



BRIEFING PAPER

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Universal Credit: A reading list

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Introduction

The most significant welfare reform of the last ten years has been the introduction of [Universal Credit \(UC\)](#) - a means-tested benefit which is in the process of replacing six existing benefits and tax credits for working age households. The benefit is available to those who are in work on low incomes, as well as those who are unemployed or whose capability for work is limited by sickness or disability.

Universal Credit was introduced by the Coalition Government from 2013 to simplify and streamline the benefits system, improve incentives for work, tackle poverty, and reduce fraud and error. It is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and has been available in every part of the UK since December 2018. Currently, it's the only option for any working-age individual or family wishing to apply for a means-tested benefit.

For more than a decade, the principles, design, implementation, and claimant experiences of Universal Credit have been subjects of high-profile public and political debate. This reading list covers Universal Credit from early debates through to April 2021. It includes selected Commons Library briefing papers, Select Committee reports, as well as research from think tanks, campaigning charities, and other expert commentators.

This reading list is not intended to be comprehensive.

1. House of Commons Library Resources

1.1 Briefings and debate packs

[Coronavirus: Universal Credit during the crisis](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-8999, 15 January 2021

[Opposition Day Debate: A Motion relating to Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit](#), Commons Library Debate Pack CDP 2021-0009, 15 January 2021

[The Universal Credit assessment period and earned income](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-8501, January 2020

[Universal Credit and Debt](#), Commons Library Debate Pack CDP 2019-0131, 3 June 2019

[Housing Costs in Universal Credit](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-6547, May 2019

[Universal Credit and the Severe Disability Premium](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-8494, March 2019

Briefings on original legislation and debates

[Draft Universal Credit Regulations 2013](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper SN06548, 7 February 2013

[Universal Credit: An Introduction](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper SN6469, 9 November 2012

[Welfare Reform Bill 2010-12: amendments at the Lords Committee and Report stages](#), Commons Library briefing SN06202, 27 January 2012

[Welfare Reform Bill 2010-12: Commons Report Stage and Third Reading](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper SN06034, 26 August 2011

[Welfare Reform Bill: Committee Stage Report](#), Commons Library Research Paper 11/48, 8 June 2011

[Welfare Reform Bill: Universal Credit provisions](#), Commons Library Research Paper 11/24, 7 March 2011

1.2 Data dashboards

[Constituency data: Universal Credit rollout](#), Commons Library Data Dashboard

[Constituency data: people claiming unemployment benefits](#), Commons Library Data Dashboard

1.3 Casework guides

[Universal Credit: a checklist before claiming](#), Commons Library Casework Guide, 24 March 2021

[Universal Credit information sources](#), Commons Library Casework Guide, 14 January 2021

2. Select Committee publications

Work and Pensions Committee, [The temporary increase in Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit](#), 9 February 2021, HC 1193 – This report explored issues around the temporary, coronavirus-related increases to Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit, in the run-up to Budget 2021.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit: the wait for a first payment](#), 19 October 2020, HC 204 – Report examining evidence and making recommendations relating to the wait for a first payment in Universal Credit.

- [Government response](#) published 12 January 2021.

House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee, [Universal Credit isn't working: proposals for reform](#), 31 July 2020, HL 105 – A wide ranging report claiming that “Universal Credit isn’t working” and making proposals for reform.

- [Government response](#) published 15 October 2020.

Work and Pensions Committee, [DWP's response to the coronavirus outbreak](#), 22 June 2020, HC 178 – Looking at the DWP's response to the pandemic.

- [Government response](#) published 8 September 2020.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit and “Survival Sex”: Second Report of Session 2019-20](#), HC 83, October 2019 – Report examining the evidence that some UC claimants (predominantly women) are being driven to engage in sex work in order to meet their basic financial needs.

- [Government response](#) published 2 March 2021.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit: natural migration](#), July 2019, HC 1884 – This report looks at the issues faced by claimants who move onto Universal Credit due to a change of circumstances.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit: tests for managed migration](#), May 2019, HC 2091 – This report provides recommendations for DWP plans to move claimants of the existing benefits Universal Credit is replacing onto the new benefit.

- [Government response](#) published 5 July 2019.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit: Manged Migration](#), November 2018, HC 1762 – Report explores DWP plans to move claimants of the existing legacy benefits to Universal Credit.

- [Government response](#) published 23 January 2019.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit: Childcare](#), 23 December 2018, HC1771 – Report looking at the design of Universal Credit and its effect on access to childcare.

