



# What is Universal Credit?

Universal Credit is a new payment for working age people who are on a low income or out of work. It gives them the help they need to prepare for work, start work, or earn more money and includes support for housing, children and childcare.

## UNIVERSAL CREDIT REPLACES:

- Jobseeker's Allowance (income-based)
- Employment and Support Allowance (income-related)
- Income Support
- Working Tax Credit
- Child Tax Credit
- Housing Benefit (Rental)

## How Universal Credit was introduced

Universal Credit was introduced in Northern Ireland on a phased geographical basis from 27 September 2017 until December 2018. As Universal Credit rolled out in the respective geographical areas, people living in those areas were able to make a claim to Universal Credit instead of having to submit multiple claims for the six benefits that it replaced.

### HOW WILL UNIVERSAL CREDIT HELP YOUR BUSINESS?

- **It's about income, not hours** – ending the 16 hour rule so staff can increase their hours and no longer worry about losing their benefits.
- **Opportunities to use existing part-time staff** – for overtime and extra shifts at peak times.

- **Reduction of red tape** – using the PAYE real time information you send to HMRC to calculate Universal Credit payments means you will get fewer wage enquiries.
- **Access to a wider pool of better prepared applicants** – Universal Credit increases job preparation and improves digital and budgeting skills.
- **Jobseekers will be more flexible to consider short term work** – as they'll know their claim stays open and their benefit payment will adjust accordingly.

### UNIVERSAL CREDIT CLAIMANTS:

- will be able to move in and out of work, making it easier for employers to fill temporary vacancies and access a wider pool of applicants
- will be more flexible, ensuring they can work more hours as their benefit payment will be adjusted accordingly
- will be encouraged to improve their circumstances. They may ask for more hours or for help building their skills



## Support for employers

### DEDICATED EMPLOYER TEAMS

Our dedicated employer facing staff will provide a crucial link with you on a local and national basis. They will:

- help you source the staff you need
- connect with you in a way that suits you, whether that be face to face, by telephone or digitally
- provide access to wider pool of better prepared claimants
- provide flexible solutions to encourage growth, for example assistance with recruitment, training, or signposting

Employersonlineni.com is an online service which can provide you with a wide range of candidates across all sectors efficiently,

effectively and at no direct cost. It is managed by the Employer Vacancy Service, who will help you get the right people in the right job.

You can use Employers Online to place and manage vacancies on a 24-7 basis with vacancies being directly uploaded and displayed on the JobCentre Online website. Once you have registered you can:

- copy previous vacancies and upload your application form
- receive CVs and Job Centre Application forms direct to your account
- review the applications and select those you want to consider for the job

You can find out more at [www.employersonlineni.com](http://www.employersonlineni.com)

### FURTHER INFORMATION

There is information on all aspects of Welfare Changes and Universal Credit available at [www.nidirect.gov.uk/welfarechanges](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/welfarechanges). If you would like more information specific to Universal Credit and employers, please visit [www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/universal-credit](http://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/universal-credit)