

How is Universal Credit different from the old benefits system?



You will usually get **one monthly payment** paid on the same date each month. This will include any additional elements you are entitled to, for example if you have children, if you are unable to work due to your health or if you have housing costs.



The **amount** of money you get on Universal Credit could be different from the old system. It will depend on your personal circumstances when you apply, which benefits you currently receive and whether or not you qualify for **transitional protection**.



You usually have to apply and manage your claim **online**. There is help available.



You will usually be expected to prepare for and look for work, or to increase your earnings if you are already working, unless you have a disability or health condition which prevents you from working. This is your **claimant commitment** and if you don't complete the actions, your benefits could be reduced or stopped.



If you claim other benefits related to a **disability, long term health condition or caring**, they will not be affected by moving to UC. This includes benefits such as Personal Independence Payment, Child Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance.

What is 'transitional protection'?

Some people could receive more money on UC than they did on the old system, other people might receive less. Transitional protection is designed to stop people being worse off on Universal Credit. The **Help to Claim service** can check if you **qualify for transitional protection** and timing your claim ahead of your deadline.

Help To Claim

Citizens Advice offers a free, confidential Help To Claim Service for anyone in the early stages of a UC claim. We can help you to:

- check if you can claim Universal Credit and other benefits
- understand how moving from legacy benefits to UC might affect you, based on your individual circumstances
- understand how to complete the application form
- prepare for your first job centre appointment
- understand what to do if your first payment is incorrect



You can find free information about Universal Credit, Help To Claim and other topics on our website: citizensadvice.org.uk

For advice, you can speak to an Adviser on webchat or telephone (8am – 6pm Monday – Friday).



Telephone helpline
Help To Claim **0800 144 8 444**
Relay UK **18001 0800 144 8 444**



Help To Claim Webchat
Scan the QR code or visit citizensadvice.org.uk/helptoclaim

citizensadvicecd.org.uk

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Managed Migration

Moving from the old benefits system to Universal Credit: what does it mean for you?



**citizens
advice**


**County
Durham**

What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit (UC) is a means-tested benefit that has been introduced to gradually replace the following benefits:

- Working Tax Credits
- Child Tax Credits
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

The DWP will notify everyone who is claiming these old benefits that they will need to make a claim for Universal Credit. This process is called **managed migration**.

 **You will not be moved automatically. Your old benefits will stop and you will need to apply for UC.**

What is managed migration?

Managed migration is what happens if the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) tells you that your current benefits will stop soon and you need to apply for Universal Credit (UC) instead.

The DWP will send you a letter telling you to apply for Universal Credit within 3 months. This letter is called a **migration notice**.

This will happen gradually so you might be told to move to UC at different times from people you know, depending on where you live and which benefits you are claiming.

Managed migration is already happening across the country.

Do I have to move to Universal Credit?

The DWP are planning to phase out the old benefits system by 2025. People on Working Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits will be notified first. The DWP will then gradually inform people claiming other old benefits when it is time for them to move to Universal Credit. You can stay on your current benefits for now, unless:

- you get a **letter from the DWP** telling you to claim Universal Credit by a certain date.
- your **situation changes** in certain ways - for example, separating from a partner or moving to a different council area may trigger the move to UC.

You can choose to move to Universal Credit at any time. However, if you apply before you receive the letter from DWP, you will not be eligible for transitional protection.

Once you apply for Universal Credit, you cannot move back to your old benefits. We recommend seeking advice before starting your claim to understand the best options for your individual circumstances.

How soon will I get my UC payment?

Your first UC payment will usually be **5 weeks** from the date you apply. Your old benefits might stop before your Universal Credit payment starts.

If you don't have enough money to live on while you're waiting for your first payment, you can ask for an **advance payment**. This is a loan that must be paid back to the DWP, usually within 24 months.

The **Help To Claim** service can advise on the application process and the best time to submit your UC application.

Managed Migration: What to expect



DWP sends you a migration notice

If managed migration applies to you, the DWP will send you a letter called a 'migration notice' telling you that you need to claim Universal Credit before the deadline - usually 3 months after the date you receive the letter.



Find out what it means for you

Read the information on Citizens Advice website or **speak to a Help To Claim Adviser** to understand how the move to UC will affect you, based on your individual circumstances.

Your old benefits payments will stop on the deadline in your letter from the DWP

If you want to claim Universal Credit, you must submit an application. You will not be moved over automatically. If you are having difficulties meeting this deadline, in exceptional circumstances, you can ask for an extension to your deadline.

If you apply for UC before the deadline, you may be eligible for an additional payment through **transitional protection**



Apply for Universal Credit

You will usually need to apply online. You will need to answer questions about your situation. This is called your 'to-do list'.



Book an interview with a work coach

You will be asked a few questions about your application. The DWP will tell you if it will be at the Jobcentre or over the phone. You must have this appointment within a month, otherwise you might have to start your application again.



Receive your first UC payment

You should receive your first payment 5 weeks after the date you apply. You will then receive one payment on the same date each month.