

Claimant Service and Experience Survey 2017/18

Methodological Note

31 January 2019

Contents

- 1 Background 1
 - 1.1 Rationale for the survey 1
 - 1.2 Survey overview 2
 - 1.3 Policy changes 2
 - 1.4 Code of Practice for Statistics 3
- 2 Sampling 6
 - 2.1 Sampling undertaken by DWP 6
 - 2.2 Sampling undertaken by Kantar Public 10
- 3 Questionnaire 11
 - 3.1 Questionnaire structure 11
 - 3.2 Changes to existing questions 12
- 4 Fieldwork and Response 15
 - 4.1 Fieldwork 15
 - 4.2 Response 15
- 5 Data management, coding and weighting 22
 - 5.1 Data management 22
 - 5.2 Coding 22
 - 5.3 Weighting 22
- Appendix A 26

1 Background

1.1 Rationale for the survey

The Claimant Service and Experience Survey (CSES) allows the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to monitor claimant satisfaction with the services provided by DWP and to enable claimant views to inform improvements to the delivery of benefits and services.

The survey includes a range of measures on the four areas of the DWP customer charter¹:

- Ease of access
- Getting it right
- Keeping you informed
- Right treatment.

The Charter provides a standard and focus for driving improvements in customer service standards and service delivery. It supports the Department's ambition to become an exemplar of effective service delivery. As well as collecting a measure of claimants' overall satisfaction with DWP services, the survey quantifies DWP's performance on satisfaction with claimants' transactions and Jobcentre Plus services, and explores the underlying measures that make up the four areas of the Customer Charter. It also measures the use and effectiveness of different channels of communication, with specific interest in the customer journey.

The survey focuses on ten key benefits: State Pension (SP); Pension Credit (PC); Attendance Allowance (AA); Carer's Allowance (CA); Disability Living Allowance for children (DLAc); Personal Independence Payment (PIP); Employment and Support Allowance (ESA); Income Support (IS); Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA); and Universal Credit (UC), comprised of Universal Credit Live Service (UCLS) and Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS).

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-customer-charter/our-customer-charter>

1.2 Survey overview

Kantar Public conducted a Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) survey with 15,514 claimants² between 3 August 2017 and 8 May 2018. Fieldwork was conducted across four quarterly waves lasting just over one month each quarter. To be eligible for the survey, a claimant must have been in receipt of a benefit administered by DWP and have been in contact with the Department regarding that benefit in the three months prior to the date on which the sample was drawn. This ensured that claimants' responses to the survey were informed by recent experience of interacting with DWP.

1.3 Policy changes

1.3.1 Personal Independence Payment

The composition of the population of Disability Living Allowance claimants continues to change as working age claimants are phased on to Personal Independence Payment. Remaining working age Disability Living Allowance claimants who had not migrated to Personal Independent Payment were not included in the 2017/18 survey. In August 2017, there were just over 1.5m Personal Independence Payment claims in payment (and 1.0m DLA working-age claims in payment). This rose to just over 1.8m Personal Independence Payment claims in payment by May 2018 (and 0.8m DLA working-age claims in payment)

In the 2016/17 survey, separate quotas were set within the Disability Living Allowance benefit group to have equal numbers of Disability Living Allowance Working Age and Disability Living Allowance Child claimants. This resulted in a different distribution of types of Disability Living Allowance claimant to 2015/16. These changes to the Disability Living Allowance benefit group sample composition mean that results from 2017/18 are not directly comparable with previous years.

1.3.2 Universal Credit

In April 2013 Universal Credit Live Service was introduced for claimants within certain geographic areas. It has been available across Great Britain for single people claiming income-based Jobseeker's Allowance since March 2016 but stopped accepting brand new claims in January 2018. Universal Credit Full Service was introduced in a small number of areas in November 2014. DWP has continued to roll out the full service more widely since May 2016.

² Or the claimant's nominated appointee. Full details of eligibility are given in Section 2.1.1

In August 2017, there were just over 600,000 Universal Credit claims in payment. This rose to just over 830,000 Universal Credit claims in payment by May 2018.

This year, for the first time the survey included samples for both Universal Credit Full Service as well as Universal Credit Live Service – further guidance on Full and Live Service is available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-full-service-and-live-service>.

Following the inclusion of Universal Credit Full Service claimants in the 2017/18 survey, the 2017/18 report presents findings for both types of Universal Credit together. These changes to the Universal Credit benefit group sample composition mean that results from 2017/18 are not directly comparable with previous years.

1.3.3 State Pension

The State Pension age for women has been gradually increasing since April 2010. State Pension age for women increased from 64 years 1 month in August 2017 to 65 years 7 months in May 2018.

1.4 Code of Practice for Statistics

Although this report is not an Official Statistic or National Statistic, this publication has made an active choice to apply the Code.

