

Universal Credit

Universal Credit (UC) has been rolled out over the whole of the UK, it replaces six benefits including Employment Support Allowance (income based), tax credit and child tax credit.

Why is this a Payroll issue?

A key feature of UC is that, each month, it adjusts payments for the claimants who have jobs. This is possible because employers report their payroll information in 'real time' to HMRC.

If you are in receipt of UC it is very important that you check that your payslip is correct and report any anomalies as soon as possible to the ESC Helpdesk on 01698 403151 or email: ESC-HelpDeskTeam@northlan.gov.uk

The date when you apply for UC will determine your assessment period. If you are due any backdated payments and they fall within your assessment period, this will be treated as earnings in that period and may affect your UC payment. The frequency of your salary payment may also impact on your monthly payment of UC.

For example:

If you are fortnightly paid there are 26 pay periods within the year, this is 2 more than the monthly assessment period (12 months x 2 = 24). Therefore there are two occasions within the year when your UC payment might be stopped or reduced i.e. May 2019 has 3 fortnightly pays paid on the 02/05/2019, 16/05/2019 & 30/05/2019: so this may affect your June 2019 UC payment. The other month where this happens is October 2019: so this may affect your November 2019 UC payment.

If you are four weekly paid there are 13 pay periods within the year, this is 1 more than the 12 monthly assessment periods. Therefore there is only 1 occasion within the year when your UC payment might be stopped or reduced i.e. July 2019 has 2 four weekly pays paid on the 02/07/2019 & 30/07/2019: so this may affect your August 2019 UC payment.

As shown in the above examples being paid four weekly is less disruptive to your UC payments. If you are currently being paid fortnightly and would like to be paid four weekly, please contact the ESC Helpdesk on the details shown above.

What help is available?

Technical help can be sought at your local library, this is available if you do not have access to a computer or to the internet. You can call: 01698 332626 to find out where your nearest library is situated.

Your local Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) can assist you with your claim. Go to: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions

You can find more information on UC from HMRC website: <https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>

If you find yourself in hardship:

- The Scottish Welfare Fund: www.mygov.scot/scottish-welfare-fund
- NLC Financial Inclusion Team: www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/benefits
- UNISON Scotland: www.unison-scotland.org/