

Case Manager Guidance –

Introduction

Move to Universal Credit is a project made up of 3 ways that someone can end their legacy benefit claim and start claiming Universal Credit. These are:

- Natural migration
- Voluntary migration
- Managed migration

Natural migration (on-going)

Natural migration is where a legacy benefit claimant has a change in circumstances which would have previously resulted in them needing to make a new claim for one of the benefits that Universal Credit replaces.

So instead of making a new claim to Jobseeker's Allowance (Income Based, Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related), Income Support, Housing Benefit or Tax Credits, they will need to make a claim to Universal Credit.

There are many changes which can result in a new claim to benefit being required, such as a change in employment status, health or family circumstances.

Voluntary migration (on-going)

Voluntary migration is where a claimant voluntarily makes a claim to Universal Credit and:

- they have not received a migration notice directing them to make a claim to Universal Credit as part of managed migration
- they have not had a change of circumstances leading to them naturally migrating to Universal Credit

Managed migration

Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) is a process designed to close down legacy benefits and direct claimants to make a claim to Universal Credit.

Claimants selected to claim Universal Credit as part of Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) will receive a **migration notice** in the post.

This is a notification which explains their legacy benefit claim will be ending, and directs them to make a Universal Credit claim by a specific date. This will be 3 months and one day from the date of issue.

For example, if the Migration Notice is issued on 25 May, the claim by date is the 26 August.

If they claim by the claim by date, they will be considered for Transitional Protection. This protects eligibility and entitlement from existing benefits.

If the claimant makes a claim within one assessment period of their claim by date, they will still be considered for Transitional Protection.

Their Universal Credit claim start date will be backdated to their deadline date.

Only claimants on the Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) journey are eligible to be considered for Transitional Protection.

Once their claim to Universal Credit has been made, their legacy benefits will be stopped.

Claimants who have made a Universal Credit claim as part of the Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) programme are those who have not yet had a change of circumstances that have required them to claim Universal Credit nor chosen to make a Universal Credit claim voluntarily. For this reason, they are still claiming legacy benefits.

Universal Credit replaces the following legacy benefits:

- Child Tax Credit (CTC)
- Working Tax Credit (WTC)
- Housing Benefit (HB)
- Income Support (IS)
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA IB)
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA IR)

Eligibility for Move to Universal Credit (managed migration)

In most cases, those claiming Universal Credit as part of Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) must meet the normal eligibility criteria. See: **Eligibility for Universal Credit**

However, there are some exceptions to the eligibility criteria for these claimants.

These exceptions are part of Transitional Protection, and only apply if claimants apply on or before the claim by date on their migration notice.

Exception: Students

Full time students are not usually eligible to receive Universal Credit. However, legacy benefit claimants who are making a claim as part of Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) and are already in full time education, are exempt from this rule.

They will be allowed to complete any course they were participating in, on the day before they made their claim.

If their claim to Universal Credit is closed and they are still a student when their course ends and they try to claim again, the normal student eligibility rules are applied. The only exception to this is if their claim is closed due to earnings. In these cases, if a further Universal Credit claim is made within 4 months of the last day of their previous entitlement, the student disregard can be applied.

If they are no longer a student when the course ends, normal Universal Credit rules apply.

If they start a new course of education after they make their claim, the normal Universal Credit student eligibility rules must be applied. See **Students: Eligibility, conditionality and student income**

Exception: Tax Credit only claimants with capital over £16,000

Tax Credit only claimants who have more than £16,000 of capital or savings, and meet all other eligibility criteria are able to be entitled to Universal Credit for a maximum 12 assessment periods.

This exception does not apply to any other benefit or combination of benefits.

Capital or savings above £6,000 and up to £16,000 will be subject to the normal **treatment of capital**.

Any capital or savings above £16,000 is disregarded. (For example, if the claimant has £20,000, the amount from above £6,000 up to £16,000 is taken into account and the additional £4,000 is disregarded).

If their capital or savings falls to £16,000 or below, then increases above £16,000 within the 12 assessment periods, the disregard is not reapplied.

If their capital or savings remains above £16,000 after the 12 assessment periods have passed, they will no longer be eligible for Universal Credit.

If their capital or savings reduces significantly below £16,000, **deprivation of capital** will need to be considered.

If their claim is closed due to earnings before the 12 assessment periods pass, and they re-claim within 4 months of the end of the assessment period for which Universal Credit was awarded, the exception to the £16,000 rule continues until they reach 12 total assessment periods on their Universal Credit claim.

The total number of assessment periods does not reset if a new claim is made.

For example: if the claimant spends 8 assessment periods on Universal Credit

- their claim closes due to earnings
- they re-claim within 4 months of the end of the assessment period for which Universal Credit was last awarded,
- they are able to spend another 4 months on Universal Credit with capital in excess of £16,000.

If claim closure due to earnings coincides with the claimant reaching 12 assessment periods, the exception to the £16,000 rule will not apply if they reclaim.

Migration notice

Claimants selected to claim Universal Credit through the Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) Programme will receive a migration notice by post.

The migration notice is a notification letter which tells the claimant that their legacy benefits will be ending, and that they need to make a Universal Credit claim by a specific date. This will be a minimum of 3 months and one day from the date the migration notice is issued.

