



Cabinet Office

Data on responses to correspondence from MPs and Peers in 2021

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Data on responses to correspondence from MPs and Peers Members' Correspondence in 2021

The Government attaches great importance to the effective and timely handling of correspondence. The Cabinet Office is publishing this correspondence data to enable transparency and to demonstrate the total volume of correspondence received by Government Departments and Agencies from Members of Parliament and Peers in the calendar year 2021.

The deadlines set by Government Departments and Agencies for responding to correspondence from Members of Parliament and Peers should not exceed 20 working days, and Departments and Agencies are advised to consider setting more challenging deadlines than 20 working days to ensure a better minimum service level.

In the year 2021, the Government received a total of 264,277 cases of correspondence, a 4% decrease in comparison to 2020. Of this, 159,395 cases were responded to on time, at a performance rate of 60% against the 20 working day target outlined in the Guide to Handling Correspondence. There were continued challenges faced by correspondence teams, particularly in Q1 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, and a significantly high volume of correspondence received by FCDO relating to events that took place in Afghanistan during Q3, which affected their performance for that quarter.

In order to enable a more accurate comparison across Government for departments with more challenging response targets than 20 working days, we have now added in a mandatory 20 working day response percentage.

Department or Agency	Target Response time (Working Days)	Total Number of MP correspondence received	% of response achieved within target response time	% of cases responded to within 20 working days
Total	-	264443	55%	60%
Q1	-	69205	52%	57%
Q2	-	55932	59%	64%
Q3	-	74022	45%	49%
Q4	-	65284	56%	63%
Attorney General's Office	20 Days	273	89%	89%
Q1	20 Days	94	80%	80%
Q2	20 Days	65	94%	94%
Q3	20 Days	53	94%	94%
Q4	20 Days	61	93%	93%
Serious Fraud Office	20 Days	28	93%	93%
Q1	20 Days	4	100%	100%
Q2	20 Days	15	100%	100%
Q3	20 Days	5	60%	60%
Q4	20 Days	4	100%	100%
Cabinet Office*	20 Days	3012	62%	62%
Q1	20 Days	935	48%	48%
Q2	20 Days	953	58%	58%
Q3	20 Days	693	68%	68%
Q4	20 Days	431	89%	89%
COP26	20 Days	350	16%	16%
Q1	20 Days	46	7%	7%
Q2	20 Days	48	15%	15%
Q3	20 Days	124	15%	15%
Q4	20 Days	132	21%	21%

Equality Hub**	20 Days	760	26%	26%
Q1	20 Days	N/A	N/A	N/A
Q2	20 Days	431	38%	38%
Q3	20 Days	118	11%	11%
Q4	20 Days	211	30%	30%
UKSA / ONS	10 Days	300	75%	96%
Q1	10 Days	113	66%	97%
Q2	10 Days	156	80%	95%
Q3	10 Days	17	82%	100%
Q4	10 Days	14	71%	93%
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy	15 Days	10350	52%	69%
Q1	15 Days	3406	55%	71%
Q2	15 Days	2386	59%	80%
Q3	15 Days	2150	38%	55%
Q4	15 Days	2408	53%	66%
Competition Markets Authority	15 Days	169	81%	84%
Q1	15 Days	51	71%	76%
Q2	15 Days	37	71%	76%
Q3	15 Days	41	76%	84%
Q4	15 Days	40	90%	90%
OFGEM	15 Days	443	88%	88%
Q1	15 Days	123	95%	98%
Q2	15 Days	95	98%	100%
Q3	15 Days	90	98%	100%
Q4	15 Days	135	93%	97%
Land Registry	15 Days	348	91%	98%
Q1	15 Days	62	100%	100%
Q2	15 Days	83	94%	99%
Q3	15 Days	104	86%	94%
Q4	15 Days	99	84%	97%

Department for Digital Culture, Media and Sport	20 Days	6809	66%	66%
Q1	20 Days	2564	66%	66%
Q2	20 Days	1963	68%	68%
Q3	20 Days	1113	56%	56%
Q4	20 Days	1169	76%	76%
Charity Commission	20 Days	198	92%	92%
Q1	20 Days	46	88%	88%
Q2	20 Days	59	90%	90%
Q3	20 Days	35	95%	95%
Q4	20 Days	58	93%	93%
National Archives	20 Days	6	100%	100%
Q1	20 Days	1	100%	100%
Q2	20 Days	4	100%	100%
Q3	20 Days	1	100%	100%
Q4	20 Days	0	N/A	N/A
Department for Education	18 Days	12098	63%	65%
Q1	18 Days	5732	51%	55%
Q2	18 Days	2608	87%	88%
Q3	18 Days	1927	63%	65%
Q4	18 Days	1831	64%	67%
Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED)	15 Days	104	91%	96%
Q1	15 Days	21	95%	100%
Q2	15 Days	18	89%	94%
Q3	15 Days	28	89%	96%
Q4	15 Days	37	92%	95%

