

Universal Credit - Re-awards, rapid reclaims and run-ons policy

Summary

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This explains the policy regarding re-awards, rapid reclaims and run-ons when a claimant re-qualified for Universal Credit

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The aim of re-awards and reclaims is to provide a simple route back onto [Universal Credit](#) for claimants who experience a short break in entitlement, for example due to temporary work, and also to:

- reduce the administrative burden on claimants so they are encouraged to increase their [earnings](#) on a long-term or temporary basis
- ensure that claimants receive payments of Universal Credit quickly
- ensure that claimants whose job has ended reclaim Universal Credit as quickly as possible in an effort to reduce periods of unemployment
- reduce the department's administrative costs associated with processing new Universal Credit claims

Universal Credit digital and Legacy services

Reclaims will only be available in the digital services. In the live service, re-awards will continue to be available. There are no rapid reclaims in Legacy service areas.

Reclaims

If a [claimant](#) with no current Universal Credit entitlement re-qualifies (for example due to a decrease in their earnings or because of a change in circumstances occurring within 6 months of their previous Universal Credit entitlement ending) they will not go through the full new claim process.

In these circumstances they would make a new Universal Credit claim and will only:

- provide updated information (as the department would already hold their personal details for their previous Universal Credit award)
- retain their previous Universal Credit [assessment period](#) and be paid on the same date each month as per their previous award
- agree a [Claimant Commitment](#)
- in the majority of cases receive a Universal Credit payment for the whole of the assessment period in which they made their new claim (see 'Previous employment ends' below)

Reclaims from couples

If a claimant meets the reclaim criteria, forms a [couple](#) with an existing Universal Credit claimant and re-qualifies for Universal Credit, they will qualify for a reclaim.

This applies even if the new member of the couple doesn't meet the basic entitlement conditions at the start of the assessment period (before joining the benefit unit) and provided both members meet these conditions at the end of their assessment period. Where the couple have separated

they will also qualify for a reclaim as a single person as long as they are entitled to Universal Credit.

Reclaims when previous employment ends

Claimants whose Universal Credit entitlement ends due to an increase in [earnings](#) (and who subsequently become unemployed within 6 months) will return to their previous Universal Credit assessment period:

- if the claimant makes a new claim for Universal Credit within 7 days of their job ending, they will be paid Universal Credit for the whole of the assessment period in which they made the new claim

- if the claimant doesn't make a new claim for Universal Credit within 7 days of their job ending, they will have to show good reason for not doing so:

 - if they can show good reason, they will receive payment of Universal Credit for the whole of the assessment period in which they made the new claim

 - if they cannot show good reason, they will not receive a payment of Universal Credit for the whole assessment period in which they made the new claim - instead they will only receive a payment from when they made the claim to the end of the assessment period

Re-awards

Claimants whose Universal Credit ends due to an increase in earnings (but whose earnings subsequently decrease or they have a change of circumstances, within 6 months of their Universal Credit entitlement ending) will qualify for a re-award provided they continue to meet the Universal Credit entitlement conditions. In these circumstances they would:

- automatically return to Universal Credit if details of any changes had been reported to the department

- retain their previous Universal Credit assessment period and be paid on the same date each month as per their previous award

- have to agree a Claimant Commitment

- receive a payment of Universal Credit for the whole assessment period

The only claimants who are not eligible for a re-award are those whose entitlement ends because they no longer satisfy the basic conditions of entitlement. If these claimants wish to return to Universal Credit they must make a new claim.

Waiting days

Claimants who qualify for a reclaim or re-award do not have to serve the 7 day waiting days period once they re-qualify for Universal Credit.

Run-ons

Run-ons allow a claimant's Universal Credit award to remain unchanged for a short period of time in the following circumstances:

- the death of a [partner](#), [child](#) or cared-for person all elements of the award that would otherwise reduce or be removed following bereavement will continue to be paid unchanged for the assessment period in which the death occurs and the following two assessment periods (during this time, claimants should also be exempt from [conditionality](#) – at the end of this period light touch support, such as the re-introduction of Work-Focused Interviews, may apply for a further three months without sanctions)

where a claimant becomes unemployed and they have already paid [childcare costs](#) – these costs can be claimed in the assessment period in which the claimant ceased work, and the next assessment period (if the claimant hasn't found work by the end of the second assessment period, they cannot claim further childcare costs again until they meet the full entitlement criteria)