For example, if a migration notice is issued on 10th May, the claimant needs 3 months including 10th May to make their Universal Credit claim. They must be given until 10th August at least to make their claim. The 11th August (or later date) should be specified as the claim by date, to ensure the deadline is not within the 3 month and one day period.

Once the migration notice is issued an alert will be set in Universal Credit, to inform agents once a claim to Universal Credit has been made.

Change of circumstances after the migration notice is issued

Once the migration notice is issued, if the claimant has a change of circumstances within the 3 month and one day period, that moves them into an exclusion or deferral category, they may be issued a cancellation notice.

See **Move to Universal Credit (managed migration): Exclusions and deferrals**

They can be brought back on to the Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) journey if their circumstances change again, unless the change means that they are no longer entitled to legacy benefits.

A claimant may have a change of circumstances which means that:

- they are no longer entitled to legacy benefits and need to claim Universal Credit straight away
- they would have previously had to make a claim to a different legacy benefit that Universal Credit has replaced

These claimants need to make a Universal Credit claim straight away to ensure that they can receive the correct financial support.

Claimants who receive a migration notice and subsequently have any change of circumstance, including a change in couple status, will be eligible for the other Transitional Protection arrangements for students and for disregarding capital.

Claimants who move to a non-Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) postcode, after the migration notice has been issued are still considered to be Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) claimants.

This includes claimants who have not yet made their claim to Universal Credit.

They should continue on the Move to UC (managed migration) claimant journey, and be considered for Transitional Protection in the same way as other Move to Universal Credit claimants.

If the claimant does not make a claim by the claim by date on their migration notice, their legacy benefits will be terminated.

Sending a reminder

All claimants selected to take part in Move to Universal Credit (managed migration), receive a migration notice directing them to claim Universal Credit by a specific date.

Where an individual has not made a claim 7 weeks after receiving their migration notice, a reminder notice letter will be issued.

The reminder notice re-emphasises the requirement to make a claim by their claim by date, the implications of not making a claim, and the support available to them.

If the individual does not make a claim 10 weeks after the migration notice was issued, a second reminder notice is issued by SMS text if there is a mobile number held as a primary number.

If there isn't a primary number, the claimant is sent a reminder letter.

Claim made to Universal Credit

If a claimant makes a new Universal Credit claim by the claim by date, the following benefits will continue to be paid for a further 2 weeks, after the claim to Universal Credit was made from the day they made their Universal Credit claim.

- Income Support
- Jobseekers Allowance (IB)
- Employment and Support Allowance (IR)
- Housing Benefit

These will not be deducted from future Universal Credit payments.

However, Working Tax Credits and Child Tax Credits eligibility will stop from the day before they made their Universal Credit claim.

Claimants in temporary or specified accommodation will continue to receive Housing Benefit.

If the claimant has a current WCA decision recorded on their ESA claim, this will automatically be carried over to their Universal Credit claim. They will not need to attend another WCA assessment. Universal Credit WCA review processes will apply.

If a claimant states they need extra help with rent or housing costs and require further financial support, they should be referred to their Local Authority to apply for a **Discretionary Housing Payment**.

Once the National Insurance Number and claimant identification are verified, a banner will be visible within the service to identify claimants who are claiming under Move to Universal Credit.

The Transitional Element can be calculated once all evidence has been verified. See Transitional Protection (add link to guidance)

Claimants will be assigned to a Labour Market regime appropriate to their personal circumstances and be expected to participate in appointments and work-related activity if their regime requires this. See: **Labour Market regimes**

Claimant does not make a claim to Universal Credit

Claimants who do not make a claim by the claim by date will have their legacy benefits stopped.

However, if they make a Universal Credit claim within one assessment period of that happening, their Universal Credit claim date will be backdated to the claim by date. These claimants can still be eligible for Transitional Protection, if applicable, and the 2 week run on.

The 2 week run on is payable even if the claimant makes a claim to Universal Credit after their claim by date, or they don't claim at all.

For some claimants, a migration notice extension may be appropriate.

Once all the reminders have been issued, if the claimant does not make a claim by their claim by date, no further attempts to contact the claimant are made before their legacy benefits are terminated.

Extensions

It may sometimes be appropriate to extend a claimant's claim by date.

A maximum of 4 weeks can be applied, either by the claimant requesting it, or where a support decision is made based on their circumstances.

There are a number of good reasons a claimant might need more time to claim, including:

- the claimant did not engage in the Move to Universal Credit process until their claim by date was already very close

- the claimant needs more time to get the necessary documentation, evidence or information to make their claim
- the claimant needs more time to get support with making their claim
- the claimant has planned hospital treatment (or a similar commitment) that means they are unable to make a claim by their deadline date

This list is not exhaustive.

If the claimant is still struggling to make a claim by the end of their extension period, they can request a further extension. This must be done more than 1 week before their claim by date to discuss their options.

There is no limit to the number of times an extension can be requested or allowed.

Extensions can only be applied before the claimant's claim by date.

Once the date has passed, an extension cannot be applied.