The code is built around three main concepts, or pillars:

- **Trustworthiness:** Having confidence in the people and organisations that publish statistics
- **Quality:** Using data and methods that produce assured statistics
- **Value:** Publishing statistics that support society's needs for information.

We have applied the pillars of the code in a proportionate way, as follows.

1.4.1 Trustworthiness (trusted people, systems and processes)

This report is published on an annual basis, following the completion of fieldwork. The current contract will produce a further report for 2018/19.

The work was conducted independently by Kantar Public.

The survey has robust processes to protect data confidentiality and to ensure legal obligations are met. Kantar Public abide by Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Kantar Public also adheres to the Market Research Society's code of conduct.

Sample files containing the contact details of sampled claimants are kept separately and securely away from survey and can only be accessed by the research team at

Kantar Public. Only anonymised responses are delivered as the survey output. DWP cannot identify who from the original drawn sample took part in the survey.

1.4.2 Quality (robust data, methods and processes)

We seek through this report to be transparent about the methods and data used as well as any sources of uncertainty. Where appropriate, we note any limitations in data sources used. We also note any issues in data comparability over time, changes to the benefit landscape which change comparability as well as changes to methodological approaches (for instance, sampling).

The data contained within this report has been scrutinised and approved both within DWP and by the independent contractor Kantar Public (a full list of checks are included in section 5.1)

Once the data contained within the report (including data tables) has been through Kantar Public's quality assurance processes, DWP quality assure the data through a rigorous process of checking the SPSS syntax used and further reproduction of data tables, highlighting and investigating any discrepancies.

It should be noted that the sample population is those that have contacted DWP three months prior to the sample being drawn. This is referred to as the 'contacting population' and is quite distinct from the overall DWP claimant population, many of whom may not have any (or very rare) contact with the Department.

The sampling approach is intended to be as representative as is possible of the aforesaid 'contacting population' but there are some key limitations:

- For some benefits, the sample sizes are smaller and therefore findings are less robust (for further details see section 2)

The sample is a quota sample, designed to meet target interview numbers for each benefit group. Therefore, strictly speaking, statistical significance tests, that assume a random probability sample, should not be applied. However, we have conducted indicative tests on data that we describe in the main report to help identify likely substantive trends. Value (statistics that serves the public good)

The data contained within this report is used to report on claimant satisfaction with DWP services across the ten main benefits and ultimately to inform delivery improvements and measure performance. The figures provide an overview of claimant satisfaction and associated measures relating to the DWP Customer Charter (ease of access, right treatment, getting it right, and keeping you informed) so the public can see the levels of claimant satisfaction with DWP services across a number of different measures. Results can also be broken down by equality characteristics.

It is used by Ministers and other senior staff to inform decisions on the best ways to provide high quality services in the most efficient manner to claimants.

The report is often used as a basis for further ad-hoc requests from external stakeholders, for example in the form of Parliamentary Questions or Freedom of Information Requests.

2 Sampling

2.1 Sampling undertaken by DWP

2.1.1 Sample eligibility

In order to provide useful information about the current state of service, the survey sampling strategy was designed to provide a representative cross-section of DWP claimants who have had recent contact with the department.³ A claimant was defined as somebody currently claiming (or having recently claimed) one of the following:

- State Pension
- Pension Credit
- Attendance Allowance
- Carer's Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Personal Independence Payment
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support Jobseeker's Allowance
- Universal Credit

As discussed in section 1.3, the survey must keep pace with structural changes in the benefit landscape. During 2016/17, the rollout of Universal Credit, designed to replace six existing benefits and tax credits, continued. Existing claimants of Universal Credit Live Service (primarily single unemployed claimants) were joined by claimants of Universal Credit Full Service as the full digitally delivered benefit was rolled out to all eligible claimants. The 2016/17 survey covered only claimants of Universal Credit Live Service but the 2017/18 report incorporates weighted data for both Universal Credit Live Service and Universal Credit Full Service claimants, providing a combined Universal Credit measure.

Further, the size and composition of the population of Disability Living Allowance claimants was changing as working age claimants were migrated on to Personal Independence Payment. The 2017/18 report therefore only includes a sample for Disability Living Allowance for children (under 16).

³ 'Recent contact' is defined as contact between DWP and a DWP claimant taking place in up to three calendar months before the sample was drawn by DWP (but no earlier). Contact is defined as any time a DWP claimant has phoned, written a letter, emailed, visited a jobcentre, filled in an online form, or got in touch with a DWP representative. Contact is also any time someone from DWP has phoned, emailed, texted or sent a letter to a DWP claimant.

As well as those receiving benefits directly, appointees, persons appointed by DWP to act on behalf of claimants deemed incapable of acting on their own behalf, were also defined as DWP claimants; as were parents or guardians of claimants of Disability Living Allowance for children below the age of 16.

