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## Universal Credit Update for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Financial Capability Forum 24/01/2020

### 1. Key Statistics

Universal Credit Caseload (published 17 December 2019):

- In the five weeks to 14 November 2019, the number of people on Universal Credit has increased by 5% to 2.7 million.
- Of these people, 56% (1.5 million) were female, compared to 53% in November 2018.
- Of the 2.5 million people on Universal Credit on 10 October 2019, 36% (900 thousand) were in employment.

Proportion of paid UC claims that were paid on time (all claims)

- Full payment on time: 95.49%
- Some payment on time: 98.29%

Proportion of paid UC claims that were paid on time (new claims)

- Full payment on time: 88.43%
- Some payment on time: 92.89%

### 2. Benefit Sanction Rates

In August 2019, 2.39% of UC claimants subject to conditionality at the point where the sanction was applied had a deduction taken from their UC award as a result of a sanction, remaining broadly comparable to the rate in May 2019.

### 3. Findings from research shows:

- The Universal Credit Full Service Claimant Survey shows that 9 months into a Universal Credit claim, 40 per cent of claimants are working for an employer in a paid role, as opposed to only 23 per cent at the start of their claim.
- People on Universal Credit spend around 50% more time looking for a job than they did under JSA.
- 86% of people on Universal Credit were actively looking to increase their hours, compared to just 38% of people on JSA. This is because they can take on more hours without losing their benefit.
- 77% of people on Universal Credit were actively looking to increase their earnings, compared to just 51% of people on JSA.

### 4. What is Universal Credit

Gov.uk website that provides information about all aspects of Universal Credit broken down into easy read topics.

These include:

- information for those who are new to Universal Credit
- how to make a claim to Universal Credit
- how to maintain your Universal Credit account once you have claimed
- how to assist someone else to make a claim to Universal Credit

Link to gov.uk: <https://www.understandinguniversalcredit.gov.uk/>

#### 5. Universal Credit if you have a disability or health condition

Gov.uk website that contains information about making a claim for Universal Credit if you have a health condition or disability.

It also includes information about:

- Medical evidence requirements
- The Work Capability Assessment
- Help with prescriptions and health care costs
- Other financial support that may be available

Link to gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit-if-you-have-a-disability-or-health-condition>

#### 6. Universal Credit guidance on consent and disclosure of information

Gives guidance on how Universal Credit claimants can give consent for their information to be shared with another person or organisation to help them deal with their claim.

It includes information about:

- Consent and representatives
- Information that will never be disclosed by DWP
- When DWP can share your information without consent
- Special rules for Appointees and Power of attorneys

Link to gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-consent-and-disclosure-of-information>

#### 7. Update on the Move to Universal Credit (formerly Managed Migration) pilot

Between July 2019 and 2023, the final phase of Universal Credit roll out will take place. During this phase, the Department will move all remaining claimants on legacy benefits to Universal Credit. This is known as Move to Universal Credit.

The Move to Universal Credit process and claimant journey is being tested, initially as part of a small scale pilot in Harrogate Jobcentre. The pilot will run from July 2019 for approximately 18 months. Testing will tell us what support or information claimants need to help them move to Universal Credit successfully.

We are testing an approach that is based on using existing relationships that DWP or our partners have with claimants. Initially, we selected claimants for the pilot from those that currently attend the jobcentre for meetings with their work coach. The work coaches are building on these existing relationships to prepare claimants to move to Universal Credit and support them through the journey.

Through these relationships, we will find out whether someone is ready to move and if not, how to get them ready. This personal, tailored face to face support will ensure the selected claimants move successfully to Universal Credit. Only when we are confident the claimant is ready will the work coach give the claimant their Migration Notice. This is the letter which asks them to move to Universal Credit within the next 3 months. If the claimant is not ready, the work coach will find out the reasons why and will provide personalised, ongoing support to help the claimant get ready.

In order to protect their current benefit entitlement, the claimant must make a new claim to Universal Credit within 3 months of the date on which the Migration Notice is issued.

Universal Credit is calculated differently to legacy benefits. This may result in claimants being entitled to less than the amount they received on their legacy benefit(s). Transitional Protection (TP) is an increase in Universal Credit to ensure claimants do not have a lower entitlement to Universal Credit than they had to their legacy benefit. This will be paid as part of the claimants Universal Credit entitlement and will erode as the claimant experience changes in their circumstance over time.

#### 8. Important Changes to EU Settled Status Scheme

The Home Office have introduced the European Union settlement scheme for European Union (EU), European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss citizens and their family members.

Successful applications to the scheme will be given either a settled status (Indefinite leave to remain) or pre-settled status (limited leave to remain).

Applicants must have started living in the United Kingdom by 31 December 2020.



Settled status is normally given if they have lived in the United Kingdom for a continuous 5-year period, known as continuous residence. Settled status provides eligibility to Universal Credit provided they can show factual habitual residence.

Pre settled status is normally given to those who have not yet lived in the UK for a continuous 5-year residency period. Pre settled status does not provide automatic eligibility to Universal Credit.

There is no physical residency card to prove settled status. A claimant must provide a share code, if they have chosen to use the Home Office 'View your settled or pre settled status' service.

Where a claimant has provided a share code, it can be used to confirm their status using the Home Office 'Check someone's settled or pre settled' service.

Single EU/EEA or Swiss claimants who are habitually resident in the UK can use their settled status to prove they can apply for Universal Credit.

From 15/01/2020 a change has been made to the process to check if a Habitual Residence Test (HRT) interview is needed.

A question has been added to the process to check if claimants have a Settled Status under the Home Office EU Settled Status Scheme.

If you need to check your client's settled status or pre settled status you can do so on gov.uk using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/check-immigration-status>

If your clients need to view and prove their settled or pre-settled status or get a share code they can do so on gov.uk using the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status>

This change will only apply to single claimants who have declared they are not a British citizen and that they have not been away from the UK for more than 4 weeks in the last 2 years.

#### 9. News on Clive Diver – DWP Disability Employment Adviser.

Many of you will know Clive through his work as a Disability Employment Adviser providing help and support for a wide variety vulnerable claimants.

From 20<sup>th</sup> January 2020, Clive will be taking a 6-month career break from DWP. His duties will be taken over by other DWP colleagues for this temporary period.

10. Jobcentres to receive new £3 million fund to support homeless people

There has been a lot of interest in the announcement this week about the DWP £3 million fund for Jobcentres to help homeless people.

I would like to be able to offer more detail for you all but right now the only information available is as given in the press release.

<https://www.gov.uk/jobcentres-to-receive-new-3-million-fund-to-support-homeless-people>

We expect more detail will be forthcoming and at that point we would envisage starting to productively engage with all the relevant partners and organisations. So, for the moment can we ask you to be patient with us and as soon as I have more detail I will be in touch (or put the relevant assigned DWP colleague in touch).

11. Benefits If You're Terminally Ill

To support families affected by Terminal Illness and to move the department towards a more holistic service, a GOV.UK page has been published which brings together all the information they might need. It provides clarity on what we mean by a 'Terminal Illness', understanding medical evidence, benefit calculators so families can assess eligibility for support and links to the appropriate benefit information and claims processes through to external organisations who can provide a deeper holistic service.

The page is located here - <https://www.gov.uk/benefits-if-youre-terminally-ill>

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