

# Universal Credit in Hart District



Universal Credit  
Published August 2018

[www.hart.gov.uk](http://www.hart.gov.uk)

## What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a payment to help with living costs for working age residents. You may be able to get it if you are on a low income or out of work. Universal Credit has been rolling out across the UK for a few years but has only applied to a small percentage of new claimants.

Universal Credit Full Service will now be rolled out across the Hart District during 2018 for all new claims. It is a single payment and will replace the following means tested benefits:

- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance (JSA)
- Income-based Employment Support Allowance (ESA)
- Housing Benefit
- Income Support
- Child Tax Credits
- Working Tax Credits

## Will this affect me & when?

If you currently receive any of the above benefits you cannot get Universal Credit at the same time. You don't need to claim Universal Credit until the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) gets in touch. However if you need to make a new claim or have a change in circumstances then you will need to apply for Universal Credit.

If you think this applies to you go to [www.universalcreditinfo.net](http://www.universalcreditinfo.net) and input your postcode, to check when you will be able to claim. Some residents can apply now whilst others will only be able to do so from October/November this year.

## How do I apply for Universal Credit?

1. Set up an online account at [www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit](http://www.gov.uk/apply-universal-credit). You will need an email address to apply. You can do this from your smartphone, desktop computer or iPad. You will need your National Insurance number, housing information such as amount of your rent, income and savings, childcare situation and if you are in receipt of any other benefits.

2. Use your account to start a claim (please note that you will be asked to verify your identity online). If you experience difficulties with this you can go back to your Universal Credit account and click on "I can't do this online" so that you can skip this step and confirm your identity at the Job Centre instead.

3. Arrange an interview at your local Job Centre within 7 days of starting your claim. To book the appointment call **0800 328 5644**

## How long will it take to process my application & receive my first payment?

It usually takes 5 weeks from when your old benefits stop and you get your first Universal Credit payment. You can ask for an advance payment when you visit the Job Centre for the first time if you don't think you'll have enough money to live on while you wait for your first payment.

## What is different about Universal Credit & the way I currently get benefit payments?

Universal Credit will be a single payment each month on the same day, rather than weekly or fortnightly. Your rent will usually be paid directly to you as part of this instead of you getting a separate housing benefit payment sent to your landlord.

Your single payment will be paid directly into your bank, building society, Post Office or credit union account. It is important that you budget for such changes and ensure that your rent is kept up to date, as well as priority payments such as your Council Tax and utilities.

You will need to manage your account online including updating information online if you work. Your payment will be adjusted if necessary.

## How & where can I get help?

Citizens Advice Hart can offer free and confidential advice to assist you to register an online account, complete an application, manage your money, as well as assist with the management of any ongoing claims.

The service operates across phone, webchat and email and is available at outreach locations in Odiham, Hook and Hartley Wintney. To contact Citizens Advice Hart visit [www.citizensadvicehart.org.uk/contact](http://www.citizensadvicehart.org.uk/contact) or use the details below:

- Call Adviceline on **03444 111 306**
- Email [citizensadvice@hartcab.cabnet.org.uk](mailto:citizensadvice@hartcab.cabnet.org.uk)

You can also get advice by calling the Universal Credit Service Helpline on **0800 328 5644**

If you would like to speak to a Housing or Benefits officer from Hart District Council please call **01252 622122** and select option 1.

## Where can I access a computer if I don't have one?

Your local library may have facilities. You can also use the computers in the reception area of the Hart District Council offices in Fleet.

## Hart District Council contact details

Hart District Council,  
Harlington Way,  
Fleet, Hampshire,  
GU51 4AE

01252 622122  
hart.benefits@secure.capita.co.uk  
www.hart.gov.uk

Facebook: /HartDistrictCouncil  
Twitter: @HartCouncil  
Instagram: @HartCouncil

## Citizens Advice Hart contact details

Citizens Advice have 2 offices in Hart, so pop in to your nearest office:

Citizens Advice Hart,  
Harlington Way,  
Fleet, Hampshire,  
GU51 4AE

Citizens Advice Hart,  
Royal Oak Close,  
Yateley, Hampshire,  
GU46 7UD

03444 111 306  
citizensadvice@hartcab.cabnet.org.uk  
citizensadvicehart.org.uk

Facebook: /citizensadvicehart  
Twitter: @HartCAB