

DWP Partner Update 07/02/2022

Count of customers – Universal Credit and Legacy benefits (Stats Xplore 19/01/22)

Universal Credit – Number of People on UC by Age Group at December 2021 (all conditality groups)

| Jobcentre Plus | 18 – 24 | 25 – 39 | 40 – 49 | 50 – 59 | 60+ | TOTAL |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------|---------------------|
| Campbeltown | 119 | 344 | 193 | 154 | 84 | 894 |
| Dunoon | 157 | 469 | 238 | 217 | 83 | 1164 |
| Helensburgh | 183 | 478 | 244 | 197 | 90 | 1192 |
| Oban | 231 | 665 | 334 | 291 | 156 | 1677 |
| Rothesay | 78 | 235 | 139 | 126 | 79 | 657 |
| TOTAL | 768 | 2191 | 1148 | 985 | 492 | 5584 |
| Count at Dec 2020 Comparison to Dec 2021 | 979 ↓211 | 2450 ↓259 | 1186 ↑38 | 1053 ↓68 | 526 ↓34 | 6194 ↓610 |

Universal Credit – Number of People on UC by Conditionality Group at December 2021

| Jobcentre Plus | C'town | Dunoon | H'burgh | Oban | Rothsay | TOTAL |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|
| Searching for work | 246 | 364 | 283 | 518 | 201 | 1612 |
| Working – with requirements | 163 | 202 | 225 | 268 | 97 | 955 |
| Working – no requirements | 192 | 196 | 266 | 378 | 93 | 1125 |
| No work related Requirements | 266 | 348 | 360 | 414 | 210 | 1598 |
| Planning for work | 9 | 20 | 22 | 33 | 13 | 97 |
| Preparing for work | 35 | 49 | 52 | 73 | 36 | 245 |
| TOTAL | 911 | 1179 | 1208 | 1684 | 650 | 5632 |

Jobseekers Allowance as at May 2021 – Argyll & Bute

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Male | 170 |
| Female | 89 |
| Total | 259 |

Employment & Support Allowance as at May 2021 – Argyll & Bute

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Phase of claim | |
| Assessment phase | 117 |
| Work Related Activity Group | 349 |
| Support Group | 2257 |
| Total | 2723 |

Income Support as at May 2021 – Argyll & Bute

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Statistical Group | |
| Lone Parent | 70 |
| Carer | 122 |
| Total | 192 |

Way to Work campaign

This week DWP launched [Way to Work](#) - a national drive to get half a million people who are out of work into jobs in the next five months.

With 1.2 million vacancies available and hundreds of thousands of people on Universal Credit who are actively looking to make a fresh start in work. Way to Work will accelerate connecting current opportunities and jobseekers.

To do this, we are providing the following:

- Claimants will spend more time with their work coaches. This will improve the work coach's understanding of their needs and their suitability for certain roles.
- Jobcentres will be working with a diverse range of employers, of differing sizes and sectors. Work coaches will be able to match claimants to the type of employer.
- For those feeling anxious, work coaches will offer a variety of ways and platforms claimants can be introduced to prospective employers, including recruitment days, physical and virtual job fairs and other events.
- The recruitment process will be simplified and shortened.

[Read the press release](#)

Help to Claim

From 1 April, and following a grant competition, Citizens Advice (CA), in partnership with Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS) will continue to provide independent support to people wanting to make a new claim to Universal Credit. This support will cover England, Scotland and Wales.

CA and CAS will provide Help to Claim support by telephone and digital channels. CA and CAS will refer people unable to access support via these channels to their local jobcentre, where staff will identify the appropriate support to meet their needs.

[Read the press release](#)

[Help to Claim Scotland](#)

Cut to the Universal Credit taper rate, and Universal Credit Work Allowance increased

The taper rate means that if people increase their earnings, by working more hours for example, their Universal Credit is gradually reduced. The current taper rate is 63p, meaning for every £1 a person earns after tax, their Universal Credit is reduced by 63p.

The Chancellor announced that the Government is cutting the taper rate by 8p, from 63p to 55p, ensuring more money in people's pockets.

The Work Allowance allows some households to earn a set amount before the taper rate kicks in. This is generally for households on Universal Credit who are in work and either looking after a child or have a household member with limited capability for work.

Work Allowances are currently set at £293 a month if the household receives housing support, or £515 if they do not receive housing support. These are both being increased by £500 per year.

Both of these changes will be implemented from December 2021, and together will benefit 1.9 million households who will on average keep around an extra £1,000 a year. The changes apply across Great Britain, and the Northern Ireland Executive will be funded to match them.

General support

Work Coaches can use the **Flexible Support Fund** to help customers cover travel costs for up to 3 months when they start work, as well as using this fund to remove other barriers when a customer has a job offer. This can be used to remove barriers such as clothing, tool, equipment of training.

JCP has also recently purchased provision via the **Dynamic Purchasing System** for a small group of customers in Dunoon to give them support in learning basic computer skills. A further course is due to start in Helensburgh on 17/1/22.

Access to Work

Access to Work can help people get or stay in work if they have a physical or mental health condition or disability. The support depends on needs but through Access to Work can apply for:

- A grant to help pay for practical support with your work
- Advice about managing your mental health at work
- Money to pay for communication support at job interviews

There is also support available for mental health support which can be accessed without being diagnosed with a condition.



WelcomeToAbleFutures.pdf

[Access to Work: get support if you have a disability or health condition - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/access-to-work-get-support-if-you-have-a-disability-or-health-condition)

Helping people understand how Universal Credit can support them

DWP has launched a new campaign to help people understand the support that Universal Credit (UC) could offer them.

