









Kirklees Easy Read Benefits Guide

Information on Universal Credit (UC) and Personal Independence Payments (PIP), and where to go for support?

What is Universal Credit?

	<p>Until now, people have had to apply for several separate benefits (money) because they are on a low income, they are out of work or are not able to work.</p>
	<p>The government is now introducing a new benefit called Universal Credit which will replace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income Support • Income based Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) • Income related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) • Housing Benefit • Tax Credits. <p>Universal Credit will not take the place of Disability Living Allowance. That is now called PIP (Personal Independence Payment).</p>
	<p>Universal Credit is one monthly payment to help with your housing and living costs. It is a means-tested benefit for people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are 18 or over • are under state pension age • Have less than £16,000 in savings.

What is going to happen to my benefits?

	<p>If you are already getting one of the benefits that are being replaced, you may be moved over to Universal Credits and you will have a Work Coach.</p>
	<p>Universal Credit is being introduced in stages by postcode area. It started in Kirklees in November 2017.</p> 
 <p>Department for Work & Pensions</p>	<p>You don't need to do anything until you hear from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) about moving to Universal Credit. However if your circumstances change this might mean you may be moved across to UC. Always seek advice before making a claim for UC.</p>
	<p>If you make a new claim for Universal Credit, you should receive your first payment about 5 - 6 weeks after you make your claim.</p>









It is paid monthly and you will need to make your money last and ensure that you pay your rent first.






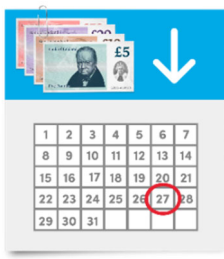
Extension of Housing Benefits. From April 2018 people will be able to get an extra 2 weeks' of housing costs after the end of their Housing Benefit claim when moving to Universal Credit.

Payment Advances: From January 2018 people can ask for their full Universal Credit payment in advance. The repayment period will be extended from 6 months to 12 months.

What do I need to do?







	<p>You will need a bank account to claim Universal Credit because it will be paid directly into a bank account.</p>
	<p>Most people will use the internet to apply for Universal Credit, so you will need to access a computer, tablet or phone with internet on it.</p>
	<p>You will need an email address when you apply for Universal Credit, because it will be the main way that your Work Coach will communicate with you.</p>
	<p>Help to Claim service can help you with your claim for UC, their number is 0344 848 7970.</p>
	<p>You will need a form of photo identification and your National Insurance number.</p>
	<p>You will need a copy of your rent and tenancy agreement and the date you started your tenancy.</p>

Other facts



	<p>Under Universal Credit there is no permitted work, which means whereas before you could earn up to £20 per week, it would now be taken directly off your benefit. But you can still work part time and be better off.</p>
	<p>All Universal Credit applications are done online, and you will have to go online when you can continue to get the benefit. If you can't read or write or use a computer, you will have to get someone to help you do this.</p>
	<p>If you need support with your claim, there is a Help to Claim Service run by Citizens Advice Service, they are based at Civic Centre 3 Huddersfield and Empire House, Dewsbury Tel: 0344 848 7970.</p>
	<p>Universal Credit is paid monthly in arrears, and you will have to wait 5 weeks for your first payment. This means you can be without your benefit whilst you change over. However you can ask for an advanced payment to help you cope during this period.</p>

Your responsibilities



When you claim Universal Credit there are a number of activities you become responsible for in order to receive your payment. You can get more information about [Universal Credit](#) online.





	Complete work search activities for up to 35 hours per week.
	Complete a tailored Commitment with your work coach.
	You will be responsible for paying your own rent and other housing costs.
	Reporting change in circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full service - through your online account.• Live service - through the service centre.
	Manage your payments and budget on a monthly basis.
	Working part-time and able to earn more? You're required to seek additional work and increase your earnings.

What happens if I can't meet my responsibilities?