The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (OFQUAL)	20 Days	70	96%	96%
Q1	20 Days	33	94%	94%
Q2	20 Days	13	100%	100%
Q3	20 Days	15	93%	93%
Q4	20 Days	9	100%	100%
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	20 Days	14106	58%	58%
Q1	20 Days	4255	55%	55%
Q2	20 Days	3408	59%	59%
Q3	20 Days	3528	60%	60%
Q4	20 Days	2915	56%	56%
Food Standards Agency	20 Days	35	94%	94%
Q1	20 Days	0	N/A	N/A
Q2	20 Days	10	100%	100%
Q3	20 Days	13	92%	92%
Q4	20 Days	12	92%	92%
Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT)	15 Days	46	80%	89%
Q1	15 Days	5	80%	100%
Q2	15 Days	11	72%	91%
Q3	15 Days	13	77%	85%
Q4	15 Days	17	88%	88%
Department for International Trade	15 Days	2182	80%	84%
Q1	15 Days	524	94%	96%
Q2	15 Days	531	87%	91%
Q3	15 Days	565	83%	86%
Q4	15 Days	562	57%	65%

Department for Transport	7 Days	13363	67%	92%
Q1	7 Days	3194	73%	86%
Q2	7 Days	3070	75%	94%
Q3	7 Days	4442	55%	92%
Q4	7 Days	2657	73%	95%
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency	8 Days	17062	36%	62%
Q1	8 Days	1195	92%	99%
Q2	8 Days	3042	29%	64%
Q3	8 Days	5436	17%	30%
Q4	8 Days	7389	43%	78%
Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency	10 Days	1330	94%	98%
Q1	10 Days	434	77%	93%
Q2	10 Days	302	100%	100%
Q3	10 Days	333	100%	100%
Q4	10 Days	261	100%	100%
Maritime & Coastguard Agency	10 Days	14	100%	100%
Q1	10 Days	4	100%	100%
Q2	10 Days	3	100%	100%
Q3	10 Days	6	100%	100%
Q4	10 Days	1	100%	100%
Vehicle Certification Agency	15 Days	4	100%	100%
Q1	15 Days	0	N/A	N/A
Q2	15 Days	2	100%	100%
Q3	15 Days	2	100%	100%
Q4	15 Days	0	N/A	N/A
Department for Work and Pensions	20 Days	7116	69%	69%
Q1	20 Days	1449	79%	79%
Q2	20 Days	1984	66%	66%
Q3	20 Days	1772	80%	80%
Q4	20 Days	1911	56%	56%

Health and Safety Executive	10 Days	130	83%	98%
Q1	10 Days	41	90%	100%
Q2	10 Days	31	94%	100%
Q3	10 Days	27	70%	100%
Q4	10 Days	31	74%	94%
Department of Health and Social Care	18 Days	38021	28%	33%
Q1	18 Days	11423	18%	28%
Q2	18 Days	7844	34%	39%
Q3	18 Days	9627	34%	33%
Q4	18 Days	9127	27%	32%
Public Health England***	18 Days	127	99%	100%
Q1	18 Days	46	98%	100%
Q2	18 Days	37	100%	100%
Q3	18 Days	44	100%	100%
Q4 - UK Health Security Agency***	20 Days	859	62%	62%
Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency	18 Days	105	22%	27%
Q1	18 Days	16	44%	44%
Q2	18 Days	32	28%	35%
Q3	18 Days	28	18%	25%
Q4	18 Days	29	7%	7%
Foreign and Commonwealth & Development Office****	20 Days	14190	50%	50%
Q1	20 Days	3268	47%	47%
Q2	20 Days	3314	44%	44%
Q3	20 Days	4659	44%	44%
Q4	20 Days	2949	71%	71%

HM Revenue and Customs	15 Days	13982	70%	81%
Q1	15 Days	4331	66%	78%
Q2	15 Days	3466	65%	76%
Q3	15 Days	3299	71%	82%
Q4	15 Days	2886	83%	91%
HM Treasury	20 Days	12111	66%	66%
Q1	20 Days	6043	64%	64%
Q2	20 Days	2013	73%	73%
Q3	20 Days	2022	62%	62%
Q4	20 Days	2033	66%	66%
HMRC Policy*****	20 Days	789	38%	38%
Q1	20 Days	294	23%	23%
Q2	20 Days	210	53%	53%
Q3	20 Days	153	33%	33%
Q4	20 Days	132	53%	53%
Home Office	20 Days	5687	61%	64%
Q1	20 Days	1678	71%	73%
Q2	20 Days	1561	65%	67%
Q3	20 Days	1256	55%	60%
Q4	20 Days	1192	46%	49%
Her Majesty's Passport Office	20 Days	3270	41%	41%
Q1	20 Days	525	57%	57%
Q2	20 Days	424	62%	62%
Q3	20 Days	1027	35%	35%
Q4	20 Days	1294	33%	33%
UK Visas and Immigration/Immigration Enforcement/Border Force	20 Days	63848	60%	60%
Q1	20 Days	10960	54%	54%
Q2	20 Days	11279	62%	62%
Q3	20 Days	24288	35%	35%
Q4	20 Days	17321	63%	63%

