

## **COVID-19 Business and Individual Support Plus Universal Credit and New Style Job Seekers Allowance**

Over the past three weeks a number of financial measures have been announced by the Government to help support businesses and individuals to assist with the current Coronavirus pandemic.

So far the measures announced include the following and they have been covered in more detail in our previous communications:

- [Covid 19 Emergency measures for individuals and businesses](#)
- [Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan - New](#)
- [Coronavirus Self Employed Income Support Scheme](#)
- [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme](#)

However, despite the unprecedented level of financial support announced, there are a number of individuals who will not qualify for some of the packages announced.

- Those self-employed whose average level of profit from self-employment exceed £ 50,000 or whose average profit from self-employment is less than 50% of their total income or who became self-employed after 5 April 2019
- Directors of owner managed companies who take basic salary plus dividends and if furloughed will only be able to claim 80% of their basic salary through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- Unemployed or working less than 16 hours per week and not eligible for any of the support packages

For those in such an unfortunate situation, it is possible that a claim under Universal Credit may be appropriate. In addition a claim to New Style Job seekers Allowance may be available

The purpose of this communication is to provide some guidance on claiming Universal Credit and New Style Job seekers Allowance.

### **UNIVERSAL CREDIT**

The Government guidance on this can be found on the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>

To summarise:-

Universal Credit is a payment to help with your living costs. It is normally paid monthly. You may be able to get it if you are on a low income or out of work.

You need to apply for Universal Credit online. However, if you are unable to apply on-line, you can contact their helpline: Telephone: 0345 600 0723.

You cannot claim Universal Credit if you are entitled to the severe disability premium.

## Eligibility

You may be able to get Universal Credit if:

- You are on a low income or out of work
- You are 18 or over (there are some exceptions if you are 16 to 17)
- You are under [State Pension age](#) (or your partner is)
- You and your partner have £16,000 or less in savings between you
- You live in the UK

Universal Credit is paid once a month, usually into your bank, building society or credit union account. If you need help with your living costs while you wait for your first payment, you can apply for an advance.

## What you need to apply?

### You will need:

- your bank, building society or credit union account details (call the Universal Credit helpline if you do not have one)
- an email address
- [information about your housing](#), for example how much rent you pay
- details of your income, for example payslips
- details of savings and any investments, like shares or a property that you rent out
- details of how much you pay for childcare if you are applying for help with childcare costs

You also have to verify your identity. For this you will need some proof of identity, for example your:

- driving licence
- passport
- debit or credit card

### What you will receive :-

Single and under 25	£251.57 per month
Single and 25 or over	£317.82 per month
A couple and both under 25	£395.20 per month (for you both)
A couple and both 25 or over	£498.89 per month (for you both)

## NEW STYLE JOB SEEKERS ALLOWANCE

Government guidance on this can be found on the following link:-

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-style-jobseekers-allowance>

### To summarise

- If you are unemployed or work less than 16 hours a week you may be able to get New Style Job Seeker's Allowance (JSA).
- You need to apply for New Style Job Seeker's Allowance online. However, if you are unable to apply on-line, you can contact Job centre Plus.  
Telephone: 0800 055 6688.
- New Style JSA is a fortnightly payment that can be claimed on its own, or at the same time as [Universal Credit](#).

### Eligibility

- To get New Style JSA you usually need to have been working within the last 2 to 3 years as an employee, and have paid (or been credited with) Class 1 [National Insurance contributions](#)
- You must show that you have been looking for work; the previous face to face interviews have been cancelled – you may be contacted by phone.

If you qualify, you can get New Style JSA for up to 182 days. After that you will be contacted by a work coach to discuss your options.

### What you will receive: -

- |                                  |                        |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| • Age up to 24                   | up to £57.90 per week  |
| • 25 or over                     | up to £73.10 per week  |
| • Couples (both aged 18 or over) | up to £114.85 per week |

If you qualify for both New Style JSA and Universal Credit, any New Style JSA you receive will be taken into account as income for Universal Credit.

The guidance sets out the different criteria for claiming Universal Credit or New Style JSA. For instance, you can claim New Style JSA even if you have savings over £16,000, unlike Universal credit.