



UCFS 13A WS The Commitment 05: Final Discussions

Facilitator Led Brief
V13.0a

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Final Discussions

Introduction

We have now looked at conducting the meeting with a claimant in order to create a tailored, stretching Commitment.

Next we are going to look at the action required before ending the meeting: what happens when a claimant accepts their Commitment, sanctions, the process when the claimant requests a second opinion and the five working days/seven calendar days cooling off period.



Remind the learners that if the claimant has MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) restrictions, their Commitment must be agreed with the site Single Point of Contact (SPOC) in advance of the claimant accepting their Commitment.



The learners can find out more about MAPPA on the intranet as follows:

**Home >> Organisation >> Universal Credit >>
Universal Learning >> Complex Needs >>
Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements**

[MAPPA](#)

The Requirement to accept a Commitment

As we have discussed, it is a basic entitlement to Universal Credit that the claimant accepts a Commitment which is current and reflects their current circumstances. If a claimant does not accept their Commitment they will not be entitled to Universal Credit and their claim will close.

You should strongly encourage the claimant to accept their commitment when they are in the office for the Commitment Meeting. It is in their best interests to do this immediately as not doing so may lead to a delay in payment or to the claim being closed.

Ensure that the claimant understands they are required to inform us of any change of circumstances, as this may impact on their work related requirements. The commitment must be updated to reflect relevant changes in circumstances and the claimant must accept the update Commitment to remain entitled to Universal Credit.



In a joint claim, if either one or both claimants refuse to accept the Commitment (either at the outset, subject to any safeguards or following a referral), their claim to Universal Credit will close.

The Claimant does not Accept the Commitment

If a claimant does not accept their Commitment they will be offered a 'cooling off period' and can request a second opinion offered a 'reasonable' amount of time to consider it, currently set at five working days/seven calendar days. This is known as the 'cooling off period'.

You must explain to them that if they do not accept the commitment by the end of this period will result in their claim being closed.

The 'Cooling Off Period' and Second Opinion

Refer the participants to the Claimant Commitment Universal Learning page. Ask the learners to explore the sections of guidance relating to the five working days/seven working days cooling off period and requesting a second opinion. Afterwards they should feed back to the class about what they have learned. Allow 10 minutes for this exercise.

Social Intranet Home >> Organisation >> Universal Credit >> Universal Learning >> Claimant Commitment >> Requirement to accept a claimant commitment - temporary removal

[Cooling Off Period/Second Opinion](#)



Ensure the following points are covered in the discussion:

Cooling Off Period

- If a claimant does not accept their Commitment they will be offered a 'reasonable' amount of time to consider it, currently set at five working days/seven calendar days.
- You must explain to the claimant that if they do not accept the commitment by the end of this period their claim will be closed.

Second Opinion:

- During the five working-days/seven working days cooling off period, the claimant may request a second opinion on the detail and reasonableness of the work availability and work related requirements they have been set.
- If this happens you must explain the process and consequences of asking for a second opinion.
- The second opinion will be conducted by another work coach in a 'second opinion interview'.

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- If the work related requirements in the Commitment are considered reasonable, the claimant can accept it at that point but the date of claim will change to the date on which they accepted the Commitment. If the claimant refuses to accept the Commitment at this point, the claim will be closed (for both parties if this is a couple claim).
- Where the second opinion is found in favour of the claimant the Commitment will be amended. If accepted by the claimant, the claim will continue from the original date of claim.
- If a claimant has asked for a second opinion and the Commitment requirements have been updated, a cooling off period and second opinion is not permitted for that updated Commitment.
- A claimant who refuses to accept their Commitment (whether following a second opinion review or where a review has not been requested), has failed to meet a condition of entitlement to Universal Credit. Their claim will therefore be closed.
- It is important to ensure they understand that if this happens they will not receive any Universal Credit. This includes all payments, for example housing and child payments.



One cooling off period and/or second opinion will apply to each updated Commitment throughout the claimant's period on Universal Credit.

Exceptions

There may be some circumstances where the requirement to accept a Commitment may be lifted temporarily. This only applies where exceptional circumstances prevent the claimant from accepting it.

For example, if the claimant is in hospital or there is an issue at the Jobcentre, such as closure due to flooding.

An appointee cannot accept a Commitment on behalf of the claimant.

Once the exceptional circumstances have ended, the claimant must accept their commitment.

The Claimant Accepts the Commitment

You must explain to the claimant that in order to be eligible for Universal Credit they must have accepted their Commitment and be committed to undertake the agreed steps detailed on the Commitment.

Without an accepted Commitment, Universal Credit will not be paid.

Sanctions



The consequences of not complying with the work related requirements in the Commitment (sanctions) must be explained to the claimant.

If the claimant mentions something new which changes the Commitment this should be amended.

Remind the claimant that they will have to **fulfil** the Commitment they accepted in order to receive Universal Credit.

The claimant will receive a "Read about reduced payments (Sanctions)" To-do after they have accepted their Commitment. This will give the claimant all the information they need to know about what would happen if they didn't fulfill their Commitment.

The impact of non-compliance causes or prolongs the claimant's unemployment. If a claimant fails to meet a work related requirement they are potentially prolonging their unemployment.

Sanctions will be covered in more detail later in the ork coach learning.



Electronic acceptance of the Commitment encourages the claimant to take ownership of their tailored Commitment.



Remind the learners that In circumstances where a claimant must undertake the Habitual Residence Test (HRT), the requirement to accept a Commitment can be extended until the HRT has been completed. If the claimant is found eligible for UC following the HRT they will be required to accept a Commitment and will be treated as having accepted it on the date of claim.

Final Discussions

We are now nearing the end of the discussion; the claimant information is complete, the diagnosis has been made, referrals have been made where appropriate, the claimant has accepted their Commitment.



Once the claimant has accepted their Commitment, what should you consider saying to them before they leave the office?



Answers may include:

- remind the claimant of their obligations outlined in their Commitment
- remind the claimant of the consequences of not adhering to their Commitment
- remind the claimant to keep their journal updated
- remind the claimant they can contact you online or by phone
- remind the claimant of other people they have identified to support them in looking for work
- make sure they know what to do if they are not going to be able to carry out an agreed activity (who do they contact? How?)
- encourage the claimant
- wish the claimant luck in their work related activity



Following this module, the learners will have the opportunity to complete Skills Practice exercise so that they can practise applying what they have learned about conducting the Commitment Meeting.

Module Summary



Show Slide 12 – Module Summary



On completion of this module, the learners should complete UCFS 58: The Commitment Meeting. UCFS 58 aims to illustrate best practice when conducting a Commitment meeting with a claimant using videos as the basis for discussion.