

# **Citizens Advice Wakefield District**

## **Help to Claim Service**

Universal Credit is the biggest ever change to the welfare system. Having the right support in place is key to helping people navigate these changes. Citizens Advice is a network of 280 independent charities based across England & Wales in over 2500 locations. In 2017-18 we helped 2.6 million across the country through face to face advice, phone and webchat and had 25 million visits to our online pages.

**As Universal Credit continues to roll out we'll be providing people with direct advice and support to make a claim through this new service.**

Local Authorities provided a Universal Support service up to the 31st March 2019 which had 2 distinct parts—assisted digital and personal budgeting support.

From the 1st April 2019 the DWP is funding Citizens Advice to deliver a comprehensive and consistent support service, to help ensure everyone can access the support they need to complete a Universal Credit claim, no matter where they live.

We have funding from the DWP to run this service from April 2019—March 2020

### **Wakefield District**

Free, confidential, impartial advice and guidance available from your first click to your first payment.

**Telephone (Freephone) 0800 144 8 444**

**Webchat/email/online content [www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)**

### **Face to Face**

(From week 22nd April 2019 we will be in job centres across the district)

**Wakefield Job Centre Plus: Monday & Wednesday**

**Castleford Job Centre Plus: Monday, Wednesday & Thursday**

**Pontefract Job Centre Plus: Tuesday & Thursday**

**Hemsworth Job Centre Plus: Wednesday & Friday AM**

**And at our main Wakefield office on King Street and other outlets across the district**

**[please see our website for full details of locations & opening times]**

**[www.wakefielddistrictcab.co.uk](http://www.wakefielddistrictcab.co.uk)**



# Help to claim

At Citizens Advice Universal Credit is our fastest growing advice area. Since the roll out began we've helped over 175,000 people with Universal Credit issues.

The majority of people who come to us for help with Universal Credit need help in making their initial claim. We've designed a new service which meets this need and it will be available in England and Wales from April 2019. Citizens Advice Scotland will deliver a parallel service in Scotland.

## The service

### Step 1: Multi- channel 'no wrong door' access



Our service will be available, face-to-face, over the phone and online through webchat and online content - to allow clients to access support in the way that's right for them. They can be sign-posted or referred by other support agencies or self-refer.



### Step 2: Help to Claim check

We'll check that Universal Credit is the right benefit for the client to claim



### Step 3: Individual needs assessment

However clients come into our service we'll start by assessing their individual needs to make sure they can get access to the right level of support in the way that's right for them



### Step 4: Support to start a Universal Credit claim

- Check whether a client should be applying for Universal Credit
- Set up an email address or Universal Credit account
- Work through claim to-dos
- Access Universal Credit phone claim service or DWP home visit support



### Step 5: Completing a claim and getting ready for first payment

Depending on their level of need this might include help to:

- Support through the verify process
- Provide additional evidence
- Prepare for the practicalities of a monthly payment
- Access adaptations such as direct payments to landlords and conditionality easements
- Apply for additional financial support



### Step 6: Access to longer term support

Our help to claim service supports clients to make their initial Universal Credit claim. We can also support them with other issues in their lives by signposting or referring clients to other services - within Citizens Advice or through other organisations.