The digital advertising campaign will help people, including those on legacy benefits, understand the tailored support they could access through Universal Credit, whether they're in work, out of work, or unable to work at the moment.

A new web page will help guide people through Universal Credit, detailing the support it offers and how it works to make sure people are getting all the financial support they are entitled to – all in one place. [Find out more](#)

Evidence to Verify Housing Costs

When claimants are given a list of acceptable evidence to verify their address, they will no longer be able to provide a mobile or digital telephone bill. These documents do not prove that they are currently living at the address. If claimants have a landline phone bill, this is acceptable and can be used as evidence

Job Entry: Targeted Support (JETS)

JETS is being extended to Friday 30 September 2022. It is designed for claimants who are close to the labour market and require light-touch employment support, including digital skills or support finding a new career path, work coaches can refer customers to this provision.

Bringing New Style Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and Employment & Support Allowance (ESA) obligations in line with Universal Credit

A recent change was made to bring the obligations in new style JSA and ESA benefits in line with those in Universal Credit.

This will mean that, as is the case for Universal Credit claimants, if someone in receipt of new style JSA and ESA fails to do what they have agreed to in their Claimant Commitment without good reason - such as having or caring for a child, or a change to a health condition - their payments may be reduced for a set period. This is known as a sanction.

All Claimant Commitments are tailored to a person's personal circumstances and local jobs market, and claimants affected by this change are being informed of the introduction of the new process. Sanctions are only applied as a last resort when a claimant is not engaging with the commitment they have made. If someone disagrees with a decision, they can ask for it to be looked at again.

Minimum Wage Increases

The [National Living Wage](#) (link) will rise from 1 April 2022 to £9.50. The rate for 21-22 year old will also increase to £9.18, 18-20's will move to £6.83 and the apprentice rate will be £4.81.

Working Tax Credit Changes

During the pandemic, WTC customers did not have to tell HMRC about temporary short-term reductions in their working hours as a result of coronavirus. From 25 November 2021 customers will have the usual one-month window if they are not back to working their normal hours [Working Tax Credit customers must report changes to working hours - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Carer's Allowance Supplement - Scotland

The eligibility date of the next [Carer's Allowance Supplement](#) payment will be 11 October 2021 for customers living in Scotland and in receipt of Carer's Allowance on that date. Recognising the additional pressures unpaid carers face as a result of the pandemic, the December [payment will be doubled](#) to £462.80.

Child Winter Heating Assistance - Scotland

The Scottish Government has laid legislation extending the eligibility criteria for [Child Winter Heating Assistance](#) to include customers living in Scotland aged 16 to 18, in receipt of the enhanced daily living component of Personal Independence Payment during the qualifying period. If the legislation is passed, the payment will also be backdated to last year. Winter 2021 payment of £202, are expected to be made from the end of November in batches over the winter.

Warm Home Discount Scheme for Winter 2021/22

The Warm Home Discount (WHD) is a government scheme that obligates the largest energy suppliers to credit a £140 discount onto the electricity bills of certain low income households.

Recipients of the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit will receive a letter by mid-December advising whether the discount will be paid automatically by their energy supplier, or if they need to contact the WHD Helpline by 28 February 2022 to confirm their eligibility.

The WHD Helpline opens on 18 October 2021 - Tel: 0800 731 0214.

A limited number of WHDs are also available to other low income households. Non-Pension Credit customers should contact their energy supplier for further information. [Find out more](#)

Action taken to help stop pension scams

New regulations to help prevent pension savers being subject to scams, came into force on 30 November.

There have been cases of fraudsters trying to trick those of pension age into moving their pension pots into fake accounts. The new red and amber flag system allows transfers to be stopped or paused when there are tell-tale signs of fraud, like “too good to be true” incentives such as free pension reviews, early access to pension cash, or other time-limited offers.

To mark the new regulations two [videos](#) have been produced, one featuring the [Minister for Pensions](#), which help explain to people what the changes mean for pension savers and how the regulations will work.

As this is an important message, we would be grateful if you could help us get the news out there, such as sharing the posts on your social media channels. More details of the new regulations can be found on [GOV.UK](#).

Tax liability of coronavirus support schemes

HMRC are reminding people that grants and payments from schemes to support businesses and self-employed individuals during coronavirus (COVID-19) are taxable. They should be declared as taxable income on company tax returns in line with the relevant accounting standards.

To find out more visit [Reporting coronavirus \(COVID-19\) grants and support payments](#) on GOV.UK.

Advice on Finances - Scotland

Households experiencing financial difficulties are being [offered greater support\(link is external\)](#). The Money Support Scotland website, funded by the Scottish Government, will point users to a range of organisations committed to promoting the take up of social security benefits, free debt advice and access to affordable credit.

Internet Voucher Scheme - Scotland

Homes and businesses in Scotland that are unable to access fast internet speeds now have until 31 March 2022 to apply for funding worth up to £400 under the Reaching 100% (R100) [Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme\(link is external\)](#). An additional £250 is available for those in the hardest-to-reach areas.

Early Learning and Childcare Consultation - Scotland

A [consultation](#) seeking views from organisations and individuals on the proposed public service delivery objective under the data sharing provisions. The aim is to enable data sharing between DWP, HMRC, the Scottish Government and Scottish local authorities to improve take-up of the targeted offer of early learning and childcare (ELC) in Scotland to eligible 2-year-olds. Data sharing is envisaged to help identify households that are eligible for funded ELC and to inform them of their likely eligibility and improve take up. The consultation ends on 7 March 2022.

End