

Universal Credit - what happens after you apply

Easy read booklet



**This leaflet has information about how to apply
for Universal Credit**

**It will tell you what to expect after you have
started your application**

Contents	Page
Glossary (Word list)	3-5
Applying for Universal Credit	6
Confirm your Identity	7
Universal Credit Interview	8-10
Claimant Commitment	11-12
How to get help with applying	13
Help to Claim	14-16
Step-by-step guide	17-18

Glossary (Word List)

Citizens Advice

A charity that provides advice and information to help you solve problems.

Claimant

The person who is making a claim and will be receiving the benefit.

Claimant Commitments

An agreement between you and your work coach of things you will do in order to get your Universal Credit money.

DWP

Department for Work and Pensions
- this is the part of the government who pays Universal Credit

Glossary (Word List)

Help to Claim

Help to Claim is a service from Citizens Advice. It can support you through the early stages in a Universal Credit Application.

JobCentre Plus

The office you need to attend to manage your Universal Credit claim and get help from your work coach.

Reasonable Adjustment

A reasonable adjustment is a change that will **help you to do something** like attend a meeting, in a way that considers your health or disability.

To Do List

The section in your Universal Credit Journal that tells you what tasks you need to do.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is a benefit that helps you pay for costs like rent, shopping and energy bills.

Universal Credit Helpline

The Universal Credit Helpline is a phone line that you can use to contact the DWP about your Universal Credit claim.

Work Coach

Someone employed by the DWP to support benefit claimants with preparing for, finding and securing work.

Work Related Activity Group

The group you are put in to decide what activities you might need to do to look for or prepare for work.

Applying for Universal Credit



Before applying for Universal Credit you should **check that you are eligible** - this means that you are allowed to make a claim.

You can find more information in the DWP easy read guide 'Who can claim Universal Credit'.



From there you should **check what information you will need** to apply for Universal Credit.

You can find more information in the DWP easy read guide 'Before you apply for Universal Credit'.



You will then need to **set up an online account** and apply for Universal Credit.

You can find more information in the DWP easy read guide 'How to apply for Universal Credit'.



After this you will complete your **to do list**. This means **answering questions** about your situation such as who you live with or how much money you have.

Confirm your Identity



Before you can complete your application you will need to **confirm who you are**. This is known as **verifying your identity or verification**.



You can **verify online**. You will need to provide information that only you would know.



You will need **2** of these documents:

- UK Passport
- UK driving License
- recent tax Self Assessment returns
- credit references or records



If you are **not** able to **verify your identity online** you can do this at your **Jobcentre Interview**. This will be in person at the Jobcentre or a phone call.



The DWP will use your interview answers and the documents you provide to **verify your identity**.

Universal Credit Interview



After you have applied for Universal Credit, you will need to have a **meeting** with someone who works for the DWP.



Before you can book your interview there will be an item in your **to-do list** called '**prepare for your appointment**'. Here you will **select the documents** to bring to your interview.



After you have done this step there will be a phone number. You need to call this number to **book your interview**.



The DWP might call you to book your interview. If they don't you will need to call them **within 1 month**.



The details of your interview will be on your **to-do list** on your Universal Credit online account.



If you cannot hear or talk on the phone you can use the **DWP Video Relay Service** or the **Relay UK Text service**.



The person you have your meeting with is called your '**Work Coach**'. You will usually be asked to meet them at your local **JobCentre**.



If you will find it difficult to go to your jobcentre because of your health condition or disability, you can ask for something called a **reasonable adjustment**.



A reasonable adjustment is a change that will help you go to your meeting.



This could mean you:

- Have your meeting on the phone
- Have your meeting somewhere other than the jobcentre that is easier for you to get to
- Take someone with you.

Claimant commitment



At your meeting, you will be asked to sign a document called a **claimant commitment**.



Your **claimant commitment** is an agreement between you and your work coach of things you will do in order to get your Universal Credit money.



You should tell your work coach about anything that affects your **ability to work** or **look for work**. This will affect your claimant commitment.



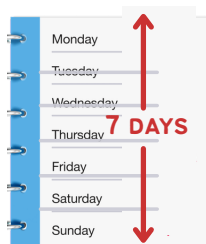
Your work coach will tell you what '**work related activity group**' you will be in. This tells you what **tasks** you need to do to **get ready for work**.



If you don't think your **claimant commitment** is right, you need to tell your **Work Coach**.



Explain to them why you will **struggle to complete tasks**. They have to consider your request and be reasonable.



When you get your final claimant commitment you need to **accept it within 1 week**.



If you don't accept it in time they will **close** your Universal Credit **claim**.



After you submit your claim, you will have to wait **5 weeks** for your first Universal Credit payment.

How to get help with applying



You can ask someone you trust to help you apply. You could ask your partner, someone who supports you, or a friend or family member.



You can visit a Job Centre for help.



You can call the Universal Credit helpline.



There is a free Citizens Advice service to help you apply called **Help to Claim**. Help to Claim is able to help with lots of things.

Help to Claim can:



Tell you if you are allowed to be paid from Universal Credit.



Tell you how much money you should get from Universal Credit.



Answer questions about what things mean and help if you feel worried.



Help you make a phone claim.



Check your first Universal Credit payment is right and help you if it is wrong.



Explain what will happen after you apply.



Help to Claim can help you prepare for your interview at the JobCentre.

You can talk to Help to Claim from 8am-6pm, Monday - Friday.



The Help to Claim phone number is:

England: **0800 144 8 444**

Scotland: **0800 023 2581**

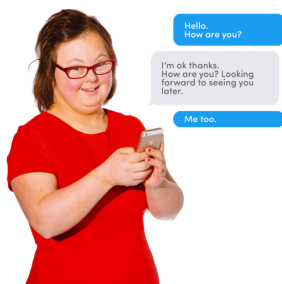
Wales: **08000 241 220**



Call the Wales number to speak to a Welsh speaking adviser. If you speak a different language, you can ask for a translator.



You also can speak to an adviser on **webchat**, or use our British Sign Language (**BSL**) service. You should visit the Citizens Advice website to do this.



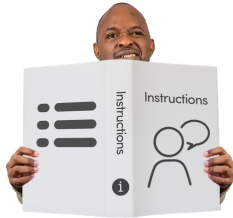
If you can't hear or speak on the phone, you can call **Relay UK** and type what you want to say:

England : **18001 then 0800 144 8 444**

Wales : **18001 then 08000 241 220**

Step by step

1



Read the rules about who can be paid Universal Credit to find out if you are able to get it.

2



If you are not sure if you can be paid Universal Credit, call Help to Claim to find out.

3



Get all the information you will need to apply.

4



Finish your Universal Credit application. Help to Claim can help you do this.

5



Arrange your first Job Centre meeting. You do this through your online Universal Credit account.



Remember you will only have **one month** to arrange your Job Centre appointment. If you do this late you might have to apply again.

6



Complete your first meeting and agree to your **claimant commitment**.

7



Wait 5 weeks for your first Universal Credit payment.

Citizens Advice helps people find a way forward.

Citizens Advice Plymouth is a charity.

We give advice for free to help people with their problems.

We will not judge you and we will treat you fairly.

You can get help if you live, work or study in England and Wales.

You can get help in person, by phone or online.

citizensadviceplymouth.org.uk



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