Annex 2

Conditionality regimes where sanctions can be applied [1]

Table 1: Proportion of people in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied[1] by gender[3] February to July 2025 [2]

Date	Male	Female
July-25	30.1%	22.2%
June-25	31.4%	22.8%
May-25	31.8%	22.9%
Apr-25	32.3%	23.1%
Mar-25	33.1%	23.8%
Feb-25	33.5%	24.0%
Jan-25	33.2%	23.8%
Dec-24	33.3%	24.1%
Nov-24	33.7%	24.8%
Oct-24	34.3%	25.7%
Sep-24	34.8%	26.4%
Aug-24	35.4%	26.9%
Jul-24	35.9%	27.2%
Jun-24	34.7%	25.3%
May-24	34.7%	24.9%
Apr-24	34.9%	25.0%
Mar-24	35.4%	25.5%
Feb-24	35.9%	25.9%

Source: Analysis of DWP Stat-Xplore data, People on Universal Credit: Conditionality Regime by Month and Gender, downloaded November 2025

Table 2: Relative likelihoods by gender[3] of being in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied[1] February 2024 to July 2025 [5]

Date	Male	Female
July-25	1.40	1.0
June-25	1.38	1.0
May-25	1.39	1.0
Apr-25	1.40	1.0

Mar-25	1.39	1.0
Feb-25	1.40	1.0
Jan-25	1.39	1.0
Dec-24	1.38	1.0
Nov-24	1.36	1.0
Oct-24	1.33	1.0
Sep-24	1.32	1.0
Aug-24	1.31	1.0
Jul-24	1.32	1.0
Jun-24	1.37	1.0
May-24	1.39	1.0
Apr-24	1.39	1.0
Mar-24	1.39	1.0
Feb-24	1.39	1.0

Source: Analysis of DWP Stat-Xplore data, People on Universal Credit: Conditionality Regime by Month and Gender, downloaded November 2025

Table 3: Proportion of people in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied[1] by age band[6] September to November 2024[2]

Age band	September 24[4]	October 24[4]	November 24[4]
16-19	60.2%	60.9%	60.9%
20-24	44.7%	44.2%	43.8%
25-29	36.2%	35.5%	34.9%
30-34	30.0%	29.2%	28.4%
35-39	27.1%	26.3%	25.4%
40-44	25.9%	25.3%	24.3%
45-49	25.6%	25.0%	24.0%
50-54	25.4%	24.9%	24.0%
55-59	26.0%	25.4%	24.9%
60-65	26.6%	26.2%	25.8%
Over 65	13.7%	13.0%	12.9%
All age bands	29.9%	29.3%	28.5%

Source: Analysis of DWP Stat-Xplore data, People on Universal Credit: Conditionality Regime by Month and Age, downloaded 17 March 2025

Table 4: Relative likelihoods by age band[6] of being in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied[1] September to November 2024[5]

Age band	September 24[4]	October 24[4]	November 24[4]
16-19	2.01	2.08	2.13
20-24	1.50	1.51	1.54
25-29	1.21	1.21	1.23
30-34	1.00	1.00	1.00
35-39	0.91	0.90	0.89
40-44	0.87	0.86	0.85
45-49	0.86	0.85	0.84
50-54	0.85	0.85	0.84
55-59	0.87	0.87	0.87
60-65	0.89	0.90	0.90
Over 65	0.46	0.45	0.45
All age bands	1.0	1.0	1.0

Source: Analysis of DWP Stat-Xplore data, People on Universal Credit: Conditionality Regime by Month and Age, downloaded 17 March 2025

Table 5: Proportion of people in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied[1] by ethnic group[7] February 2024 to July 2025[2]

	Asian/Asian British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	White	Other Ethnic Group
July-25	33.2%	37.8%	33.3%	23.0%	36.8%
June-25	33.6%	38.1%	33.6%	23.3%	37.2%
May-25	33.6%	38.0%	33.6%	23.4%	37.3%
Apr-25	33.9%	38.1%	34.0%	23.9%	37.2%
Mar-25	34.5%	38.6%	34.6%	24.5%	37.6%
Feb-25	34.7%	38.4%	34.7%	24.9%	37.7%
Jan-25	34.4%	37.5%	34.3%	24.7%	37.3%
Dec-24	35.1%	37.8%	34.5%	24.8%	37.6%
Nov-24	35.9%	38.5%	35.1%	25.3%	38.5%
Oct-24	37.2%	39.6%	36.0%	26.1%	39.7%
Sep-24	37.7%	40.0%	36.6%	26.6%	40.4%
Aug-24	38.1%	40.4%	37.2%	27.3%	41.7%