All 'professional' claimant representatives were excluded from the research (e.g. Citizens' Advice, solicitors making contact on behalf of a client, MPs making contact on behalf of a constituent). These parties were considered to be likely to make contact on behalf of a number of different people and therefore their responses an 'average' of all their contact with DWP, rather than being focused on a specific transaction.

2.1.2 Sample frame

The sample frame was established by including instances of contact that can be measured using available administrative data. Three different contact types are identified in the sample, namely new claims, change of circumstances and mandatory contact. However, DWP do not stratify by these contact types.

The sample was drawn from DWP administrative datasets that are derived from operational management information. All datasets can be used to identify claimants who have made a new claim. Similarly, all datasets – apart from Universal Credit Live Service and Universal Credit Full Service⁴ – were used to identify claimants who have been in contact with DWP to report a change of circumstance (bank details, address, marital status etc.).

Working age benefits require claimants to keep in regular contact with the Department, usually through an appointment at the local Jobcentre. All Universal Credit Live Service and Jobseeker's Allowance claimants who appeared in DWP administrative data as claiming these benefits during the preceding three-month period were therefore included in the sample frame, as were relevant sub-categories of Employment and Support Allowance (those required to take part in work-related activity or work-focussed interviews) and Income Support (lone parent obligations).

This served as an effective sample frame, allowing for the identification of claimants who had contact with DWP during the designated three-month contact period.

Some claimants were excluded from taking part in the survey for ethical reasons in line with Government Social Research practice. Claimants were excluded from being selected for the sample if they were identified as one or more of the following:

- Terminally ill
- Over 90 years old
- Potentially violent

⁴ Due to the limitation of the UC datasets, it was not possible to accurately extract and identify claimants with a 'change of circumstances'.

- Requested not to be contacted for any DWP survey
- A sensitive case (claimants whose details had been screened out due to severe implications if their private data fell into the public domain)
- A prisoner
- A person whose address is registered as the local Jobcentre (considered to be homeless)
- Someone previously sampled in a DWP survey in the last three years.

To create the final sample, duplicate cases were removed, for instance in circumstances where a claimant had claimed more than one benefit, had switched between benefits within the three-month period, or where there were data quality issues that created multiple cases for one claimant.

Further cases were removed where relevant contact details were not available, for instance a claimant's name, address or telephone number.

In line with 2016/17 methodology, the CSES excludes disallowed claims at the point of drawing the sample, although there is scope for disallowed claims to be included in fieldwork due to the time-lag between drawing the sample and interviewing claimants.

Historically, benefit satisfaction surveys were conducted by separate surveys of each DWP benefit group. The Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance survey included disallowed claimants while surveys of other benefit groups did not. When these separate surveys were grouped into the CSES, the sample of Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Personal Independence Payment claimants continued to include disallowed cases, and it was therefore decided to revert to a consistent approach across all benefits from 2015/16. Therefore, the survey results of Personal Independence Payment and Employment and Support Allowance are comparable between 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18.

However, after the sample is drawn and before the fieldwork takes place (which can extend up to three months), a claimant may withdraw their claim or have it disallowed for various reasons, including a failed medical assessment. Therefore, some people with disallowed claims may be interviewed.

2.1.3 Sample selection

Once the sample contact population had been defined, the sample itself was broken down by benefit into smaller sample datasets dependent on a number of factors; for instance, the number of live claims for that benefit, the frequency of internal reporting and policy interest. For instance, the interview quota for key working-age benefits (Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Universal Credit Live Service and Universal Credit Full Service) was set at higher levels than disability or pension-age benefits (Attendance Allowance, State Pension, Pension Credit, Personal Independence Payment, Disability Living Allowance) to ensure the number of interviews for those benefits allows for robust quarterly and regional analysis. A

weighting adjustment is used to correct for this differential sampling probability when reporting at whole sample level (see section 5.3).

As Disability Living Allowance Working Age is being replaced by Personal Independence Payment for almost all claimants, the Disability Living Allowance quota now only includes Disability Living Allowance Child claimants and no longer includes Disability Living Allowance Working Age claimants. These changes to the Disability Living Allowance benefit group sample composition mean that results from 2017/18 are not directly comparable with previous years.

The number of interviews for each benefit can be found in Table 4.1 (under 'Achieved Interviews').

2.2 Sampling undertaken by Kantar Public

The sample provided by DWP was reviewed and cleaned by Kantar Public before any telephone interviewing took place.

2.2.1 Sample checks

Kantar Public also conducted checks on the sample. These checks included:

- Comparison between the agreed sample numbers and total numbers for each benefit group delivered by DWP, to ensure they matched.
- Checks that all sample variables within each benefit were fully populated. These variables were later used for weighting.
- Comparisons between the demographic categories for each benefit against the claimant contacting population to ensure they were broadly representative. For example, the proportion of males and females should be broadly similar in both the total contacting population and sample. Discrepancies were queried with DWP before proceeding.

