

Claimant reports starting work to Universal Credit

Summary

How to record information when a claimant reports starting work, including self-employment or an apprenticeship, by telephone or face to face

Content

When a claimant reports they have started, or are due to start work over the telephone or face to face, the agent should congratulate the claimant and establish:

- the date the claimant is due to start work
- the amount of total gross earnings the claimant will receive from this employment and any other earnings they may receive in a month (the agent should be aware that the claimant may not know what earnings they will receive, for example if they have a zero hours contract)

The agent identifies from CAMLite Contact history if a Work Capability Assessment (WCA) referral has been made. If a referral has been made, the agent creates a CAMLite task with the following details:

- Task Type: Health Condition
- Sub-Type: WCA Referral
- Start Task From: Today's date
- SLA: 3 days
- Notes: 'Claimant started work on (dd/mm/yyyy). WCA action in progress, inform assessment provider'
- Assigned To: UC - WCA

See CAMLite and Work Services Platform notes.

If further action is needed, for example if the claimant is:

- self-employed -see 'Claimant is self-employed' below

- an apprentice - see 'Claimant is an apprentice' below

Claimant has a start date which is not within 1 calendar month

If the change is not due to happen within 1 calendar month of today's date, the agent advises the claimant that details can't be taken at this stage and that Universal Credit can only accept changes within 1 month.

The claimant must be told to contact Universal Credit within one month of the date they are due to start work and report:

- the date they will start (or when started)
- their total gross earnings of all work they may receive in a month

The claimant must also be reminded that if they fail to notify Universal Credit of any changes in their circumstances, this may affect their entitlement to Universal Credit.

Claimant has a start date which is within 1 calendar month

The agent establishes if the claimant has appointments that need to be cancelled or rearranged. See Identify and cancel Work Services Platform appointments.

If the claimant's gross earnings are equal to or above 35 x National Minimum Wage (NMW) or in the case of claimants in the All Work-related Requirements (AWRR) Intensive regime, earnings must be above/equal to the Administrative Earnings Threshold (AET) to determine if existing appointments are to be cancelled.

If the claimant does not know what their earnings will be, for example because they have a zero hours contract, the claimants current work search requirements will continue and any time spent in work will be considered when their work search is reviewed.

Calculating the earnings amount

The agent determines whether the claimant's earnings are equal to or above 35 x NMW or, in addition for AWRR intensive regime claimants, are above or equal to the AET.

For example based on the 2014/2015 rates $35 \times £6.50 \times 52 / 12 = £985.83$ per month for claimants over 21.

If the claimant's earnings are not equal to or above 35 x NMW, the agent needs to determine if the claimant is in the AWRR intensive regime (this is displayed on the claimant's General screen in the Work Services Platform) with earnings above the AET.

The AET for 2015/2016 has been set at £338 per month for a single person based on gross earnings. See Administrative Earnings Threshold.

If earnings are not equal to or above 35 x NMW or, in addition for AWRR Intensive regime claimants, do not exceed the AET - see 'All other claimants' below.

If the claimant's earnings are above or/equal to 35 x NMW or, in addition for AWRR Intensive regime claimants, are above/equal to the AET - the agent:

1. Establishes if the claimant has appointments that need to be cancelled, re-arranged or attended.
2. Selects 'Appointment history' in the Work Services Platform (WSP) under the Information menu in the left hand pane to see the existing appointments.
3. informs the claimant that they must still attend any work coach (WC) appointments and meet their requirements detailed in their Claimant Commitment until they start work.
4. Cancels any WC appointments due to take place after the claimant starts work. See Identify and cancel Work Services Platform appointments.
5. Informs the claimant that if they fail without good reason to attend an appointment or any other work related requirements, then their Universal Credit payments will be cut.

The AD removes any Attendance Frequency and Channels fro WSP. See Work Services Platform guide (Interventions).

See 'Method of contact' below to determine the next appropriate action.

All other claimants

The AD removes any Attendance Frequency and Channel from WSP. See Work Services Platform guide (Interventions).

The agent selects 'Appointment history' in WSP under the Information menu. If there are any WC appointments that coincide with the claimant's employment, the agent re-arranges them. See Re-arranging work-related interviews.

See 'Method of contact' below to determine the next appropriate action.

Method of contact

If the claimant reports to a Service Centre that they have started work or is starting work today, see 'Entering starting work in the Agent Portal' below.

If a claimant reports starting work to a Service Centre and the start date is within 1 calendar month of today's date, or reports they are starting work at a Universal Credit outlet, the agent:

1. Opens CAMLite.
2. Locates the claimant's CAMLite record using their National Insurance number.
3. Creates a CAMLite Contact history.
4. Records the claimant's job start date and the amount of gross earnings.
5. Creates the following CAMLite task for an account developer (AD)
 - Task Type: Generic Clerical
 - Sub Type: Action Required
 - Start Task From: (date the claimant starts work - or today if the claimant has started work today)
 - SLA: 3 days
 - Notes: Started work - CAMLite Contact history updated DD/MM/YY
 - Assigned to UC –Work Services

See CAMLite and Work Service Platform notes.