If it is clear the claimant can make and maintain a claim by online self-service, but needs support to do so, this is typically linked to skills, confidence, lack of motivation and access, see **Assisted Digital** support or **Help to Claim**.

If the claimant is unable to make and maintain an online claim, there are exceptional circumstances where they can make a claim by phone.

See: **Spotlight on: Claims by phone**.

Claimant fails to provide evidence for their Universal Credit claim

Once a Universal Credit claim has been made, information and /or evidence is needed to verify certain aspects of it, such as claimant identity and details of housing / rent payments. These are Business As Usual processes.

If the claimant fails to provide the information required to complete their claim within a month of that information being requested, the claim would be closed.

Self-employed claimants: Minimum Income Floor exemption

Self-employed claimants that claim Universal Credit, as part of Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) and are **gainfully self-employed** (GSE), will enter the 12 month start-up period.

They will not have the **Minimum Income Floor** (MIF) applied to their Universal Credit award until this period has ended. This is regardless of how long they have been self-employed before moving to Universal Credit.

After 12 months Business as Usual will apply.

Move to Universal Credit (managed migration): Exclusions and deferrals

Background

Some claimants will not be able to take part in the initial Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) programme due to their personal circumstances.

This may be because:

- they would not meet the normal eligibility conditions for Universal Credit
- it would be unreasonable to expect them to make a claim at this time
- their circumstances temporarily mean that DWP cannot safely move them across from their legacy benefits

Some claimants may be currently excluded from participating in Move to Universal Credit (managed migration), whereas others may have their participation deferred.

It may be identified that a claimant falls into one of the exclusion or deferral categories at different points in the Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) journey. This could be:

- before the migration notice is issued
- after the migration notice is issued but before they make a claim
- after they make a claim to Universal Credit

Depending on when this is identified, the support provided to claimants will differ.

Exclusions

In certain circumstances, claimants will not be included in the Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) programme. These are claimants who are:

- currently in prison
- in receipt of a Tax Credits nil award and have no other existing benefits in payment
- within 6 months of State Pension age
- in receipt of Housing Benefit only and are living in specified or temporary accommodation
- a joint tax credit claimant and their partner has been imprisoned in a member state
- receiving a Tax Credit supplement

- living abroad and receiving a DWP benefit that allows them to claim Child Tax Credits
- Posted Workers (work for a UK company in an EU country)
- Zambrano Carers (a non-EEA national who is the primary carer of a British Citizen child that lives in Great Britain, and the child would not be able to live in GB without their primary carer)

Claimants with any of these circumstances will be permanently excluded from this move to Universal Credit.

Deferrals

In certain circumstances claimants may be deferred from being invited to the Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) programme.

Group	Defer until:
Couples	It is decided that couples are on the journey
<p>Housing Benefit claimants only</p> <p>Claimants aged 16 or 17 years old, who are claiming in their own right or as part of a couple claim</p>	<p>We can identify if they have a partner in the data that is shared with DWP.</p> <p>Their 18th birthday</p>
<p>Fraud / DWP compliance cases being investigated.</p> <p>HMRC and DWP Special Customer Records</p>	<p>The fraud / DWP compliance investigation is complete.</p> <p>They can be accommodated safely in the process.</p>
<p>Employment and Support Allowance claimants in the assessment phase who have never had the</p>	<p>The Work Capability Assessment outcome has been applied to their legacy benefit.</p>

Group	Defer until:
outcome of the work capability assessment.	
<p>ESA and JSA claimants with a nil award</p> <p>Claimants whose mail has been returned as they are no longer living at the address it was sent to (Dead Letter Office)</p>	<p>A process is designed to include them.</p> <p>Their correct address can be established.</p>
<p>Claimants with a child in non-advanced education who are aged 19</p> <p>Claimants with a visual impairment</p>	<p>The child reaches 20.</p> <p>The migration notice is designed to be issued in braille and large print.</p>
<p>Claimants who require a home visit</p> <p>Claimants who have an appointee</p>	<p>A process is designed for claimants on the Move to Universal Credit journey to have a home appointment.</p> <p>A process is designed to include them.</p>
<p>There is a mismatch between the data held on the 'Track Move to UC migration' database and the data held on CIS (Searchlight)</p>	<p>The data can be reviewed and corrected where needed.</p>

Group	Defer until:
Terminally ill claimants	A process is designed to include them, if that is appropriate in their circumstances.

Selecting a claimant to migrate: Move to Universal Credit (managed migration)

Section 1: Eligibility

This section is used to determine if a claimant meets some key eligibility requirements for claiming Universal Credit.

Access the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet of claimants and select the next available case.

For each individual case, the following steps must be completed to ensure that only eligible claimants are issued with a Migration Notice.

1.1 Is another agent currently reviewing this case?

Check the 'Allocated Agent' column on the spreadsheet. If there is another agent's name in this column, the case is already being reviewed by another agent.

Yes: go to the next case on the spreadsheet and start the process again

No: go to 1.2

1.2 Take the following action:

- type your name into the 'Allocated Agent' column
- go to 1.3

1.3 Are you able to find and access the claimant's record in CIS (Searchlight)?

Yes: go to 1.4

No: go to 2.5

1.4 Does the claimant already have an active Universal Credit claim?

Check searchlight to see if there is a live Universal Credit claim in the list of benefits that the claimant is in receipt of.