2.2.2 Sample cleaning

Kantar Public cleaned the sample file, provided by DWP, to create a final sample file to load into the NIPO Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) server for fieldwork. The following processes were undertaken:

- Any records with a missing or invalid telephone number were removed.
- Any record showing a duplicate telephone number, contact name or address. Where duplicate telephone numbers exist, one record is selected at random to leave one unique record for each sampled claimant.

2.2.3 Final sample files

Two files were then created:

- An advance letter dispatch file (see section 4.1.2)
- A file for the Telephone Unit to load into the NIPO CATI server.

3 Questionnaire

3.1 Questionnaire structure

The core modules of questions were broadly consistent with the 2016/17 survey. The survey was structured into four sections: introduction, getting key information, transaction-related questions and general questions. The latter two sections collected information for DWP's four customer charter metrics. The content of these sections is described below. A flowchart of the questionnaire structure is included in figure 3.1.

3.1.1 Introduction

This section introduced the survey, confirmed the claimant's benefit group as defined by the sample, and confirmed that the claimant had been in contact with DWP in the three months prior to interview. Claimants who self-reported no contact with DWP in the previous three months were deemed ineligible and excluded from the survey at this point.

3.1.2 Getting key information

Establishing the type of transaction

This section collected information to determine the routing for the remainder of the questionnaire. The first part asked a question to establish the type of transaction undertaken with DWP within the past three months. As it is often the case that claimants have had multiple contacts with DWP in the three months prior to interview, the question is structured using a selection list. The list was read out in strict order until the claimant identified a transaction they had undertaken (for a complete list and the order, see Appendix A).

Communication channel

The second part of this section included questions to identify the modes of contact used to contact the Department both initially and in any subsequent contact, and similarly to identify the modes of contact and experience of claimants when contacted by the Department.

3.1.3 Transaction related questions

In this section, claimants were asked for more detail about their experience of contact with DWP for their transaction, according to the mode of contact used. The types of contact covered were:

- Online
- Telephone (calling DWP)
- Telephone (receiving a call from DWP)
- Written contact (post, email and text message)
- Face-to-face
- Online account

If a claimant's transaction had involved contact with a member of DWP staff, they were asked further questions on responsiveness and the outcome of the transaction. This covered topics that were related to the DWP Customer Charter, including whether staff were helpful, polite, understanding, fair and sympathetic, and whether the information provided by DWP staff was correct.

3.1.4 General questions

To gather more information about the effectiveness of different modes of contact, a series of more general questions about points of contact with DWP were asked at the end of the questionnaire. These questions were not related to claimant's recent transaction. Claimants were asked questions on the following:

- The accuracy and clarity of information provided by DWP
- Whether problems or complaints were resolved
- Different communication channels used for contacts outside of the transaction and their overall experiences.

The survey then concluded with a question asking for the claimant's overall satisfaction with DWP services before collecting demographic details.

3.2 Changes to existing questions

The overall structure of the 2017/18 questionnaire was largely unchanged. However, questions relating to Universal Credit and online accounts were added or amended.

Wording changes were made to two questions in 2017/18 survey, meaning that comparisons could not be made with previous years. These were:

- Whether the claimant had access to the internet at their home

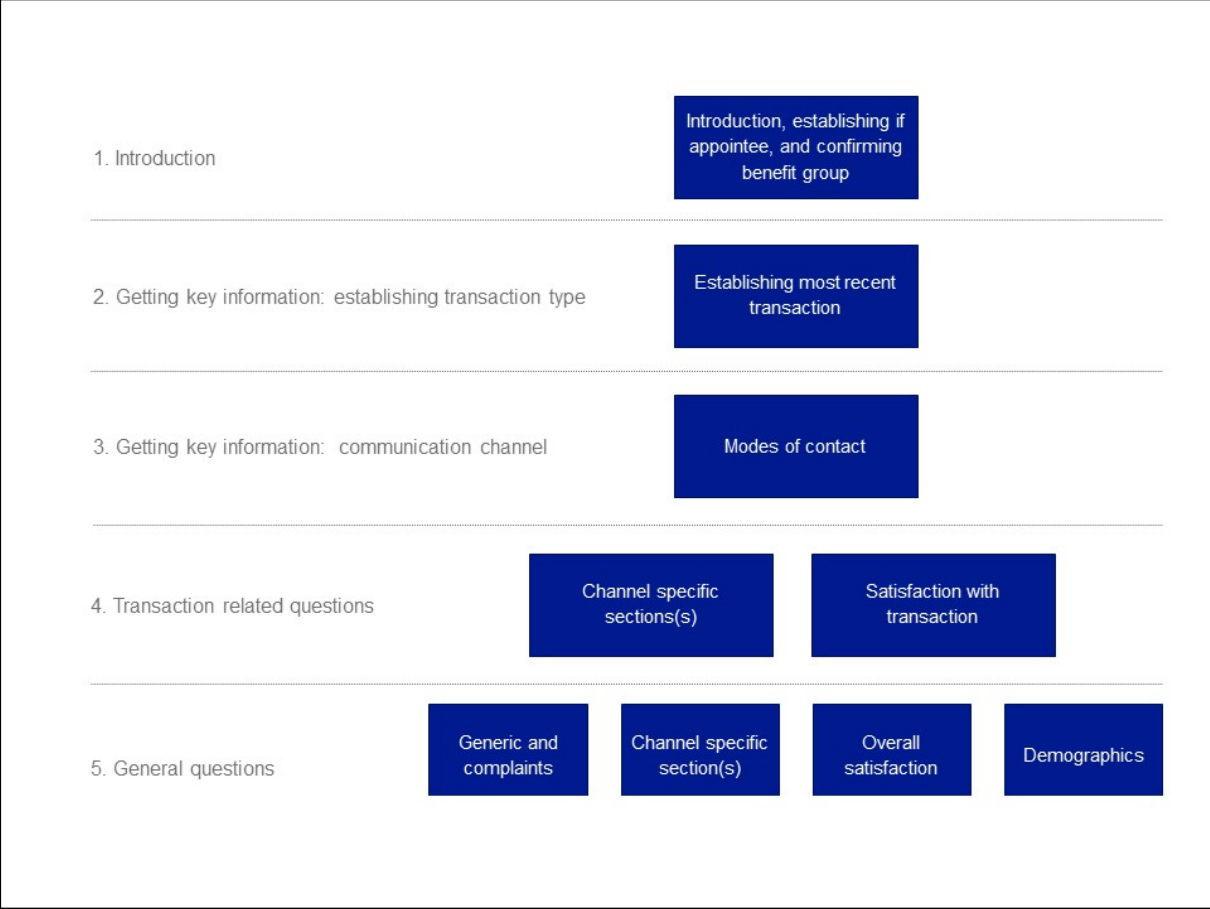
- Where they usually accessed the internet outside of their home

Other minor updates and changes to the questionnaire were made to reflect changing categories and definition, and in response to feedback on the operation of the questionnaire from interviewers and on areas of policy interest from stakeholders.

A number of questions underwent substantial changes in the 2016/17 survey, meaning that comparisons cannot be made across the last three years. This was either due to routing changes, the addition of new questions, or changes to the response lists. These included whether:

- there was telephone contact during the transaction
- the claimant visited gov.uk during the transaction
- the claimant visited the Jobcentre during the transaction
- the claimant received or sent a letter during transaction
- the claimant received or sent an email during transaction
- the claimant received a text message during transaction.

Figure 3.1: Questionnaire structure



4 Fieldwork and Response

4.1 Fieldwork

4.1.1 Interviewer training

Many of Kantar's interviewers had experience of working on the survey in previous years. All interviewers attended an internal briefing conducted by Telephone Unit managers. This was supplemented by a further briefing by the research teams at Kantar Public and DWP to explain the purpose of the survey and questionnaire structure. Kantar's quality control exceeds ISO 20252 prescribed standards with at least seven per cent of completed interviews monitored. Call introductions were monitored throughout the fieldwork period and interviewers regularly received feedback and coaching.

4.1.2 Advance letters and opt outs

All claimants or, if applicable, their appointees in the supplied sample were sent an advance letter two weeks before the start of fieldwork. This letter explained the purpose of the study, reasons for their inclusion in the sample and how the survey would take place. In Wales, letters were produced in both English and Welsh.

The letters included a Freepost address and Freephone number for claimants to contact if they did not wish to be contacted further (opt out) or if they required help or further information about the study. The record of anyone who contacted Kantar Public to opt out before the start of fieldwork was removed before the final sample was delivered to the Telephone Unit. After that point, if a claimant opted out, their record was removed from the Telephone Unit sample file directly.

4.1.3 Main fieldwork period

In total, 15,514 interviews were carried out during four quarterly waves of fieldwork as detailed below:

- Quarter 1: 3 August 2017 – 6 September 2017
- Quarter 2: 16 October 2017 – 18 November 2017
- Quarter 3: 18 January 2018 – 21 February 2018
- Quarter 4: 3 April 2018 – 8 May 2018.

4.2 Response

DWP set quota targets by benefit for each quarter to achieve the minimum number of interviews proportionate to the population of claimants who had contacted DWP in the three-month sample period, and to allow for sub-group analysis.