Jul-24	38.6%	40.8%	37.6%	27.3%	43.0%
Jun-24	35.1%	39.1%	36.4%	26.3%	39.0%
May-24	34.2%	38.9%	36.4%	26.2%	38.3%
Apr-24	33.7%	38.7%	36.6%	26.4%	37.8%
Mar-24	33.8%	39.3%	37.3%	27.2%	38.1%
Feb-24	33.8%	39.4%	37.6%	27.7%	38.3%

Source: Analysis of data contained in Table 3.3, DWP Data Tables: Universal Credit Ethnicity Statistics, published 12 August 2025, available here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/benefit-sanctions-statistics-to-may-2025

Table 6: Relative likelihoods by ethnic group[7] of being in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied[1] February 2024 to May 2025 [5]

	Asian/Asian British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	White	Other Ethnic Group
July-25	1.44 [m]	1.64 [m]	1.44 [m]	1.00	1.60 [m]
June-25	1.44 [m]	1.64 [m]	1.45 [m]	1.00	1.60 [m]
May-25	1.44 [m]	1.62 [m]	1.44 [m]	1.00	1.59 [m]
Apr-25	1.42 [m]	1.59 [m]	1.42 [m]	1.00	1.56 [m]
Mar-25	1.41 [m]	1.58 [m]	1.41 [m]	1.00	1.53 [m]
Feb-25	1.39 [m]	1.54 [m]	1.39 [m]	1.00	1.51 [m]
Jan-25	1.39 [m]	1.52 [m]	1.39 [m]	1.00	1.51 [m]
Dec-24	1.42 [m]	1.52 [m]	1.39 [m]	1.00	1.52 [m]
Nov-24	1.42 [m]	1.52 [m]	1.39 [m]	1.00	1.52 [m]
Oct-24	1.43 [m]	1.52 [m]	1.38 [m]	1.00	1.52 [m]
Sep-24	1.42 [m]	1.50 [m]	1.38 [m]	1.00	1.52 [m]
Aug-24	1.40 [m]	1.48 [m]	1.36 [m]	1.00	1.53 [m]
Jul-24	1.41 [m]	1.49 [m]	1.38 [m]	1.00	1.58 [m]
Jun-24	1.33 [m]	1.49 [m]	1.38 [m]	1.00	1.48 [m]
May-24	1.31 [m]	1.48 [m]	1.39 [m]	1.00	1.46 [m]
Apr-24	1.28 [m]	1.47 [m]	1.39 [m]	1.00	1.43 [m]
Mar-24	1.24	1.44 [m]	1.37 [m]	1.00	1.40 [m]
Feb-24	1.22	1.42 [m]	1.36 [m]	1.00	1.38 [m]

Source: Analysis of data contained in Table 3.3, DWP Data Tables: Universal Credit Ethnicity Statistics, published 12 August 2025, available here:

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https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/universal-credit-statistics-29-april-2013-to-10-july-2025

Table 7: Proportion of people in the searching for work conditionality regime by ethnic group[7] February 2024 to July 2025[2]

	Asian/Asian British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	White	Other Ethnic Group
July-25	28.2%	33.3%	26.9%	16.7%	31.5%
June-25	28.5%	33.6%	27.0%	16.8%	31.8%
May-25	28.5%	33.5%	27.1%	17.0%	31.8%
Apr-25	28.8%	33.5%	27.5%	17.5%	31.7%
Mar-25	29.4%	33.9%	28.1%	18.1%	32.1%
Feb-25	29.7%	33.7%	28.1%	18.5%	32.1%
Jan-25	29.4%	32.8%	27.6%	18.2%	31.7%
Dec-24	30.0%	33.1%	27.8%	18.3%	32.0%
Nov-24	30.8%	33.6%	28.3%	18.7%	32.7%
Oct-24	31.9%	34.6%	29.0%	19.3%	33.7%
Sep-24	32.4%	34.9%	29.4%	19.8%	34.3%
Aug-24	32.6%	35.2%	29.9%	20.2%	35.5%
Jul-24	33.1%	35.6%	30.2%	20.4%	36.8%
Jun-24	29.4%	33.8%	28.9%	19.0%	32.7%
May-24	28.5%	33.6%	28.9%	18.9%	31.9%
Apr-24	27.9%	33.4%	29.1%	19.1%	31.4%
Mar-24	27.9%	33.9%	29.7%	19.7%	31.7%
Feb-24	27.8%	34.0%	29.9%	20.1%	31.9%

