

Preparing for your Universal Credit interview

This sheet is designed to help you prepare for your interview. You can print it out and take it with you to remind yourself what documents to take and what to say to your work coach during the interview.

Checklist of evidence you'll need

Remember

You can ask DWP to post you a letter that lists the evidence you'll need to provide. You must take all the right evidence to the interview, otherwise you'll have to wait longer for your UC payment.

You'll definitely need to provide evidence of:

- who you are, eg passport or driving licence
- your postcode, eg an official letter from a bank or energy company
- your NI number - you can find this on a payslip or letter from HMRC. Call the helpline on 0300 200 3500 (textphone 0300 200 3519) if you can't find your NI number
- your bank, building society or credit union account, eg a bank statement or bank card - ask your bank for a copy of a statement if you don't have one

Depending on your circumstances, you might need to provide evidence of:

- how much rent you pay - this can be found on your rent agreement, ask your landlord for a copy if you don't have one
- your landlord's address - this can be found on your rent agreement, ask your landlord for a copy if you don't have one

- any savings you have and any other 'capital' investments, eg shares or property - you'll need a bank statement to show your savings or details of property you own

- any income that's not from work, eg from a pension or insurance plan
details of how much you earn from work, eg recent payslips

- how much you pay for childcare (if you want to claim for childcare costs), eg an invoice or receipt

- any other benefits you're getting, eg benefits letters or a bank statement

- child benefit reference numbers for any children you have if you get child benefit - this can be found on letters to you about child benefit, it will start with 'CHB' and is made up of 8 numbers and 2 letters, eg CHB12345678 AB - phone the Child Benefit Office on 0300 200 3100 (textphone 0300 200 3103) if you need help

Remember

If you're in a couple, the jobcentre will normally need information and evidence about your partner's circumstances as well as yours.

Remember

You won't get your UC payment until you've provided DWP with all the right evidence. So it's important to get all the documents to them as quickly as possible. If you can't provide the right evidence, you should contact DWP and explain why (telephone 0800 328 5644, textphone 0800 328 1344).

Improving your work situation - the claimant commitment

Your personal circumstances

What personal circumstances might affect your ability to carry out work-related activities? (eg childcare responsibilities, health concerns, caring responsibilities, ability to read and write)

What job could you do?

What are your skills? These don't have to have been developed in a job. They could be skills you've got from other life experiences, eg working around the home, managing a budget at home, being a parent, involvement with community or voluntary activities, support you've provided for friends or family members etc.

What qualifications and work experience do you have? If you have a CV or any training or qualification certificates, take them along to the interview.

What kind of job would you like?

How many hours could you work per week? Most full time jobs are around 36 hours per week. If you don't feel you can work full-time, give your work coach a good reason. For example, you might have to pick up children from school or have health concerns.

Where could you work? Your work coach may expect you to travel up to 90 minutes to work. If you feel you couldn't cope with a long commute, be prepared to explain why. For example, you might not own a car or have health concerns, childcare or caring responsibilities.

Ask your work coach about:

- fortnightly payments (called an 'alternative payment arrangement') if you think you'll struggle with monthly payments
- whether your rent can be paid directly to your landlord, if you have debts or rent arrears or are worried about missing your rent payments
- a short-term advance. This extra money is a loan and helps cover your costs until you get your first UC payment
- the Flexible Support Fund - this can help you to cover the costs of travel or training
- the Jobcentre Plus Travel Discount Card
- budgeting support if you would like some help and advice on how to manage your money throughout the month