and revisions

This release includes Experimental Statistics for the duration and rate of a UC, JSA and ESA sanction. The rate differs from previous reported methodologies as the point-in-time figure is now available through the development of duration measures.

The sanctions process means that the outcome of a sanction is subject to retrospective changes which should be considered when using the decision data.

Users should be aware that there are differences between sanctions policy across benefits that will affect comparisons.

The UC sanctions statistics now include UC live service and full service for the duration and point in time statistics. Data on sanction decisions and destinations is only for live service; full service will be added as availability and quality assurance of the data progresses.

Care must be taken when interpreting the duration charts and figures as, for fair comparisons, sufficient time must have passed before longer duration categories can be achieved e.g. sanctions lasting 27 weeks or more starting in January 2016 would not begin to be cleared until July 2016. Deductions can end for a number of reasons, such as the claimant leaves benefit, transfers to a different conditionality group, or the claimant is earning enough on UC that they no longer have any standard allowance from which a deduction can be taken. These statistics include those sanctions which subsequently go on to be overturned. Claimants whose sanction is overturned will be repaid any deduction. When a claimant leaves benefit following a sanction start, but before the sanction is served, the claim end date is taken to be the sanction end date. In the cases where a sanction end date is the same date as the sanction start (the claimant serves zero days of sanction), the cases are not counted as a sanction served and are excluded from the data.

Contact information and feedback

For more information, please contact Tracy Hills at tracy.hills@dwp.gsi.gov.uk.

DWP would like to hear your views on our statistical publications. If you use any of our statistics publications, we would be interested in hearing what you use them for and how well they meet your requirements. Please email DWP at stats-consultation@dwp.gsi.gov.uk.

Users can also join the “Welfare and Benefit Statistics” community at: <http://www.statsusernet.org.uk> DWP announces items of interest to users via this forum, as well as replying to users’ questions.