

Universal Credit – backdating policy

Summary

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This explains the policy for limiting backdated Universal Credit claims by encouraging claimants to make a new claim online at the point of need

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Backdated claims for Universal Credit

Backdating will be available in very limited circumstances (as set down in regulations) to protect the most vulnerable claimants who may be delayed in claiming Universal Credit through no fault of their own. This includes claimants:

- who were previously in receipt of Jobseeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Working Tax Credit or Child Tax Credit and notification of expiry of entitlement to that benefit wasn't sent to the claimant before the date on which entitlement expired
- who have a disability (this includes a physical, mental, learning or language disability)
- who have supplied medical evidence that satisfies the Secretary of State that the claimant had an illness that prevented them from making a claim
- who were unable to make a claim online due to the official computer system being inoperative
- who were previously a member of a joint claim for Universal Credit and the partner who first notifies the separation has to make a further claim to Universal Credit as a single person
- who claim Universal Credit as a single person (following a claim or an award of Universal Credit as a member of a couple) where the couple separated following the other partner's refusal to sign their Claimant Commitment

The above circumstances only apply when a single claimant or both members of a couple meet the criteria. The maximum period a Universal Credit claim will be able to be backdated is up to one calendar month