Ministry of Defence	20 Days	3773	88%	88%
Q1	20 Days	618	98%	98%
Q2	20 Days	655	96%	96%
Q3	20 Days	885	82%	82%
Q4	20 Days	1615	84%	84%
Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities	20 Days	11724	49%	49%
Q1	20 Days	4194	36%	36%
Q2	20 Days	2486	53%	53%
Q3	20 Days	2829	65%	65%
Q4	20 Days	2215	50%	50%
Ministry of Justice	15 Days	1859	73%	88%
Q1	15 Days	465	72%	86%
Q2	15 Days	487	85%	95%
Q3	15 Days	445	70%	89%
Q4	15 Days	462	73%	73%
Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service	15 Days	1454	78%	92%
Q1	15 Days	405	81%	94%
Q2	15 Days	317	90%	95%
Q3	15 Days	382	70%	88%
Q4	15 Days	350	71%	91%
HM Prison and Probation Service	15 Days	951	66%	82%
Q1	15 Days	316	77%	82%
Q2	15 Days	212	80%	94%
Q3	15 Days	205	50%	77%
Q4	15 Days	218	50%	76%

Office of the Public Guardian	15 Days	89	73%	83%
Q1	15 Days	22	82%	91%
Q2	15 Days	9	100%	100%
Q3	15 Days	31	58%	74%
Q4	15 Days	27	74%	81%
Crown Prosecution Service	20 Days	268	75%	75%
Q1	20 Days	63	67%	67%
Q2	20 Days	81	79%	79%
Q3	20 Days	67	82%	82%
Q4	20 Days	57	70%	70%
National Crime Agency	10 Days	13	46%	69%
Q1	10 Days	6	50%	100%
Q2	10 Days	4	50%	50%
Q3	10 Days	1	0%	0%
Q4	10 Days	2	50%	50%
Northern Ireland Office	15 Days	188	33%	44%
Q1	15 Days	40	43%	53%
Q2	15 Days	70	29%	37%
Q3	15 Days	49	41%	57%
Q4	15 Days	29	17%	24%
Office of the Leader of the House of Commons	15 Days	179	84%	98%
Q1	15 Days	63	90%	97%
Q2	15 Days	46	91%	98%
Q3	15 Days	29	72%	97%
Q4	15 Days	41	76%	100%
Office of the Leader of the House of Lords	10 Days	21	100%	100%
Q1	10 Days	11	100%	100%
Q2	10 Days	6	100%	100%
Q3	10 Days	3	100%	100%
Q4	10 Days	1	100%	100%

Scotland Office	20 Days	86	53%	53%
Q1	20 Days	29	38%	38%
Q2	20 Days	29	62%	62%
Q3	20 Days	14	50%	50%
Q4	20 Days	14	64%	64%
Wales Office	15 Days	143	91%	91%
Q1	15 Days	46	91%	100%
Q2	15 Days	32	94%	100%
Q3	15 Days	29	93%	100%
Q4	15 Days	36	86%	100%

Annex

*The COP26 Unit is a temporary business unit which sits within the Cabinet Office whilst the UK Government is host of the Conference. In order to show more accurate annual data, statistics for core Cabinet Office and COP26 correspondence have been separated.

**Following an audit in July 2021 it was determined that much of the data from Q1 had been corrupted due to record keeping processes and so has been discounted from this analysis. Improved information management practices have been in place for the remainder of the year.

***2021 Q1 – Q3 results are published for PHE as an Executive Agency of DHSC before its dissolution on 30 September 2021. In addition to written correspondence, PHE also received 487 enquiries via an email helpline, of which 94% were responded to within one working day and 100% within 20 working days. UKHSA launched operations on 1 October 2021, combining elements of PHE and NHS Test and Trace, meaning only Q4 statistics are available.

****In Q3, the FCDO received an unprecedented volume of correspondence about the Afghanistan crisis. Given the exceptionally high volume received over a short period, each piece of correspondence was not recorded in central systems nor was timeliness measured. Subsequent work identified some 41,205 pieces of correspondence from Parliamentarians, a figure which includes significant levels of duplicates as the same emails were sent to multiple mailboxes and correspondence which was subsequently transferred to other Departments. (Public correspondence was significantly higher.) The FCDO set up a crisis response system to go through all this correspondence, including all the cases raised by Parliamentarians, and responded in substance to all MPs' correspondence received by 12 September by the end of September in one reply to each of 650 MPs and one reply to each of the Peers who had written. All MPs' correspondence on Afghanistan received after 12 September was recorded centrally and is reflected in the data above.

*****These are cases drafted by HMRC policy and signed by HM Treasury Ministers.