- [Government response](#) published 11 April 2019.
- [Further Government response](#) published 1 July 2019.

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Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit: Support for disabled people](#), 19 December 2018, HC 1770 – Report examining issues faced by disabled claimants.

- [Government response](#) published 27 February 2019.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Support](#), 28 October 2018, HC 1667 – This report explored the provision of the local authority-run “Universal Support” services designed to help claimants adapt to and manage the challenges of UC.

- [Government response](#) published 18 January 2019.

Public Accounts Committee, [Universal Credit](#), 26 October 2018, HC 1183 –Explores the impact on claimants of the early rollout of Universal Credit.

- [Government response](#) published 31 January 2019.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit and domestic abuse](#), 1 August 2018, HC1166 – This report explores the role of Universal Credit in supporting survivors of domestic abuse.

- [Government response](#) published 18 October 2018.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit: supporting self-employment](#), 10 May 2018, HC 997 – This report explores features of Universal Credit which affect self-employed claimants including the Minimum Income Floor.

- [Government response](#) published 17 July 2018.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit Project Assessment Reviews](#), 8 February 2018, HC 740 – Looking at the Project Assessment Reviews (PARs) of the Universal Credit programme carried out by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA).

- See also [Written Statement HCWS524](#), 8 March 2018.

Work and Pensions Committee, [In-work progression in Universal Credit](#), 11 May 2016, HC 549 – Exploring plans for Universal Credit to support claimants who are already in work to progress.

- [Government response](#) published 19 July 2016.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit implementation: monitoring DWP’s performance](#), 9 April 2014, HC1209 – This report looks at the early implementation problems faced by the DWP.

- [Government response](#) published 25 June 2014.

Work and Pensions Committee, [Universal Credit implementation: meeting the needs of vulnerable claimants](#), 22 November 2012, HC 576 – This report explored Universal Credit design and administrative challenges following the passage of the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

- [Government response](#) published 5 February 2013.

3. General policy

3.1 Commentary on implementation

Timmins N, [Reforming Universal Credit: the priorities](#), Institute for Government, 31 July 2020 – Historian and commentator Nicholas Timmins offers his ideas on how to reform Universal Credit.

Timmins N, [Universal Credit: getting it to work better](#), Institute for Government, March 2020 – Report looking at where further improvements to the delivery of Universal Credit could be made. It identifies two key areas, suggesting a ‘Welcome Grant’ for new claimants, and reducing or writing off historic benefit debt.

Centre for Social Justice, [Universal Credit: Update](#), September 2019 - This briefing offers an update on how Universal Credit is being received by claimants, how it is helping to save the Government money, encouraging the long-term unemployed back in to work, and reducing the risk of people becoming trapped in a life on benefits.

APPG on Universal Credit, [What needs to change in Universal Credit: Priority recommendations](#), July 2019 – A report outlining suggested improvements to Universal Credit.

United Nations, [Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights](#), April 2019 – Chapter 6 covers Universal Credit.

Dent A, [The failings of Universal Credit and Basic Income: lessons for the UK](#), Autonomy, August 2018 – Briefing exploring the perceived failings of Universal Credit, looking at the underlying theory and considering whether universal basic income is a way forward.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Understanding the impact of Universal Credit on the labour market](#), June 2018 – Analysis of how Universal Credit is having an effect on the labour market.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit Programme Full Business Case Summary](#), June 2018 – Sets out the rationale for Universal Credit, and outlines the expected employment impacts, economic case, and the Government’s value for money assessment.

Office for Budget Responsibility, [Welfare Trends Report](#), Cm 9562, January 2018 – Report focusing on the cost of implementing Universal Credit.

Policy in Practice, [Universal Credit: Options to smooth the implementation for claimants](#), November 2017 – An options paper for the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions.

Brewer M, et al. [Universal remedy: ensuring Universal Credit is fit for purpose](#), Resolution Foundation, October 2017 – Report re-assessing and reviewing both how the UC system is working and the sustainability of the underlying policy design.

Timmins D, [Universal Credit from disaster to recovery?](#), Institute for Government, September 2016 - This report explores the origins of

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Universal Credit, its implementation problems and set-backs, as well as its more successful rollout from 2013 onwards.

Finch D, [Universal challenge: making a success of Universal Credit](#), Resolution Foundation, May 2016 – Report looking at the potential for Universal Credit to be a success subject to changes being implemented by the Government.