If there is no record on searchlight of this, access the Universal Credit service and search for the claimant using their name and post code.

Yes: go to 2.6

No: go to 1.5

1.5 Does the following benefit information held on the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet match the claimant information held in CIS (Searchlight)?:

- list of eligible benefits they are currently in receipt of
 - Jobseeker's Allowance (Income-based)
 - Employment and Support Allowance (Income-based)
 - Income Support
 - Housing Benefit
 - Working Tax Credits
 - Child Tax Credits

Important: for JSA, ESA and IS, the award details can be found in the 'Benefits' section of searchlight. You must disregard any information in the 'Interests' section that relates to these benefits.

Important: For HB, WTC and CTC, the award details can be found in the 'Interests' section of searchlight. Both WTC and CTC will appear as 'New Tax Credits'.

So, if the spreadsheet shows that the claimant is in receipt of either WTC, CTC, or both, as long as the 'Interests' section shows 'New Tax Credits', this is accepted as a match.

Yes, the data matches: go to 1.6

No, the data does not match: go to 2.1

1.6 Does the following claimant information held on the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet match the claimant information held in CIS (Searchlight)?

- National Insurance Number (NINo)
- first name and surname (the claimant's middle name does not need to match)
- date of birth
- residential address
- correspondence address
- phone number

If there are multiple telephone numbers recorded on CIS, as long as at least 1 of the telephone numbers matches the spreadsheet, this is not considered a data mismatch.

Yes, all the data matches: go to 1.7

No, there is a data mismatch: go to 2.1

1.7 Is the claimant's address in CIS shown as Dead Letter Office (DLO)?

Yes: go to 2.1

No: go to 1.8

1.8 Does the 'Benefits' section of CIS show that the claimant is in receipt of any of the following benefits?

- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support

Yes: go to 2.7

No: go to 1.9

1.9 Take the following action:

- select the 'Data mismatch' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'No' from the dropdown
- go to 1.10

1.10 Does the claimant have a partner?

This information can be found in the 'Relationships' section on CIS (Searchlight).

Yes: go to 2.4

No: go to 1.11

1.11 Is the claimant over 18 years old?

Yes: go to 1.12

No: go to 2.2

1.12 Is the claimant under State Pension age?

To check someone's State Pension age, see: **What is your date of birth? - Check your State Pension age - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)(link is external)**

Yes: go to 1.13

No: go to 2.3

1.13 Will the claimant reach State Pension age in the next 6 months?

Yes: go to 2.3

No: go to Section 3 Exclusions and deferrals

Section 2: Recording a data mismatch and claimant ineligibility

2.1 Take the following action:

- select the 'Data mismatch' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- defer the claimant from moving to Universal Credit by selecting the relevant data mismatch from the dropdown

End of process

2.2 Take the following action:

- select the 'Reason for deferring' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Claimants under 18' from the dropdown list

End of process

2.3 Take the following action:

- select the 'Reason for excluding' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Approaching state pension age' from the dropdown list

End of process

2.4 Take the following action:

- select the 'Reason for deferring' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Joint claims' from the dropdown list

End of process

2.5 Take the following action:

- select the 'Reason for deferring' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Record inaccessible' from the dropdown list

End of process

2.6 Take the following action:

- select the 'Data mismatch' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'UC claim made' from the dropdown list

End of process

2.7 Take the following action:

- select the 'Data mismatch' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Yes - not Tax Credits only, receiving other benefits' from the dropdown list

End of process

Section 3: Exclusions and deferrals

This section is used to help determine if a claimant falls into any of the Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) deferral or exclusion categories.

3.1 Does the claimant require correspondence to be sent in large print or braille?

This information can be found under the 'Braille or large print' heading in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet

Yes: go to 3.5

No: go to 3.2

3.2 Is the claimant currently in prison?

Check the claimant's current address on the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet or in CIS (Searchlight) to determine if they are in prison. Prison addresses will contain the acronym 'HMP'.

Yes: go to 3.6

No: go to 3.3

3.3 Does the claimant have an appointee?

This information can be found in searchlight.

Yes: go to 3.7

No: go to 3.4

3.4 Does the claimant have a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) or Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA)?

This information can be found in either the 'Personal details' or 'Relationships' section of CIS (Searchlight).

Yes: go to 3.8

No: go to 3.9

3.5 Take the following action:

- select the 'Reason for deferring' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Braille or large print required' from the dropdown list

End of process

3.6 Take the following action:

- select the 'Reason for excluding' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Claimants who are prisoners' from the dropdown list

End of process

3.7 Take the following action:

- select the 'Reason for deferring' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Claimant with appointee' from the dropdown list

End of process

3.8 Take the following action

- select the 'Reason for deferring' column in the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- select 'Claimant with appointee' from the dropdown list

End of process

3.9 Take the following action

- select the 'Reason for deferring' column and select 'None applied' from the dropdown list
- select the 'Reason for excluding' column and select 'None applied' from the dropdown list

Go to section 4

Section 4: Sending the migration notice

This section is used to support agents in sending the migration notice to an eligible claimant.