6. Reads the following declaration to the claimant:

"If I give false or incomplete information or fail to report changes in my circumstances promptly, I understand that my Universal Credit payments may be stopped and any overpayment of Universal Credit may be recovered.

I understand that I must report all changes in my circumstances which may affect my entitlement promptly and by failing to do so I may be liable to prosecution or face a financial penalty"

7. Reads out the following information:

"You don't need to report your earnings if your employer pays your wages through a Pay As You Earn scheme as your Universal Credit payments will be automatically adjusted. However, you must report earnings if:

- you receive payments which are not covered by Pay As You Earn
- you have casual earnings
- Universal Credit has already asked you to report earnings yourself from a particular job."

8. Confirms the details of the claimant's employment, again congratulates the claimant on starting work and tells them they may be contacted to accept a new Claimant Commitment.

9. Ends the call/interview and updates WSP
'General notes with the details of the conversation together with confirmation that the declaration has been read and accepted.

See CAMLite and Work Service Platform notes.

Entering starting work in the Agent Portal

If the claimant has already started work or is starting on the day the change is reported, the telephony agent (TA):

1. Accesses the Agent Portal through CAMLite.
2. Opens 'Reporting changes' on the claimant's Universal Credit homepage to display the 'Update your claim screen 1'.
3. Selects 'Update my work status'.
4. Selects 'Continue' to display the 'Update your claim screen 2'.
5. Selects 'Continue' to display the 'End of section' screen.
6. Selects 'Continue' to display the 'Claim overview' screen.
7. Selects 'Start' from the 'In your circumstance' field. This will present the 'Questions about your work income' screen.
8. Reads the information displayed to the claimant.
9. Selects 'Continue' to display the 'Your paid work' screen.
10. Enters the 'Date started work'.
11. Enters the total expected monthly gross earnings the claimant will receive from all employment in a month.
12. Selects 'Continue' to enter the change.
13. Reads the information displayed to the claimant.
14. Selects 'Continue' which presents the 'Claim Overview' screen.
15. Selects 'View summary'.
16. Selects 'I confirm all details are correct' which will present the 'Declaration' screen.
17. Reads the declaration and selects 'I confirm this declaration and submit my claim'. This will submit the change.
18. Updates CAMLite Contact history with the actions taken
19. Ends the call and updates WSP notes with the relevant details.

Claimant is self-employed

When a claimant reports that they are self-employed (or a partner who is already self-employed joins an existing claim) a Gateway Interview is needed for those claimants who are in the AWRR group, or are lifted out of the AWRR group into the No Work Related Requirement (NWRR) group because they have earnings which are above the Conditionality Earnings Threshold (CET).

The claimant is referred to a Gateway Interview for the WC to consider whether they are gainfully self-employed. If the claimant is in gainful self-employment they do not have to look for, or be available for other work, to continue receiving Universal Credit.

A revised Claimant Commitment must be created to ensure the claimant is moved to the Self-employed – Start Up group if in the first year of trading, or the Self-employed - Minimum Income Floor (MIF) applies where it is assumed for conditionality and payment purposes that their earnings are in line with their CET.

If it is decided the claimant is not in gainful self-employment, they must continue to report their self-employed earnings to Universal Credit in each assessment period and be available to look for other work to continue receiving Universal Credit. See Capturing and processing self-employment information.

Claimant is an apprentice

When a claimant reports they are taking up a position as an apprentice (or someone who is an apprentice joins a Universal Credit claim), confirmation is required that they are in a recognised apprenticeship.

Consideration is also required for any impact on the claimant's expected hours and if the lower NMW apprentice rate applies which will affect their CET.

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study as follows:

- working their normal work hours (minimum 30 hours per week)
- training as part of their apprenticeship (usually one day per week)
- paid at least the NMW apprentice rate whilst they are under 19 (16 – 18) or during the first year of their apprenticeship (19 or over)

- paid at least the NMW rate for their age if they are aged 19 or over and have completed their first year

The claimant must:

- have a named training provider
- be working towards a recognised qualification
- be paid at least the NMW for an apprentice

The claimant must provide:

- the name of their training provider
- the name of the vocational qualification they are studying for

If the claimant is unable to provide this information they are unlikely to be undertaking a formal apprenticeship.

When the apprenticeship is confirmed, the claimant's expected hours are revised to a maximum of 30 hours per week and the apprentice NMW rate indicator (where this applies) is amended so the CET is calculated using the appropriate NMW rate.

The related CET is calculated using the correct NMW. If the claimant is under 19, or in the first year of their apprenticeship (any age), the apprentice rate must be used (whilst it is possible for an apprentice to be paid above the applicable NMW – the minimum expected is used in CET calculations).

Apprentices should be in the NWRR – Working enough regime because they are earning equal or over their (adjusted) CET. Apprentices will be treated exactly the same as any other claimant who is in work.

If the apprentice is 19 and over and has completed the first year of their apprenticeship, Universal Credit calculates their CET using the NMW rate appropriate to their age, and correctly assesses and allocates their conditionality regime. No additional action is needed.

See Inputting a change in circumstances onto Agent Portal to automatically determine a claimant's conditionality regime.