

Universal Credit – information on support arrangements in Newcastle

Universal Credit is a means tested benefit for working age people who are on low incomes and working, seeking to work or unable to work. It is replacing the following ‘legacy’ benefits which are administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and local authorities:

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA)
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credit
- Working Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit

If you receive one or more of the above ‘legacy’ benefits, they will **stop** when you or your partner claim Universal Credit and you may be worse or better off financially. Also, if you have a change in circumstances, **you may have to** claim Universal Credit but not always. This [online table lists the main changes that might lead to a claim for Universal Credit](#). You can get advice from the services on [benefit advice services in Newcastle](#).

Support for Newcastle residents to make a Universal Credit claim online

Universal Credit claims should be made online on the Government’s website at www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit.

If you can’t access the above, or you need support to complete the online Universal Credit claim, you have these options:

Phone the **Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644**

This [government website page](#) is for those who have **accessibility needs** and need support with:

- using the phone (advice on Relay UK, textphone, Video Relay Service for deaf people who use British Sign Language and alternatives to the phone, including home visits)
- using a computer
- reading letters or filling in forms
- attending face-to-face meetings
- managing your own affairs

Citizens Advice’s ‘Help to Claim’ service between 8.00am and 6.00pm (Monday to Friday) can help people make the online claim:

- Phone: 0800 1448 444
- Relay UK
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- Webchat advice

Details: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/helpclaim

YHN tenants can get help with accessing benefits from your local YHN Financial Inclusion Officers or Support and Progression Workers. Get in touch by [completing a form](#) or calling 0191 278 8600. More details on www.yhn.org.uk/services-customers/money-advice

Newcastle City Council provides a face-to-face service to support residents to make Universal Credit claims online and those who already have claims but need help to manage their online Universal Credit accounts.

Support is also offered with other online forms such as Housing Benefit, Discretionary Housing Payments and Council Tax.

Note: Elaine is not a benefit advisor and therefore unable to offer benefit advice. Support is offered to residents who have IT skills at all levels even a basic knowledge.

Existing Universal Credit claimants need to have their login details to access their accounts.

To get this support, phone Elaine on **07970 632 851** (Monday to Friday, from 8.30am to 4.30pm). Elaine is available in the following buildings but please ring her in advance to make sure Elaine is available or to arrange an appointment:

Mondays	West End Community Hub, Condercum Road, Benwell. 10.00am -12.00pm & 1.00pm - 3.00pm
Tuesdays	City Library, City Centre. 10.00am -12.00pm & 1.00pm - 3.00pm
Wednesdays	Blakelaw Library Binswood Avenue Blakelaw. 10.00am -12.00pm Fenham Library, Fenham Hall Drive. Fenham. 1.00pm – 3.00pm
Thursdays	Outer West Community Hub, West Denton Way West Denton 10.00am -12.00pm & 1.00pm -3.00pm
Fridays	West End Community Hub, Condercum Road, Benwell. 10.00am -12.00pm & 1.00pm - 3.00pm

Note: Residents who do not have IT skills, have literacy difficulties or have language barriers need to phone the national Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644. [DWP webpage says](#): “If you cannot use digital services at all, Universal Credit applications can still be made over the phone”

For the online claim, you will need the following information:

You'll also need this information for other people you live with. Without this information, you may not get a payment. Some of it can be discussed in your interview which is set up a few days after your claim.

- Your email address and phone number (to start your account)
- Your postcode
- Your National Insurance number (if you have one) and your nationality
- Your rent agreement (if you have one) or mortgage details
- Details of your savings or other capital
- Details about your work and earnings
- Details of any income that is not from work, e.g. from an insurance plan
- Details of any other benefits you are getting
- Details of any education or training
- Details of your children, including their Child Benefit numbers
- Information about the health or disabilities of you or family members (this may increase your Universal Credit)

- Details of the bank, building society or credit union account you want Universal Credit to be paid into (including account name, sort code and account number). Newcastle's credit union is www.moneywise.org.uk, phone 0191 276 7963. If you don't have one, the www.moneyhelper.org.uk can help you choose the right account for you.

You also have to verify your identity. You can do this online at www.gov.uk/verify, which has been expanded to include the [Government Gateway](#). If you can't do this, phone the Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644.

More details on how to claim on www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/making-a-claim/how-to-claim/

Budgeting support for Newcastle residents who are in receipt of Universal Credit

If you claim Universal Credit and need support with budgeting, you should speak to your Jobcentre Plus work coach who may refer you to Personal Budgeting Support. In some circumstances you also can request a temporary [Alternative Payment Arrangement](#) or other help.

If you have spoken to Jobcentre Plus but have not been referred and you believe that you still need support with budgeting because of Universal Credit, you can contact the following services. Give your name and contact details and say that you are having budgeting issues because of receiving Universal Credit.

- **If you are a Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) tenant**, contact YHN by:
Email www.yhn.org.uk/services-customers/money-advice or yhn@yhn.org.uk
Phone **0191 278 8600**
Visit YHN Money Advice page and read about support on offer to tenants at www.yhn.org.uk/services-customers/money-advice or contact your housing officer and ask them to refer you for support from YHN community Support and Progression or Financial Inclusion services
- **If you live in any other type of property**, contact the Council's Money Matters team by:
Email moneymatters@newcastle.gov.uk
Phone **0800 1707 008**

Universal Credit does not include help with your Council Tax bill.

Instead, you need to claim Council Tax Reduction directly from Newcastle City Council. You can do this online at www.newcastle.gov.uk/counciltaxsupport

More information about Universal Credit

Is available online at www.newcastle.gov.uk/universalcredit

Where to get Benefit and Debt Advice in Newcastle

From independent advice services, can be found on www.newcastle.gov.uk/benefitcontacts

This information is accurate at the time of writing (May 2022).