4.1 Take the following action:

- access the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- locate the claimant to whom you are going to send the migration notice
- in the 'Migration notice sent' column, record today's date

Use the following date convention: DD/MM/YYYY

- access the 'Standard Migration Notice v1' template in the **Move to Universal Credit (managed migration)** section of Universal Learning

Do not use the 'Standard Migration Notice v2' template for these claimants.

You must use 'Standard Migration Notice v1'.

The date on the migration notice will automatically update as soon as you start typing the claimant's address.

Important: You must not use the 'Enter' key while adding information to the migration notice. You can use the 'Tab' key to move between sections of the letter.

Add the claimant's first name and surname to the top of the letter.

The claimant's middle name (if they have one) must not be included on the letter.

Record the claimant's address on the letter.

If the claimant has a correspondence address, this must be used.

The address must match the address held in CIS. If the claimant's address in CIS does not match the address held on the spreadsheet, this must be recorded as a data mismatch as shown in step 2.1.

Make sure the address covers 4 lines or fewer. If the address is 5 lines or more then the letter will be rejected when you try to send it to the claimant later in the process.

- add the claimant's 'Reference' number to the right-hand side of the letter where it says 'Your Ref' (this number can be found on the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet in the 'Reference' column)

- go to 4.2

4.2 Take the following action:

Identify the claimant's claim by date by checking the 'Claim by date' in the 'Move summary' section of the Move service.

Record the claim by date on the letter using the naming convention DD/MM/YYYY.

The letter will then automatically change the date into full length format for you. For example, if you input 26/08/2022, this will change to 26 August 2022:

- record the eligible benefits that the claimant is currently entitled to on the letter, these could be any of the following:
 - Working Tax Credits
 - Child Tax Credits

The eligible benefits the claimant is in receipt of can be found in the 'Award' column of the spreadsheet.

Make sure that you write out the benefit names in full and not the abbreviated format.

- go to 4.3

4.3 Take the following action:

- select 'File' and 'Save As'
- use the following naming convention for the file name of each Migration Notice:
 - `firstname_surname_referencenumber_Standard`

The reference number is the number found in the 'Reference' column of the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet.

- change the 'Save as type' to 'PDF'
- save the PDF to the 'Move to Universal Credit – Home', 'Migration Notice Issued', SharePoint folder
- go to 4.4

4.4 Take the following action:

- log into the 'GOV.UK Notify' system using the following link: **GOV.UK Notify sign-in(link is external)** (you may want to save this to your desktop)
- sign in using your e-mail and password
- select 'Uploads' from the left-hand side of the screen
- select 'Upload a letter'
- browse for file and locate the Migration Notice that you have just saved in the SharePoint folder
- upload the PDF document

If GOV.UK Notify rejects the letter when you try to upload it, this is usually because the address entered onto the letter is more than 4 lines. In this case, you must go back and amend the letter so that the address covers 4 lines or fewer.

- select the 'Second class post' radio button (if not already selected)
- click 'Send letter'
- go to 4.5

4.5 Take the following action:

- access the 'Version of migration notice sent' column on the spreadsheet
- select 'Migration Notice v1 (MNS1)' from the dropdown list

Go to section 5

Section 5: Completing the 'Record migration notice' to-do in the Move Service

Take the following action:

- access the **Move service(link is external)**
- search for the claimant and access their record
- open and complete the 'Record migration notice' to-do

The claimant's 'Move Status' will now automatically update to 'Migration notice sent'.

End of process.

Sending a reminder: Move to Universal Credit (managed migration)

Specialist teams guidance

Note: This section must **only** be used by the agents working on Move to Universal Credit (managed migration).

Background

All claimants selected to take part in Move to Universal Credit (managed migration) receive a migration notice directing them to claim Universal Credit by a specific date.

7 weeks after being sent their migration notice, the claimant will be sent a reminder letter if they have not made a Universal Credit claim.

The reminder letter will re-emphasise the requirement to make a claim by their individual claim by date, the implications of not making a claim, and the support available to them.

10 weeks after being sent their migration notice, if the claimant still has not made a claim, they will be sent a text message reminding them that they need to make a claim.

If DWP does not hold a mobile number for the claimant, they will be sent a second reminder letter instead of a text message.

Prompt to send a reminder

First reminder

The 'Send reminder notice' column on the 'Move to UC migration' spreadsheet is used to identify when a claimant's first reminder notice needs to be sent.

The column will remain blank until 7 weeks have passed from the date the migration notice was issued.

Once 7 weeks have passed, the 'Send reminder notice' column will automatically be updated with the text 'Send reminder'. This means that the claimant needs to be issued a reminder notice through GOV.UK Notify.

Important: Team Leaders must take action each day to filter the claimants on the spreadsheet whose reminder notice needs to be sent. You can filter search for 'Send reminder' text within the 'Send reminder notice' column. This will bring all the claimants who need to be sent their reminder notice to the top of the spreadsheet.

Important: All reminder notices must be uploaded to GOV.UK Notify by 5:30pm on the day that they are drafted / actioned.

Once you have been assigned a reminder case by your Team Leader, follow the steps in the instructions below starting from section 1.