Source: Analysis of data contained in Table 3.3, DWP Data Tables: Universal Credit Ethnicity Statistics, published 12 August 2025, available here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/universal-credit-statistics-29-april-2013-to-10-july-2025

Table 8: Relative likelihoods by ethnic group[7] of being in the searching for work conditionality regime February 2024 to July 2025 [5]

	Asian/Asian British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	White	Other Ethnic Group
July-25	1.69	1.99	1.61	1.00	1.89
June-25	1.70	2.00	1.61	1.00	1.89

May-25	1.68	1.97	1.59	1.00	1.87
Apr-25	1.65	1.91	1.57	1.00	1.81
Mar-25	1.62	1.87	1.55	1.00	1.77
Feb-25	1.61	1.82	1.52	1.00	1.74
Jan-25	1.62	1.80	1.52	1.00	1.74
Dec-24	1.64	1.81	1.52	1.00	1.75
Nov-24	1.65	1.80	1.51	1.00	1.75
Oct-24	1.65	1.79	1.50	1.00	1.75
Sep-24	1.64	1.76	1.48	1.00	1.73
Aug-24	1.61	1.74	1.48	1.00	1.76
Jul-24	1.62	1.75	1.48	1.00	1.80
Jun-24	1.55	1.78	1.52	1.00	1.72
May-24	1.51	1.78	1.53	1.00	1.69
Apr-24	1.46	1.75	1.52	1.00	1.64
Mar-24	1.42	1.72	1.51	1.00	1.61
Feb-24	1.38	1.69	1.49	1.00	1.59

Source: Analysis of data contained in Table 3.3, DWP Data Tables: Universal Credit Ethnicity Statistics, published 12 August 2025, available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/universal-credit-statistics-29-april-2013-to-10-july-2025

Table 9: Proportion of people in the preparing for work conditionality regime by ethnic group[7] February 2024 to July 2025[2]

	Asian/Asian British	**Black/African/Caribbean/Black British**	**Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups**	**White**	**Other Ethnic Group**
July-25	3.4%	3.0%	4.8%	5.1%	3.5%
June-25	3.4%	3.0%	4.9%	5.2%	3.6%
May-25	3.4%	3.0%	4.8%	5.1%	3.6%
Apr-25	3.4%	3.0%	4.8%	5.1%	3.6%
Mar-25	3.4%	3.1%	4.8%	5.1%	3.6%
Feb-25	3.3%	3.1%	4.8%	5.1%	3.7%
Jan-25	3.3%	3.1%	4.9%	5.1%	3.7%
Dec-24	3.4%	3.1%	4.9%	5.1%	3.7%
Nov-24	3.4%	3.2%	4.9%	5.2%	3.8%
Oct-24	3.5%	3.3%	5.1%	5.3%	3.9%
Sep-24	3.5%	3.3%	5.2%	5.3%	4.0%
Aug-24	3.6%	3.4%	5.3%	5.5%	4.0%
Jul-24	3.6%	3.4%	5.4%	5.6%	4.0%
Jun-24	3.7%	3.5%	5.4%	5.7%	4.1%
May-24	3.7%	3.5%	5.4%	5.7%	4.1%

Apr-24	3.8%	3.5%	5.4%	5.7%	4.1%
Mar-24	3.8%	3.5%	5.5%	5.8%	4.1%
Feb-24	3.9%	3.5%	5.5%	5.9%	4.1%

Source: Analysis of data contained in Table 3.3, DWP Data Tables: Universal Credit Ethnicity Statistics, published 12 August 2025, available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/universal-credit-statistics-29-april-2013-to-10-july-2025

Table 10: Relative likelihoods by ethnic group[7] of being in the preparing for work conditionality regime February 2024 to July 2025 [5]