Table 4.1 summarises the interviews achieved by benefit across each fieldwork period.

Table 4.1: breakdown of achieved interviews by sampled benefit and quarter, 2017/18

Benefit	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Total
State Pension	99	118	118	117	452
Pension Credit	114	113	113	112	452
Attendance Allowance	114	113	113	113	453
Carer's Allowance	112	114	113	113	452
DLA	113	113	114	112	452
Personal Independence Payment	200	200	200	201	801
Employment and Support Allowance	749	754	750	747	3,000
Income Support	108	101	121	122	452
Jobseeker's Allowance	750	751	750	749	3,000
Universal Credit Live Service	752	752	750	746	3,000
Universal Credit Full Service	750	750	754	746	3,000
Total	3,861	3,879	3,896	3,878	15,514

In total, Kantar Public interviewed 26 per cent of the final resolved eligible sample.⁵

The definition of the final resolved eligible sample includes claimants who were eligible for an interview and where a final outcome was recorded.⁶ This could either be a completed interview or a refusal to take part, either prior to fieldwork or when contacted by an interviewer.⁷ The definition of final resolved eligible sample excludes:

- claimants who died.
- claimants with invalid or incorrect telephone numbers.
- cases where a named claimant was unknown at the telephone number recorded in the sample.
- ineligible sample members. These are claimants who were not in contact with DWP in the three months prior to interview (or could not recall contact).

This figure should not be considered a response rate. DWP set quotas for the number of interviews required by benefit group. Once this quota is met, Kantar Public cease attempting to contact claimants in this benefit group.

The overall conversion rate was 17 per cent. This is calculated as the amount of interviews achieved as a proportion of the overall fieldwork sample (based on the number of advance letters sent out). This figure includes ineligible claimants.

Table 4.2 provides further information on conversation rate calculations.

⁵ For an introduction to the computation of response and non-response rates see 'Chapter 6: Non response in sample surveys' in Groves R M et al. (2009) *Survey Methodology* 2nd ed. Hoboken, Wiley., *Second Edition*

⁶ A fieldwork outcome is recorded for all cases where the Telephone Unit have made contact with a respondent (e.g. appointment made, bad numbers). These outcomes remain interim until there is no reason for the Telephone Unit to make further contact (e.g. if an interview is achieved, if a respondent has a bad number), at which point they are coded as a final outcome. At the end of the fieldwork period some cases remain unresolved as the Telephone Unit are either unable to make contact with the respondent despite multiple attempts or have been told to call back. Those who reported having had no contact with DWP in the last three months prior to the start of fieldwork are screened out as ineligible.

⁷ This figure includes claimants who have contacted Kantar Public before or during fieldwork to opt out of the survey. In these cases it was not possible to identify whether the claimant was ineligible or refused to take part in the survey.

Table 4.2: Fieldwork conversation rates, 2017/18

	SP	PC	CA	AA	DLA	PIP	ESA	IS	JSA	UCLS	UCFS	Total
Advance letters sent	4,760	3,053	2,755	5,283	2,690	3,326	14,992	2,353	12,576	20,225	19,686	91,699
Final resolved eligible sample	2,772	1,900	1,714	2,836	1,806	2,189	9,192	1,668	8,660	11,976	12,128	56,841
Achieved telephone interviews	452	452	452	453	452	801	3,000	452	3,000	3,000	3,000	15,514
Eligible sample Conversion rate ⁸	13%	20%	25%	12%	24%	33%	30%	27%	33%	25%	24%	26%
Overall conversion rate	9%	15%	16%	9%	17%	24%	20%	19%	24%	15%	15%	17%

Table 4.3 and table 4.4 provide further detail on the fieldwork figures and the proportion of the total DWP contacting population compared with achieved interviews.

⁸ The rate of eligible sample conversion will vary by benefit, as the calculation is dependent on the number of interviews achieved, the amount of final resolved eligible sample and how much sample is left unresolved.

Table 4.3 Fieldwork figures, 2017/18

	SP	PC	AA	CA	DLA	PIP	ESA	IS	JSA	UCLS	UCFS	Total
<i>Prior to fieldwork</i>												
Sample provided by DWP	4,874	3,104	2,796	5,368	2,720	3,388	15,316	2,374	12,740	20,272	20,272	93,224
advance letters sent	4,760	3,053	2,755	5,283	2,690	3,326	14,992	2,353	12,576	20,225	19,686	91,699
Calls to office to opt-out before fieldwork	700	324	256	943	59	217	824	89	308	229	318	4,267
Sample loaded into CATI	4,060	2,729	2,499	4,340	2,631	3,109	14,168	2,264	12,268	19,996	19,368	87,432
<i>During fieldwork</i>												
Final resolved eligible sample	2,250	1,243	1,081	2,044	1,106	1,130	4,142	883	3,457	5,105	7,008	29,449
Opt-outs during fieldwork	58	38	12	114	6	22	118	7	35	27	51	488
Refusals (including proxy refusals) ⁹	227	105	141	173	88	134	593	112	488	581	423	3,065
Incomplete interviews	18	6	13	20	8	19	89	16	64	95	69	417
Ineligible ¹⁰	521	314	216	329	161	203	1,064	103	125	598	518	4,152
Deadwood ¹¹	767	515	569	1,175	664	717	3,912	493	3,483	7,422	6,722	26,439
Unresolved sample	84	206	187	340	248	259	2,048	333	2,203	3,871	2,120	11,899
<i>Interviews achieved</i>												
Achieved telephone interviews	452	452	452	453	452	801	3,000	452	3,000	3,000	3,000	15,514