Second reminder

Each day, Team Leaders will identify claimants who require a second reminder using the spreadsheet. Team Leaders will find cases where the migration notice was sent 10 weeks ago, and no claim has been made before assigning to a case manager.

Once you have been assigned a reminder case by your Team Leader, follow the steps in the instructions below starting from section 1.

Agent action

Section 1: Identifying which type of reminder needs to be sent

1.1: Is this the claimant's first or second reminder?

If you are unsure, check the 'Send reminder notice' column on the 'Move to UC migration' spreadsheet. If the column contains the text 'Completed – reminder v1 issued', this means the claimant has been sent their first reminder.

If the 'Date 2nd reminder sent' column has also been completed with a date, this means the claimant has been sent their second reminder and there is no further reminder action required.

First reminder (7 weeks): go to section 2

Second reminder (10 weeks): go to 1.2

1.2: Is a mobile number currently held in the 'Primary number' column on the 'Move to UC migration' spreadsheet?

Mobile numbers on the spreadsheet will be 11 digits long, whereas landline numbers will only be 10 digits as the spreadsheet does not contain the first zero of the landline dialling code.

Most UK mobile numbers will also start with '07' as the first two digits.

Yes: go to section 3

No: go to 1.3

1.3: As we do not hold a mobile number for the claimant, they must be sent a letter instead.

Go to section 4.

Section 2: Sending the first reminder letter

2.1: Take the following action:

- access the 'MNR1 (Migration Notice Reminder 1)' template in the **'Move to Universal Credit (managed migration)'** section of Universal Learning

Important – you must not use the 'Enter' key while adding information to the reminder notice. You can use the 'Tab' key to move between sections of the letter.

Add the claimant's first name and surname to the top of the letter.

The claimant's middle name (if they have one) must not be included on the letter.

Check CIS (Searchlight) for the claimant's most up to date address information.

If the claimant has a correspondence address held in CIS:

- **add the correspondence address to the letter**
- **update the 'Correspondence address' column on the spreadsheet where the address is not yet held**

If the claimant does not have a correspondence address:

- **locate the claimant's residential address on CIS**
- **add the residential address to the letter**
- **update the 'New address' and 'New post code' columns where the address held in CIS does not match the address held in the spreadsheet**

Make sure the address covers 4 lines or fewer. If the address is 5 lines or more then the letter will be rejected when you try to send it to the claimant later in the process.

- add the claimant's 'Reference' number to the right-hand side of the letter where it says 'Your Ref' (this number can be found on the spreadsheet in the 'Reference' column)

Go to 2.2

2.2: Take the following action

- identify the claimant's claim by date by checking the 'Claim by date' in the 'Move summary' section of the Move service
- record the claimant's claim by date on the notice using the convention DD/MM/YYYY

The letter will then automatically change the date into full length format for you.

Example: if you input 26/08/2022, this will change to 26 August 2022.

- check the 'Award' column on the spreadsheet to see which of the following benefits the claimant is currently receiving:
 - Working Tax Credits
 - Child Tax Credits
- record the eligible benefits that the claimant is currently entitled to on the notice

Make sure that you write out the benefit names in full and not the abbreviated format.

- identify the date on which the claimant was sent their migration notice using the 'Migration notice sent' column on the spreadsheet
- record the date on the letter

Go to 2.3

2.3: Take the following action:

- select 'File' and 'Save As'
- use the following naming convention for the file name of each Migration Notice:
 - `firstname_surname_referencenumber_MNR1`

The reference number is the number found in the 'Reference' column of the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet.

- change the 'Save as type' to 'PDF'
- save the PDF to Sharepoint folder – 'Reminders Sent'

Important: All reminder notices must be uploaded to GOV.UK Notify by 5:30pm on the day that they are drafted / actioned.

Go to 2.4

2.4: Take the following action:

- log into the 'GOV.UK Notify' system using the following link: **GOV.UK Notify sign-in(link is external)(link is external)** (you may want to save this to your desktop)
- sign in using your e-mail and password
- select 'Uploads' from the left-hand side of the screen
- select 'Upload a letter'

- browse for file and locate the reminder notice that you have just saved in Sharepoint folder – 'Reminders Sent'
- upload the PDF document
- select the 'Second class post' radio button (if not already selected)
- click 'Send letter'
- go to 2.5

2.5: Take the following action:

- access the 'Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- locate the claimant for whom you have just sent the reminder notice
- in the 'Date reminder sent' column, record today's date using the naming convention DD/MM/YYYY

Once you have entered the date, the 'Send reminder notice' column will automatically update to say 'Completed – reminder v1 issued'.

End of process.

Section 3: Sending a text message reminder

3.1: Take the following action:

- log into the 'GOV.UK Notify' system using the following link: **GOV.UK Notify sign-in(link is external)(link is external)(link is external)** (you may want to save this to your desktop)
- sign in using your e-mail and password
- select 'Templates' from the left-hand side of the screen
- select 'Reminder for Tax Credits claimants' from the list of options
- the following message should appear on the screen

'Your tax credit payments are ending. Make a claim for Universal Credit by [Claimant's claim by date]. Search 'apply for Universal Credit'. For support call [REDACTED].'