	Asian/Asian British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	White	Other Ethnic Group
July-25	0.67	0.59	0.94	1.00	0.69
June-25	0.65	0.58	0.94	1.00	0.69
May-25	0.67	0.59	0.94	1.00	0.71
Apr-25	0.67	0.59	0.94	1.00	0.71
Mar-25	0.67	0.61	0.94	1.00	0.71
Feb-25	0.65	0.61	0.94	1.00	0.73
Jan-25	0.65	0.61	0.96	1.00	0.73
Dec-24	0.67	0.61	0.96	1.00	0.73
Nov-24	0.65	0.62	0.94	1.00	0.73
Oct-24	0.66	0.62	0.96	1.00	0.74
Sep-24	0.66	0.62	0.98	1.00	0.75
Aug-24	0.65	0.62	0.96	1.00	0.73
Jul-24	0.64	0.61	0.96	1.00	0.71
Jun-24	0.65	0.61	0.95	1.00	0.72
May-24	0.65	0.61	0.95	1.00	0.72
Apr-24	0.67	0.61	0.95	1.00	0.72
Mar-24	0.66	0.60	0.95	1.00	0.71
Feb-24	0.66	059	093	1.00	0.69

Source: Analysis of data contained in Table 3.3, DWP Data Tables: Universal Credit Ethnicity Statistics, published 12 August 2025, available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/universal-credit-statistics-29-april-2013-to-10-july-2025

Table 11: Proportion of people in the no work requirement conditionality regime by ethnic group[7] February 2024 to July 2025[2]

	Asian/Asian British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	White	Other Ethnic Group
July-25	32.1%	28.5%	39.8%	47.4%	34.3%
June-25	31.8%	28.4%	39.7%	47.1%	34.1%
May-25	31.8%	28.4%	39.7%	47.1%	34.1%
Apr-25	30.7%	27.5%	38.4%	45.4%	33.1%
Mar-25	30.1%	27.1%	37.8%	44.6%	32.7%
Feb-25	29.5%	26.8%	37.2%	43.9%	32.2%
Jan-25	28.8%	26.3%	36.5%	43.1%	31.6%
Dec-24	28.4%	26.0%	36.1%	42.6%	31.3%
Nov-24	27.9%	25.7%	35.7%	42.1%	30.8%
Oct-24	27.2%	25.3%	35.1%	41.4%	30.3%
Sep-24	26.9%	24.9%	34.6%	40.7%	29.8%
Aug-24	26.5%	24.5%	34.0%	40.0%	29.4%
Jul-24	26.1%	24.2%	33.5%	39.3%	29.0%
Jun-24	25.8%	23.8%	33.0%	38.7%	28.6%
May-24	25.7%	23.5%	32.4%	38.1%	28.2%
Apr-24	[u]	[u]	[u]	[u]	[u]
Mar-24	[u]	[u]	[u]	[u]	[u]
Feb-24	[u]	[u]	[u]	[u]	[u]

Source: Analysis of data contained in Table 3.3, DWP Data Tables: Universal Credit Ethnicity Statistics, published 12 August 2025, available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/universal-credit-statistics-29-april-2013-to-10-july-2025

Table 12: Relative likelihoods by ethnic group[7] of being in the no work related requirements regime February 2024 to July 2025 [5]

	Asian/Asian British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	White	Other Ethnic Group
July-25	0.68 [m]	0.60 [m]	0.84	1.00	0.72 [m]
June-25	0.68 [m]	0.60 [m]	0.84	1.00	0.72 [m]
May-25	0.68 [m]	0.60 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]
Apr-25	0.68 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]
Mar-25	0.67 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]
Feb-25	0.67 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]

Jan-25	0.67 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]
Dec-24	0.67 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]
Nov-24	0.66 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]
Oct-24	0.66 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]
Sep-24	0.66 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.73 [m]
Aug-24	0.66 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.74 [m]
Jul-24	0.66 [m]	0.62 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.74 [m]
Jun-24	0.67 [m]	0.61 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.74 [m]
May-24	0.67 [m]	0.62 [m]	0.85	1.00	0.74 [m]
Apr-24	u	u	u	u	u
Mar-24	u	u	u	u	u
Feb-24	u	u	u	u	u

Sanction Rates[8]

Table 13: Sanction rates by gender[3] September to November 2024[8]

