

Identity verification

Claimants must verify their identity to claim Universal Credit. This is to confirm that we link the right person to the right claim and helps to reduce identity fraud.

Claimants can verify their identity by one or more of the following:

- GOV.UK Verify
- documentary evidence
- biographical test
- biographical check
- gather and confirm
- know and recognise

It is the claimant's responsibility to prove who they are.

GOV.UK Verify

Claimants can choose to verify their identity(ID) using GOV.UK Verify (link is external) If the claimant(s) have successfully verified their ID in GOV.UK Verify and there is a successful match between 'GOV.UK Verify' and Universal Credit and the DWP record in the Customer Information System (Searchlight), these claimants will not be required to undertake a full Initial Evidence Interview.

The claimant will still need to attend an interview, except where they are banned from attending the Jobcentre, to receive a Personal Security Number (PSN). As with any ongoing contact, the claimant's ID must be confirmed as the Universal Credit account holder before handing over the PSN.

Documentary evidence

Claimants who do not confirm their identity using GOV.UK Verify must provide one piece of primary evidence and two pieces of secondary evidence when they attend their Initial Evidence Interview:

- Primary evidence is where the issuing source of the evidence confirmed the applicant's identity through an identity checking process
- Secondary evidence is where the issuing source of the evidence performed little or no identity checking

Verifying documents

Documents provided by the claimant are checked using the ultra violet light box, high quality magnifier, natural light and other resources to validate they are genuine. Any doubts on the validity of the documents must be raised with the identity fraud team on 0141 636 8124. They will advise of the action to take.

Document high risk list

Where identity documents have been identified as having a high risk of not being genuine by serious fraud teams, a Document High Risk List (DHRL) and ad hoc alerts are produced and sent to offices listing the current high risk documents. The list is held in shared folders within offices. These documents

must be checked in all cases with the Document Examination Team whilst the claimant is in the office.

For checks on documents call the Document Examination Team on: 0141 636 8124

Biographical test

When the claimant is unable to provide documentary evidence, they must pass a biographical test (BIO).

BIO questions are generated onto a BIO template using information held on the Customer Information System (Searchlight).

The claimant has to successfully answer two out of three questions correctly and they have two opportunities to satisfy this test. However, if the claimant answers one correct from each set of three questions - they will pass.

The BIO template informs the user if a claimant has passed or failed.

Biographical check

If the claimant does not pass the security questions, biographical checks are undertaken to verify their ID. These can be taken over the telephone.

If the claimant has details of suitable third parties, they must complete a consent form and statements that the third party will then need to confirm.

Gathering and confirming

A combination of documentary evidence, questioning and comparison to DWP records can be used to verify ID if there is enough evidence to confirm it with confidence.

Knowing and recognising

If the claimant is known to two members of the Jobcentre as part of their work, and these persons are willing, they can verify the claimants ID.

Ongoing contact

After the initial verification of a claimant's identity, it is important to continue to protect sensitive information in every future contact - in person or by telephone.

The claimant's identity must be confirmed each time there is contact in person or by telephone.

In person

When a claimant has been seen over a period of time and they can be recognised because a relationship has been built-up, there is no need to continue to see identity documents and/or ask security questions at each visit.

If the claimant is seen for the first time and/or cannot be recognised, the usual identity verification process must be followed by asking for identity documents or asking security questions.

Claimants must continue to be told to always bring identity documents to each appointment, as they cannot guarantee to see a staff member who will recognise them.

This does not apply to the Initial Evidence Interview.

By telephone or their account

Claimants contacting the Department by telephone or by using their account will prove their identity:

- using security questions to log into the service, or
- using the allocated PSN number to log into the service