- select 'Get ready to send'
- input the claimant's mobile number from the 'Primary number' column on the spreadsheet

After inputting the mobile number, an additional field will appear asking you to enter the claimant's claim by date.

- input the claimant's claim by date into the field using the convention DD/MM/YYYY

- select 'Continue'
- select 'Send 1 text message'

Important: In some cases, GOV.UK Notify may show that the text message was 'Not delivered' or has been 'Sending since (date/time)', this means the text has not been received by the claimant. However, as we have attempted to send a text message to the claimant on a mobile number they provided, this is still treated as a reminder being sent.

Go to 3.2

3.2: Take the following action:

- access the 'Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- in the 'Date 2nd reminder sent' column, input today's date

End of process.

Section 4: Sending a second reminder letter as no mobile number is held

4.1: Take the following action:

- access the 'MNR2 (Migration Notice Reminder 2)' template in the '**Move to Universal Credit (managed migration)**' section of Universal Learning

Important – you must not use the 'Enter' key while adding information to the reminder notice. You can use the 'Tab' key to move between sections of the letter.

Add the claimant's first name and surname to the top of the letter.

The claimant's middle name (if they have one) must not be included on the letter.

Check CIS (Searchlight) for the claimant's most up to date address information.

If the claimant has a correspondence address held in CIS:

- **add the correspondence address to the letter**
- **update the 'Correspondence address' column on the spreadsheet where the address is not yet held**

If the claimant does not have a correspondence address:

- **locate the claimant's residential address on CIS**
- **add the residential address to the letter**
- **update the 'New address' and 'New post code' columns where the address held in CIS does not match the address held in the spreadsheet**

Make sure the address covers 4 lines or fewer. If the address is 5 lines or more then the letter will be rejected when you try to send it to the claimant later in the process.

- add the claimant's 'Reference' number to the right-hand side of the letter where it says 'Your Ref' (this number can be found on the spreadsheet in the 'Reference' column)

Go to 4.2

4.2: Take the following action

- identify the claimant's current claim by date by checking the 'Claim by date' in the 'Move summary' section of the Move service
- record the claimant's claim by date on the notice using the convention DD/MM/YYYY

The letter will then automatically change the date into full length format for you.

Example: if you input 26/08/2022, this will change to 26 August 2022.

- check the 'Award' column on the spreadsheet to see which of the following benefits the claimant is currently receiving:
 - Working Tax Credits
 - Child Tax Credits
- record the eligible benefits that the claimant is currently entitled to on the notice

Make sure that you write out the benefit names in full and not the abbreviated format.

- identify the date on which the claimant was sent their migration notice using the 'Migration notice sent' column on the spreadsheet
- record the date on the letter

Go to 4.3

4.3: Take the following action:

- select 'File' and 'Save As'
- use the following naming convention for the file name of each Migration Notice:
 - firstname_surname_referencenumber_MNR2

The reference number is the number found in the 'Reference' column of the 'Track Move to UC migration' spreadsheet.

- change the 'Save as type' to 'PDF'
- save the PDF to Sharepoint folder – 'Reminders Sent'

Important: All reminder notices must be uploaded to GOV.UK Notify by 5:30pm on the day that they are drafted / actioned.

Go to 4.4

4.4: Take the following action:

- log into the 'GOV.UK Notify' system using the following link: **GOV.UK Notify sign-in(link is external)(link is external)** (you may want to save this to your desktop)
- sign in using your e-mail and password
- select 'Uploads' from the left-hand side of the screen
- select 'Upload a letter'
- browse for file and locate the reminder notice that you have just saved in Sharepoint folder – 'Reminders Sent'
- upload the PDF document
- select the 'Second class post' radio button (if not already selected)
- click 'Send letter'
- go to 4.5

4.5: Take the following action:

- access the 'Move to UC migration' spreadsheet
- in the 'Date 2nd reminder sent' column, input today's date

End of process.

Give a claimant more time to claim (Extensions): Move to Universal Credit (managed migration)

Extending the claim by date with claimant consent

Some claimants may make contact to request additional time to make their claim to Universal Credit. In other circumstances, a case manager may identify through conversation with the claimant that they will not be able to make a claim by their current claim by date. Both of these cases are treated as 'Claimant requested' extensions as they are granted following an interaction with the claimant.

It does not matter whether it was the agent or claimant who started the conversation. The extension will always be treated as 'claimant requested' where the claimant has agreed to an extension.

Follow the relevant guidance based on whether the claimant has made contact to request more time or whether you have spoken to the claimant and identified the need for a claim by date extension.

Claimant has asked for more time to claim.

Case manager has identified that a claimant needs more time to claim (claimant consent given).

Extending the claim by date where no contact has been made with the claimant

There may be some circumstances where there has been no claimant contact and the decision to extend has been made without discussing it with them. This may be as part of a DWP lead deadline extension exercises where a group of claimants are all given more time to claim for a particular reason.

There may also be cases where agents feel that an extension is needed for another reason outside of the normal 'claimant requested' process.

Move to Universal Credit (managed migration): Differences in additional support for Universal Credit claimants compared to legacy benefits

What are passported benefits?