	<p>If you fail to meet each of your responsibilities that you agreed in your Claimant Commitment without a good reason, you will have a cut in your benefit, known as a 'Sanction.'</p>
	<p>This means your Universal Credit payments will be reduced for a set amount of time. If you do not agree with the sanction you can ask for a 'Mandatory Reconsideration' within a month of the date of the decision.</p>

Personal Independence Payment-PIP

	<p>Customers need to have been resident and present in the UK for 2 out the 3 years before making a claim to PIP.</p>
	<p>When you get your PIP application form, you only get 3 weeks to fill in your form and gather all your evidence. Sometimes it can take longer than that to get support from Citizens Advice, so you can ask the DWP for an extension. We recommend you do this straight away.</p>

<p>Q2b Do you need help from another person to prepare or cook a simple meal? Help includes someone:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physically assisting you to prepare to cook food, • cooking your food for you, • supervising you to make sure you are safe, and • prompting, encouraging or reminding you to cook food or how to do so. <p>This includes help you have and help you need but don't get.</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Most importantly you must have a copy of the PIP descriptors with you, and have a good look at them before you start filling in your application form, these are the things that your application will be assessed on.</p>
	<p>PIP has two parts, a mobility part that asks you how you get around, and a daily living part that looks at what support you need to do daily things like eating and getting dressed.</p>
<p>Standard = 8 points Enhanced = 12 points</p>	<p>Each part has two levels Standard and Enhanced. You have to score 8 points to get standard and 12 to get enhanced.</p>
	<p>It is ok not to score points on every question, you need to only answer the ones that apply to you. But where you do have problems with an activity the form asks about, make sure you are honest and describe all the help and support with that task.</p>
	<p>For example, you may be able to physically wash and bathe yourself, but often forget or do not appreciate the importance of doing this. Therefore you should explain that you need other people to prompt and encourage you to do this.</p>
	<p>You have to explain every bit of support you would need within each section, It's not about whether you can do something or not but the amount of support, encouragement, or prompting you may also need in lots of details.</p>



Example: A PIP Assessor told us: "In the mobility section of the pack it states the two descriptors cover *Going out* and *Move about*. We feel "go out" may lead the customer to believe the planning and following a journey descriptor is judging their physical ability to go out. When in fact we are looking at their ability to plan and follow a journey. For instance can they follow directions, would they know what bus to catch or could they cope mentally with a bus breaking down?"



You can to send evidence of your disabilities with your PIP application. These can be written by your local Nurse or GP, your self-advocacy group, your support staff or anybody else who supports you. It can be a letter, care plan, support plan or anything else. The best evidence confirms that you have the problems with the tasks the form asks you about.



Do not delay in sending the form back until you have the additional evidence. The evidence can always be sent later.



You could be asked to attend an assessment. They will ask you about the things you said on your form. They may ask you to go further than your local assessment centre. For example people from Huddersfield can be asked to go to Leeds. You can phone them and ask them to rearrange your assessment in your local centre.



We recommend you take someone with you who knows you well. Make sure you are prepared and take all your meds with you. Take a copy of your application form and evidence letters descriptors and anything else you might need. (Please see our Assessment Sheet for further details).



If you are told you don't qualify for PIP, and you disagree with the decision you have 28 days to request a mandatory reconsideration, this is where you ask them to have another look at your claim.



An appeal can only be lodged once the mandatory reconsideration has taken place. We recommend you get support from a local benefits support organisation for this. (See where to go for support section).



Appeals can take a long time sometimes up to 18 months before you get a final decision. Over 65% of benefits are reinstated after an appeal, and if you win your appeal, you will get your money back dated.

Where to go for support in Kirklees?

	<p>Your Support Worker if you have one, family, or a care coordinator will be able to help you to make an appointment with someone who can advise you and help you to apply online for Universal Credit.</p>
	<p>Your work coach at the job centre can help you with your application.</p> <p>This could be an adviser or a work coach at your local jobcentre plus helen.dyson@dwp.gsi.gov.uk in Huddersfield and jill.priestley@dwp.gsi.gov.uk in Dewsbury.</p>
	<p>Carers can get support from Carers Count Kirklees Tel: 0300 012 0231 Email: info@carerscount.org.uk</p>
	<p>You can support around benefits and appeals from Citizens advice in Brook Street, Huddersfield and Empire House , Dewsbury: 0344 848 7970. Help to Claim Number (UC Only): 0800 144 8 444.</p>
	<p>Better off Kirklees; gives on line information and can give some advice over the phone 0344 848 7970.</p>