⁹ Please note that there is a difference between an 'opt-out' and a 'refusal'. Respondents are coded as an 'opt-out' if they make contact with Kantar Public to opt out of survey participation. Respondents are coded as a 'refusal' if they refuse to take part in the survey during a phone call with a Telephone Unit interviewer.

¹⁰ Those who reported having had no contact with DWP in the last three months prior to the start of fieldwork are screened out as ineligible.

¹¹ Deadwood includes cases where the telephone number was bad or incorrect, or where a respondent has died.

Table 4.4: The proportion of the total DWP contacting population compared with achieved interviews, 2017/18

	SP	PC	AA	CA	DLA	PIP	ESA	IS	JSA	UCLS	UCFS	Total
2017/18 contacting population	190,525	99,344	32,926	22,227	48,722	282,718	1,162,210	852,065	1,431,644	906,890	616,028	5,645,299
Proportion of total DWP contacting population	3.4%	1.8%	0.6%	0.4%	0.9%	5.0%	20.6%	15.1%	25.4%	16.1%	10.9%	100%
2017/18 interviews	452	452	452	453	452	801	3,000	452	3,000	3,000	3,000	15,514
Proportion of total survey population	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%	5.2%	19.3%	2.9%	19.3%	19.3%	19.3%	100.0

5 Data management, coding and weighting

5.1 Data management

Kantar Public produced datasets on a quarterly basis. From Q2 onwards, each data delivery was accompanied by a cumulative dataset of interviews to date, ending with the annual dataset delivered after Q4 fieldwork.

The dataset was checked and cleaned each quarter. This included:

- Routing checks on questionnaire variables
- Checks on all sample variables
- Cleaning of variable names, variable labels and value labels
- Comparison checks on quarterly datasets
- Sense checks on key variables.

Derived variables were also created for analytical purposes.

5.2 Coding

The CSES contains many pre-coded answer lists developed over the years that the survey has been running. These questions allow open ended responses to 'other specify' which are reviewed each year to consider if new answer codes should be added. If so, codes are generated manually through analysis of the text and agreed with the DWP research team. In 2017/18 no new codes were created.

5.3 Weighting

5.3.1 Overview

Kantar Public generated weights for analysis at national, regional and benefit group level. These were derived using a multi-stage process beginning with calculation of design weights and then using these to help construct non-response weights. Design weights compensate for variations in *sampling* probability; non-response weights compensate for variations in *response* probability. The final weight incorporates both elements.

5.3.2 Design weighting

The design weight compensates for variations in sampling probability within each contacting claimant population. The design weight for each individual is equal to one divided by his/her sampling probability. Consequently, the larger the design weight the lower the sampling probability. Contacting claimants of Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Carer’s Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit and State Pension all had the same probability of selection so their design weights are all the same. However, for contacting claimants of Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseeker’s Allowance and Personal Independence Payment there was some variation in sampling probability by Jobcentre Plus (JCP) region. There was also variation in sampling probably for Universal Credit Live Service by Jobcentre Plus region for quarter 1 and quarter 2 and by UC region for quarter 3 and quarter 4. The sampling probability was higher in less populous Jobcentre Plus regions and UC regions than in more populous regions. The design weight compensates for this variation.

The sampling probability is calculated as follows for each case:

$$p(\text{sampled}) = \left(\frac{\text{Number of cases sampled in JCP region}}{\text{Total contacting claimant population in JCP region}} \right)$$

The design weight is then calculated as:

$$\text{design weight} = \left(\frac{1}{p(\text{sampled})} \right)$$

An example – based on Employment and Support Allowance in the first quarter of the 2017/18 survey – is provided in the following table (Table 5.1). The same number of cases was sampled in both Central England and Wales. However, the contacting claimant population is much smaller in Wales. As a result, claimants that live in Wales are almost three times more likely to be selected for the survey (sampling probability of 0.023) than claimants that live in Central England (sampling probability of 0.008). In order to compensate for this, claimants that live in Central England are given a larger design weight than those that live in Wales.