Passported benefits are benefits or schemes some claimants are entitled to because of their entitlement to certain other benefits or Tax Credits.

Claimants must be made aware that just because they had entitlement on legacy benefits, does not mean they automatically do on Universal Credit.

Some claimants may find that entitlement to passported benefits changes on Universal Credit, as the eligibility criteria is different to when they were on legacy benefits.

The eligibility criteria for passported benefits are not set by Universal Credit policy. They are set by the Government Departments, Utility Organisations and Devolved Administrations that own them.

Help with health costs

Can I receive help with health costs on Universal credit?

Universal Credit claimants are entitled to help with health costs if, in their last assessment period they had earnings of either:

- £435 or less
- £935 or less, if the claimant's Universal Credit includes a payment for a child, or they have limited capability for work or limited capability for work and work-related activity

If you are part of a couple, the net earnings threshold applies to your combined net earnings.

Claimants entitled to help with health costs will get:

- free NHS prescriptions (the new prescription form includes a 'Universal Credit' tick box. If the old form is used, claimants should continue to select the 'Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance' box while stocks last)
- free NHS dental treatment

- free wigs and fabric supports
- free sight tests
- access to optical vouchers to help with the cost of glasses or contact lenses
- travel to an NHS appointment on referral by a primary care practitioner (for example, doctor, dentist or optician)

For further information about NHS Help with Health Costs, see **Check if you're eligible for help | NHSBSA(link is external)**

How to claim help with health costs

Claimants must show the healthcare professional their Universal Credit statement page, when their prescription is dispensed.

Claimants who are unsure about entitlement to support with health costs (for example, because they are waiting for a decision on their claim), should pay the relevant charge and ask for a refund form at the same time.

Claimants must obtain the refund form at the same time the costs are paid, as it will not be issued later. Once the claimant receives their award letter, the refund can be claimed. This must be within 3 months of the date the charge was paid.

Universal Credit claimants who meets all the criteria for help with health costs but didn't get the refund form, must contact the NHS Business Services Authority who consider applications for refunds on a case-by-case basis.

The claimant must be made aware that a refund is not guaranteed.

Penalty charges

Claimants must make sure they are claiming health costs correctly, as checks are made on forms they have signed.

If a claim is made incorrectly, or the claimant is unable to prove they are entitled, they may have to pay a penalty charge if they are then found to be not entitled.

The penalty charge will be 5 times the charge the claimant should have paid, up to a maximum of £100. Failure to pay the penalty charge, can lead to the NHS taking action in court to recover the debt.

Why is entitlement to health costs different on Universal Credit?

On legacy benefits, claimants had automatic entitlement to help with health costs, if they were in receipt of:

- Income Support (IS)
- Jobseekers Allowance Income Based (JSA IB)
- Employment and Support Allowance Income Related ESA (IR)
- Pension Credit Guarantee Credit (PCGC)

Claimants on Contribution based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA C) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA C) were not automatically entitled to help with health costs. However, they could have been entitled on the grounds of low income.

Claimants with a valid NHS Tax Credit exemption certificate were entitled to help with health costs, if their annual family income used to calculate their Tax Credits was £15,276 or less, and they received any of the following:

- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit paid together
- Working Tax Credit including a disability or severe disability element

Free school meals

Are my children entitled to free school meals?

England and Wales:

Children may be entitled to free school meals where parents or guardians who are awarded Universal Credit, and whose annual net earned income does not exceed £7400 (£616.67 per calendar month).

Scotland and Northern Ireland:

For information on the threshold amounts for free school meals in Scotland and Northern Ireland:

- for Scotland see: **School meals(link is external)**
- for Northern Ireland see: **Free school meals(link is external)**

Why were my children entitled to free school meals when I was on my previous benefits but not now I'm on Universal Credit?

The eligibility criteria are different on Universal Credit to other benefits.

Previously, children could receive free school meals if their parents or guardians received:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Child Tax Credit (provided they were not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and had an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on, paid for 4 weeks after they stopped qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Healthy Start

Am I eligible for a Healthy Start card on Universal Credit?

Claimants on Universal Credit may be eligible for a Healthy Start card if both of the following apply:

- they are at least 10 weeks pregnant or have at least one child aged under 4
- they (and their partner, if they have one) are earning £408 or less per month

Why did I receive a Healthy Start Card when I was on other benefits but I can't get one now I'm on Universal Credit?

Claimants could apply for a Healthy Start card if they were at least 10 weeks pregnant, or had at least one child under 4, and was in receipt of one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Pension Credit (which included the child addition)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for the 4 weeks after the claimant, their partner or carer started working less than 16 hours per week) and they did not get Child Tax Credit

Claimants who were previously on Child Tax Credits could apply for a Healthy Start card if:

- they had at least one child under 4
- they had a family annual income of £16,190 or less
- they were not in receipt of Working Tax Credits

See **Passported benefits**

Council Tax

I was told I wouldn't be any worse off on Universal Credit, so why has my council tax support reduced?

DWP are unable to guarantee an individual's entitlement to a Council Tax Reduction as this is determined and governed by the local authority in which you live.

For further information and to check eligibility, signpost the claimant to **Apply for Council Tax Reduction - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)(link is external)**.