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## CLAIMANT COMMITMENT

Everyone claiming Universal Credit will have to make a 'claimant commitment'.

If you are fit for work, in most cases you must be available for and actively seeking work, and spending around 35 hours a week looking for a full-time job.

If you have 'limited capability for work' (like the 'work-related activity group' for ESA), or you are the main carer for a child aged 3 or 4, you must take part in 'work preparation activity'.

If you are the main carer of a child over one but under 3, you have to attend work-focused interviews at the Jobcentre.

If you care for a child under one, are a disabled person's carer for over 35 hours per week or have 'limited capability for work related activity' (like the current ESA Support Group) there are no 'work-related requirements'. Some other groups also have no work-related conditions.

If you have a part-time or very low-paid job, you may have to show you are looking for extra hours or better-paid work to get UC.

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## FIND OUT MORE

Potteries Gold was set up to help people in Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme get the best from Universal Credit.

We will be:

- Doing Community Briefings about Universal Credit and other benefits at a venue near you.
- Arranging workshops for small groups to help you understand your benefits.
- Offering one-off benefit advice sessions at community centres across the Potteries
- Finding venues where we can borrow computers with Internet access, where our advisers can help you with your claim.



If you are worried about managing your money when benefits are paid monthly, our Potteries Moneywise project may be able to help: [www.potteriesmoneywise.org.uk](http://www.potteriesmoneywise.org.uk)

For more information go to [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk) or contact our Citizens Advice Helpline: 03444 111 444

Potteries Gold is a **Citizens Advice Staffordshire North & Stoke-on-Trent** project to help people in Stoke-on-Trent cope with changes to the benefit system  
[www.snsca.org.uk/about-us/potteries-gold](http://www.snsca.org.uk/about-us/potteries-gold)  
Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: search for **Potteries Gold**

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# Potteries Gold

## Guide to ...

# Universal Credit



LOTTERY FUNDED

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## UNIVERSAL CREDIT IS...

A new benefit meant to replace most of the means-tested benefits we have now. You will claim Universal Credit instead of:

- Income Support
- Income-based JSA
- Income-related ESA
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

Only those benefits are changing - many benefits will stay the same.

## UNIVERSAL CREDIT ISN'T...

Contribution based JSA or ESA. (Now called New Style JSA and New Style ESA.)

As these are based on the National Insurance Contributions you have paid you still claim these separately.

Disability benefits like DLA, Attendance Allowance and PIP will also continue to be paid separately.

Other benefits including Bereavement Allowance, Widowed Parents' Allowance, Maternity Allowance and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit also stay the same. So does Child Benefit.

## WHO CAN CLAIM?

You cannot claim Universal Credit until it is introduced in your area.

Universal Credit Full Service is due to start in Stoke on Trent on 13th June 2018\*.

## HOW IT WILL WORK

Jo is a lone parent. She has to claim JSA for herself, Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit for her children, Housing Benefit for her rent and Council Tax Support.

In future, she would only have to claim Universal Credit, Child Benefit and Council Tax Support.

If she found a job she would stay on UC, instead of having to cancel her JSA claim and claiming Working Tax Credit.

If she was ill, she would also stay on UC rather than having to claim ESA.



\* Correct on 1st January 2018

## THE GOOD NEWS

Universal Credit will make claiming benefits simpler and easier for many people.

You will not have to make new claims for different benefits when your circumstances change. If you get UC when you are sick, you stay on it when you recover and start looking for work, or if go back to work.

## THE BAD NEWS

All claims for UC are made online, so you will need access to the Internet. You will also need this to manage your claim.

UC is paid monthly, in arrears, so you will usually wait at least five weeks for your first payment.

UC is paid into your bank account in one lump sum once a month, including any money for your rent. You will need to budget carefully

If you have a partner, you must agree between you who claims and gets the money.

