

Can I claim for my Rent?

If you have to pay rent where you live, you might get extra UC to help with this.

Your Universal Credit **housing element** might be less than you have to pay. Most **single people under 35** get help with rent based on the cost of renting **a room in a shared house**. In Stoke-on-Trent, this is no more than **£60.95 per week**.

If you are part of a couple, you are disabled or you are caring for a child, your UC housing element is worked out using the **local housing allowance** for the **size of home you need**. You can find details on the City Council's website.

I have a Disability. Do I get extra UC?

Only if you **pass a medical** and are assessed to have **limited capability for work-related activity**. You won't get extra UC for being on PIP (Personal Independence Payment) or not fit for work.

I have a Child. Do I claim Tax Credits?

No. There are **child elements** included in UC.



If your child is disabled, you might get a disabled child element for them. UC usually only pay for **up to two children**, even if you have three or more.

You claim **Child Benefit** separately, as this is not part of UC.

How Do I Claim UC?

UC is claimed online. You'll need a computer or smartphone to set up your UC account and make your claim, and an email address where the DWP can contact you. Go to: <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit/how-to-claim>.

You need to answer some security questions, which will be used to check who you are when you are using your account, so be sure to pick things you will remember! You will also be asked to **verify your identity**. If you have trouble with this online, tick the box to skip this section and take proof of who you are to the Jobcentre instead.

After you make your **online claim**, you book an **appointment** to sign your claimant commitment. If you miss this, your claim could be **closed down** and you will need to **start your claim again**.

You can get support with your first claim from our **Help to Claim** team on **0800 144 8444**.

For more information go to www.citizensadvice.org.uk or contact our

Citizens Advice Helpline: 0800 144 8848



Potteries Gold is a **Citizens Advice Staffordshire North & Stoke-on-Trent** project to help people in Stoke-on-Trent cope with changes to the benefit system

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Universal Credit if you are...

Leaving School or College

Means- tested Benefits No 8



What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit (UC) is a benefit for working-age people. If you are **18 or over** and leaving education and will be:

- looking for work,
 - cannot work due to sickness or
 - are a carer or lone parent,
- this could be the benefit for you.

It replaces income-based (means-tested) JSA and ESA, Income Support, Tax Credits and Housing Benefit.

What if someone gets benefits for me?

Usually, you are included in your parent or guardian's claim for benefits until the end of vacation after you leave school or finish college. If you claim Universal Credit, any benefits someone else gets for you will stop. Get advice to check which option will be best for you and your family.



Ethan (aged 18) could claim **£344.00** per month Universal Credit, although this is due to drop to **£257.33** in October.

His mum is getting **£21.15 Child Benefit** and **£65.19 Child Tax Credit** per week for Ethan. This is **£374.14 per month**, much more than Ethan can claim for himself.

I'm 18 now. Can I Claim UC?

You can claim if:

- You **live in Great Britain**
- You are not subject to **immigration control**. Get extra advice if you are not a UK citizen.
- You have **less than £16,000 savings**
- Your earnings or other income is low enough for you to qualify for UC
- You have made a **claimant commitment**

Your claimant commitment is an **agreement with the Jobcentre** that you have to sign to get UC. If you are **fit for work** and do not have to look after a child or disabled person, you will have to spend most of your time looking for work and must agree to take any job you are offered.

Your **Work Coach** will tell you what you have to do and make sure you keep to your agreement. They might send you on **training courses** or tell you **what jobs to apply for**. If you don't keep to your claimant commitment, your UC might be stopped or cut. This is called a **sanction**.

If you are a **lone parent or carer**, or you have **health problems**, you will have a different claimant commitment. You may still have to see a Work Coach from time to time and stay in touch with them by email.

What if I get a part-time job?

If you get a job, your UC is cut by 63p for each £1 that you earn. You should still be better off taking a job than staying on UC as a Jobseeker.

I'm only 16 but I've had to leave home. Can I get UC?

Young people aged 16 and 17 can only get Universal Credit in **special situations**. Most young people at school or college can't get UC.

Usually, your mum, dad or another adult acting as your guardian has to claim for you.

You can claim UC at 16 or 17 if:

- Health problems mean the DWP say you have limited capability for work or you have a doctor's fit note and are waiting for a DWP medical assessment.
- You have no parent or guardian or,
- You cannot live with your parent(s) or a guardian.
- Your parent(s) cannot live with and support you because they are in poor health, in prison or not allowed to live in Great Britain.
- You are pregnant and your baby is due in less than 11 weeks time.
- You are responsible for a child aged under 16 or you have a partner responsible for a child.

If you are in **local authority care**, you usually cannot claim UC as the council should look after you. Get **more advice** about this, particularly if you have **health problems** or are **responsible for a child**.