Month	September 24[4]	October 24[4]	November 24[4]
Male	2.8	2.9	2.8
Female	1.0	1.0	1.0

Source: Analysis of DWP Stat-Xplore data, Dataset: UC Sanctions Rates, Conditionality Regime and Sanction Indicator by Month and Gender, downloaded 27 March 2025

Table 14: Sanctions rates relative likelihoods male compared to female, September to November 2024[8]

Month	September 24[4]	October 24[4]	November 24[4]
Male	2.8	2.9	2.8
Female	1.0	1.0	1.0

Source: Analysis of DWP Stat-Xplore data, Dataset: UC Sanctions Rates, Conditionality Regime and Sanction Indicator by Month and Gender, downloaded 27 March 2025

Table 15: Sanctions rates[8] by age band[6] September to November 2024

Age band	September 24[4]	October 24[4]	November 24[4]
16-19	8.6%	8.1%	8.1%
20-24	11.2%	11.1%	10.9%
25-29	7.6%	7.5%	7.6%
30-34	5.6%	5.5%	5.5%

35-39	4.6%	4.4%	4.4%
40-44	3.9%	3.7%	3.6%
45-49	3.4%	3.1%	3.0%
50-54	2.7%	2.5%	2.4%
55-59	2.5%	2.4%	2.3%
60-65	1.9%	1.8%	1.7%
Over 65	0.8%	0.7%	0.5%
All age bands	5.4%	5.3%	5.2%

Source: Analysis of DWP Stat-Xplore data, Dataset: Sanctions Rate, Sanction Indicator and Conditionality Regime by Month and Age, downloaded 17 March 2025

Table 16: Sanction rates[8] by age band relative to all ages[6] September 2024 to November 2024

Age band	September 24[4]	October 24[4]	November 24[4]
16-19	1.59	1.55	1.55
20-24	2.06	2.11	2.09
25-29	1.40	1.43	1.45
30-34	1.04	1.04	1.05
35-39	0.85	0.85	0.85
40-44	0.72	0.70	0.70
45-49	0.62	0.59	0.58
50-54	0.49	0.48	0.47
55-59	0.45	0.45	0.44
60-64	0.35	0.35	0.34
65+	0.14	0.13	0.09
All age bands	1.0	1.0	1.0

Source: Analysis of DWP Stat-Xplore data, People on Universal Credit, Conditionality Regime by Month and Age, downloaded 17 March 2025

Table 17: Sanctions rates[8] broken down by ethnic group[7] September 2024 to May 2025

	Asian/Asian British	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	White	Other Ethnic Group
May -25	3.9	5.4	6.6	5.4	3.7

Apr-25	4.0	5.4	6.7	5.5	3.8
Mar-25	4.2	5.9	7.1	5.7	4.1
Feb-25	4.1	5.8	7.0	5.5	4.0
Jan-25	3.9	5.6	6.7	5.4	3.9
Dec-24	3.3	4.8	5.9	4.6	3.3
Nov-24	4.0	5.8	7.2	5.6	4.1
Oct-24	3.9	5.7	7.1	5.5	4.3
Sep-24	4.2	5.9	7.2	5.6	4.7

Source: Table 7.6, DWP Data Tables: Benefit sanctions statistics to May 2025, available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/benefit-sanctions-statistics-to-may-2025

Table 18: Sanctions rates relative likelihoods by ethnicity compared to the White ethnic group, September 2024 to May 2025

	Asian/Asian British	**Black/African/Caribbean/Black British**	**Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups**	**White**	**Other Ethnic Group**
May-25	0.73[m]	0.99	1.22	1.00	0.69[m]
Apr-25	0.73[m]	0.99	1.22	1.00	0.70[m]
Mar-25	0.74[m]	1.03	1.24	1.00	0.71[m]
Feb-25	0.74[m]	1.04	1.27[m]	1.00	0.72[m]
Jan-25	0.73[m]	1.04	1.25[m]	1.00	0.72[m]
Dec-24	0.71[m]	1.04	1.28[m]	1.00	0.73[m]
Nov-24	0.71[m]	1.03	1.30[m]	1.00	0.74[m]
Oct-24	0.71[m]	1.04	1.29[m]	1.00	0.77[m]
Sep-24	0.74[m]	1.06	1.28[m]	1.00	0.83[m]

Source: Section 5, DWP Benefit sanctions Statistics to May 2025, published 12 August 2025, available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/benefit-sanctions-statistics-to-may-2025

<u>Notes:</u>

[1] Conditionality regimes where sanctions can be applied: for the purposes of determining sanctions rates, DWP treats the following conditionality regimes as 'conditionality regimes where sanctions can be applied': searching for work, planning for work, preparing for work and those with an 'unknown' conditionality regime[1].