Table 5.1: Employment and Support Allowance sampling probabilities and design weights for Central England and Wales, Quarter 1 2017/18

A	B	C	D
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	Number of cases sampled	Contacting claimant population	Sampling probability = A÷B	Design weight = 1÷C
Central England	547	70,808	0.0081	129.45
Wales	547	23,741	0.023	43.40

5.3.3 Non-response weighting

Non-response weighting is required to compensate for systematic non-response – the fact that contacting claimants with certain characteristics have a lower propensity to participate in the survey.

The DWP databases used for sampling are considered to be representative of each contacting claimant population. DWP reports counts from these databases by age, gender, region, claim length and contact type. These may be used as benchmarks for judging the representativeness of the respondent dataset (after design weights have been applied).

However, during fieldwork, some sampled individuals are found not to be eligible for the survey because they did not contact DWP in the three months prior to interview. The proportion of claimants who are found to be ineligible for this reason varies greatly by benefit group and by demographic type. Therefore, the benchmark data itself is not a perfect representation of the contacting claimant population. This problem is overcome by comparing the *combination* of eligible and ineligible claimants – not just the eligible ones – to the relevant DWP database profile.

A method called ‘rim weighting’ (sometimes also called raking or iterative proportional fitting) is used to match this combined eligible and ineligible sample to the database profile in a statistically efficient manner and allocate all of the claimants a weight. Once this is complete, the ineligible claimants are deleted from the dataset. This leaves only *eligible* claimants (those that completed a full interview) with rim weights that ensure the interview dataset is representative of the *eligible* population¹².

5.3.4 Analytical weighting

The rim weight that is produced following the two stages above is used as the input for a series of other weights that are more convenient for analysis purposes. In general, these weights are simply re-scaled versions of the rim weight described above. A scaled weight is simply the rim weight multiplied by a constant.

¹² A rim weighting algorithm works by matching profiles one variable at a time, updating the weights each time, and then repeating the sequence until all respondent profiles match the population profile (typically after four or five iterations) or otherwise cannot be improved. For a discussion of the approach see Sharot, T. (1986) ‘Weighting survey results’. *Journal of the Market Research Society*, 28 (3), pg. 269-284.

Benefit weight

- This weight is used when analysing each benefit group separately, and is used for most parts of the annual report.
- The weights of each benefit group are scaled so that the sum of weights equals the sample size for that benefit group.
- This weight should *not* be used for any cross-benefit analysis.

DWP weight

- This weight is designed for analysis of the total sample, most notably when producing the overall claimant satisfaction figure.
- It is equivalent to the general rim weight, scaled so that the sum of weights equals the total sample size.
- Details of the proportions for each benefit group within the total contacting population can be found in Table 4.4.

Annual weight

The Benefit and DWP weights are created each quarter. However, while the sample size per contacting population is approximately the same for each quarter, the population size varies considerably. Consequently, for the purpose of an Annual Weight, each quarterly sample is scaled so that in the Annual dataset, it takes its proper share. For example, in Q2 of the 2017/18 survey, the number of eligible Attendance Allowance claimants in the population was around four times higher than in Q1. Therefore, the Q2 data share in the Annual Attendance Allowance dataset should be four times that of Q1. The Annual weight ensures this happens without changing the relationship between the weights within each quarter.

Appendix A

The order of selected transactions in the questionnaire was as follows:

HIER

1. Applied for a benefit
2. Had a reassessment of your entitlement following a change of benefit
3. Reported problems regarding accessing or maintaining your Universal Credit claim through your online account.
4. Reported issues or changes to your housing costs
5. Reported self-employment earnings
6. Claimed childcare costs
7. Asked DWP to reconsider or appeal a decision concerning the benefit you applied for
8. Received a decision following a medical assessment
9. Had an interview or review meeting (for example at a Jobcentre)
10. Received notification of a sanction
11. Reported a change of circumstances to DWP
12. Received notification that your housing costs will be paid direct to your landlord
13. Made a reclaim for Universal Credit
14. Stopped a claim
15. Reported problems with a benefit you are receiving
16. Made a request for an advance payment to benefits
17. Received notification of a change to benefit payment (for example from monthly to fortnightly)
18. Tried to get information about a benefit
19. Enquired about the amount of Pension Credit or State Pension you are entitled to
20. Requested a statement of your State Pension
21. Discussed jobs or training opportunities with someone at the Jobcentre.
22. Signed on

23. Made a complaint
24. Looked for job vacancies
25. Made an appointment (e.g. for an interview at a Jobcentre) or asked for an appointment to be changed.
26. Applied for financial help (e.g. for travel to interviews, childcare costs, training, moving into work, or mortgage relief)
27. Requested a form
28. No contact with DWP in the last 3 months [ineligible for survey]