[2] Proportion of people in a conditionality regime where people can be applied (Tables 1, 3 and 5): has been determined for each Reference Month by adding together the number (Tables 1 and 3) or proportion(Table 5) of people in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied divided by the number or proportion of people in all conditionality regimes using the formula: ((number of people in searching for work +number of people in planning for work + number of people preparing for work + number of people with an 'unknown conditionality regime') / (number of people in searching for work + number of people working with requirements + number of people with no work requirements + number of people working with no requirements + number of people in planning for work + number of people preparing for work + number of people with an 'unknown conditionality regime')) x 100 or ((% of people in searching for work + % people in planning for work + % people preparing for work + % of people with an 'unknown conditionality regime') / (% of people in searching for work + % of people working with requirements + % of people with no work requirements + % of people working with no requirements + % of people in planning for work + % of people preparing for work + %of people with an 'unknown conditionality regime')) x 100

[3] Gender: gender is recorded by the DWP as part of the Universal Credit claim process. In support of the claim, proof of identity must be provided for the claimant. In a small number of cases the claimants' gender is not recorded[2].

[4] Reference Month: figures relate to a point in time (the count date) which is the second Thursday of each month[23].

[5] Relative likelihoods of being in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied: relative likelihoods are a statistical technique that can be used to compare disparities between groups. For gender we have used 'female' as the comparator group. For age band we have used the average for all ages as the comparator group. For

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[1] Note 6, Table 7.6, DWP Data Tables: Benefit Sanctions Statistics to May 2025, published 12 August 2025

[2] Quality Statement, DWP Stat-Xplore, Data Set: Universal Credit Full Service Decisions Field: Gender, as at 27 March 2025

ethnic group we have used white as the comparator group in line with methodological guidance from the race disparity unit[3].

We have calculated relative likelihood by using the formula:

Relative likelihood = % of demographic group in a conditionality regime where sanctions can be applied / % of comparator demographic in a conditionality regime where a sanction can be applied.

[6] Age band: DWP determines claimant age based on date of birth. Date of birth is recorded as part of the Universal Credit claim process. In support of the claim proof of identify must be provided. The over 65 age group includes people aged up to and including 90 years of age[4].

[7] Ethnic Group: the ethnic group that the claimant feels they belong to, as recorded in the optional Universal Credit equality survey. The equality survey is an optional part of the Universal Credit claim process. It is not compulsory for claimants to complete this survey; their claim may be progressed without opening the survey. If a claimant does complete the survey, it is not compulsory for them to inform the DWP of their ethnic status as they may opt to 'prefer not to say', as part of this survey.

DWP only publishes data from the equality survey where the Response Rate to a question exceeds 70%. The Response Rate is the percentage of claimants responding to the Ethnicity section of the equalities survey. This is calculated using the following formula: *Number of claimants stating an Ethnicity in the Equality survey / the total number of claimants, including those who did not respond or chose 'prefer not to say' as their response*26. In relation to the data underpinning Tables 5 and 6, the Response Rate exceeded 70% in relation to all conditionality regimes in which sanctions can be applied with the exception of 'unknown'[5].

[8] Sanctions Rates: the sanction rate is determined using the formula:

Sanctions Rate = Number of Universal Credit claimants undergoing a sanction on the second Thursday of the Reference Month (the Count Date) / the number of Universal Credit claimants in conditionality regimes where sanctions can be applied.

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[3] Race Disparity Unit, Using relative likelihoods to compare ethnic disparities, published 18 August 2020https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/using-relative-likelihoods-to-compare-ethnic-disparities/using-relative-likelihoods-to-compare-ethnic-disparities

[4] Quality Statement, DWP Stat-Xplore Dataset: People on Universal Credit, Field: Age, as at 27 March 2025

[5] Source: Table 3.3 DWP Data Tables: Universal Credit Ethnicity Statistics

The DWP data on the number of Universal Credit claimants undergoing a sanction includes sanctions that subsequently go on to be overturned[6].

[m] Meaningful Impact: m denotes meaningful impact applying the Four Fifths rule (the DWP's preferred measure for determing whether a difference in relative likelihood is meaningful and impactful)[7]. Under the Four Fifths rule, where a relative likelihood of between 0.8 and 1.25, being within a 'zone of tolerance'. This means that the impact of the disparity is not considered large enough to be adverse from a policy perspective. Differences outside of the zone tolerance are considered large enough to be adverse from a policy perspective, and are therefore considered 'meaningful'.

Sanctions v. Criminal Fines

Criminal fines

Fines are the most common type of sentence given by the courts – in 2024, most (78%) offenders were sentenced to a fine[8]. This is because they are given for the lower-level crimes, including driving offence.

The amount of a fine must reflect the seriousness of the offence[9]. The court must also take into account the financial circumstances of the offender[10].

The aim is for the fine to have an equal impact on offenders with different financial circumstances; it should be a hardship but should not force the offender below a reasonable 'subsistence' level. Normally a fine should be of an amount that is capable of being paid within 12 months[11].

The offender's financial circumstances are taken into account by expressing that position as a proportion of an offender's relevant weekly income.

Fines are usually based on one of three bands (A, B or C). The selection of the relevant fine band, and the position of the individual offence within that band, is determined by the seriousness of the offence. In some cases fine bands D-F may be used even where

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[6] DWP Stat-xplore, Dataset: Universal Credit Sanctions Rate, as at 27 March 2025
[7] DWP, Universal Credit Sanctions Statistics: Background Information and Methodology, February 2025 available here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-sanctions-statistics-background-information-and-methodology/a
[8] Section 5, Criminal Justice Statistics quarterly, England and Wales, year ending December 2024
[9] Section 125(1), Sentencing Code
[10] Section 125(2) and (3), Sentencing Code
[11] Section 1, Approach to the Assessment of Fines, Sentencing Council guidelines available here: https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/explanatory-material/magistrates-court/item/fines-and-financial-orders/approach-to-the-assessment-of-fines-2/1-approach-to-the-assessment-of-fines-introduction/

the community or custody threshold have been passed. They must not exceed a statutory limit.

Fine Band	Starting Point	Range	
A	50% of relevant income	25-75% of relevant income	
B	100% of relevant income	75-125% of relevant income	
C	150% of relevant income	125-175% of relevant income	
D	250% of relevant income	200-300% of relevant income	
E	400% of relevant income	300-500% of relevant income	
F	600% of relevant income	500-700% of relevant income	

Where an offender's only source of income is state benefit (including where there is relatively low additional income as permitted by benefit regulations), their relevant weekly income is deemed to be £120.

A fine is payable in full on the day on which it is imposed. However, the court can allow payments to be paid over a period set by the court, normally over a maximum period of 12 months[12].

When allowing payment by instalments, guidance provides that payments should be set at a realistic rate raking into account the offender's disposable income. Guidance provides that the following approach may be useful:

Net weekly income	Suggested starting point for weekly payment
£60	£5
£120	£10
£200	£25
£300	£50
£400	£80

If the offender has dependants or larger than usual commitments, the weekly payment is likely to be decreased.

Comparison

[12] Section 10, Payment and Collection Orders, ibid

Comparison with fines paid in instalments

For a single claimant aged 25 or over, the sanction daily rate is £13.10. This equates to a weekly rate of £91.70. This amount does not vary if the individual has dependents.

For an offender with a court fine with an assumed income of £120 (the amount applied where an offender is in receipt of Universal Credit), guidance suggests a starting point of a weekly payment of £10, suggesting this may be less should the individual have dependents or larger than usual commitments.

Comparison with fine levels

Assuming a sanction length of 40 days at a £13.10 day rate (the median duration of a sanction in May 2024), an individual would be sanctioned in total £524.

This equates to 400% an assumed income of £120 (the amount applied under sentencing guidelines where an individual is in receipt of Universal Credit). A fine of 400% of assumed income falls within the range for Band E fines.

In 2024, the average court fine issued (excluding companies) was £283 (all offences)[13].

[13] Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/criminal-justice-statistics-quarterly