Millar J and Bennett F, [Universal Credit: Assumptions, Contradictions and Virtual Reality](#), Cambridge University Press, 2016 – Article examining two aspects of Universal Credit: the aim to make UC as much like work as possible, and the architecture of the means test.

Social Market Foundation, [The introduction of the Universal Credit](#), April 2013 – Briefing giving an overview of potential pitfalls in the design of Universal Credit and considering issues requiring resolution.

National Audit Office, [Universal Credit: early progress](#), September 2013 – Study covering the evolution of the Universal Credit programme and the sequence of events leading to the reset in early 2013.

3.2 Early development and legislation

Department for Work and Pensions, [Government response to the House of Commons Work and Pensions Select Committee's report Universal Credit implementation: meeting the needs of vulnerable claimants](#), Cm 8537, February 2013 – Responding to the Committee's recommendations in six areas: service delivery, claims and payments, Universal Credit entitlement, calculation of income, implications of other policy changes, and the implementation programme.

Haddon C, [Making policy in opposition: the development of Universal Credit 2005-2010](#), Institute for Government, December 2012 – A study of the development of Universal Credit in the years before the Coalition Government came to power.

Social Security Advisory Committee, [SSAC report on Universal Credit and related regulations and the Government response](#), December 2012 – report by the Committee on the consultation on drafts of the Universal Credit Regulations and related regulations, together with the Government's response.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Explanatory Memorandum to the Universal Credit Regulations 2013 and related regulations](#), December 2012 – covers the detailed rules for Universal Credit set out in regulations.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit impact assessment](#), December 2012 – Impact assessment about Universal Credit introduced under the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit: Evaluation framework](#), December 2012 – Report giving an overview of plans for evaluating the introduction, implementation, delivery and impact of Universal Credit.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Welfare Reform Act 2012: Explanatory Notes](#), March 2012 – prepared by the DWP “in order to assist the reader in understanding the Act”.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit equality impact assessment](#), November 2011 – Equality impact assessment about Universal Credit introduced under the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

Brewer M, et al. [Universal Credit: A Preliminary Analysis: IFS Briefing Note 116](#), Institute for Fiscal Studies, January 2011 – An analysis of Universal Credit as set out in the Government’s White Paper (Universal Credit: Welfare that Works – see below).

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit Policy Briefing Notes](#), May-November 2011 – as the Welfare Reform Bill 2010-12 progressed through Parliament, the DWP published briefing notes (listed below) setting out key elements of policy relating to UC to provide greater clarity.

- Universal Credit policy briefing notes – an introduction
- 1 – Additions for longer durations on Universal Credit
- 2 – The payment proposal
- 3 – Treatment of Capital
- 4 – Contributory benefits
- 5 – Second earners
- 6 – Transitional protection
- 7 – Carers
- 8 – Foster carers
- 9 – Treatment of income (other than earnings)
- 10 – Childcare
- 11 – Extending conditionality under Universal Credit to working claimants: setting a new conditionality threshold
- 12 – Conditionality under Universal Credit: the work search and work availability requirements
- 13 – Extending conditionality under Universal Credit to working claimants: safeguards within the new regime
- 14 – Earnings disregards and tapers
- 15 – Managing the build up of claims to Universal Credit

Some briefing notes were superseded by draft regulations and new briefing notes providing more up to date policy information relating to the Welfare Reform Act 2012, including Universal Credit – see [Welfare reform regulations and policy briefing notes](#), from the DWP website archived on 2 April 2013

Department for Work and Pensions [Universal Credit: Welfare that Works](#), November 2010, Cm 7957 – White Paper setting out the

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Coalition Government's plans to introduce legislation to reform the welfare system by creating Universal Credit.

Department for Work and Pensions, [21st Century Welfare](#), Department for Work & Pensions, July 2010, Cm 7913 – A consultation paper on reforming the system of benefits and tax credits in 2010. Included Universal Credit as a possible model of reform.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Consultation responses to 21st Century Welfare](#), November 2010

The Centre for Social Justice, [Dynamic Benefits: Towards a welfare that works](#), September 2009 – This report examined the need to reform the benefits system. Published by an independent think tank 'The Centre for Social Justice', it proposed a total restructure of the benefits system, replacing the then current complex administration of many different benefits and tax credits with a new streamlined system of "Universal Credits".

4. Impact

These reports explore the winners and losers from welfare reform, and the impact of Universal Credit in areas such as work incentives, debt and poverty.

National Housing Federation, [No Time to Wait: Claimant experience of Universal Credit and how to improve it](#), June 2020 – Based on a survey conducted jointly by nine housing associations across England, this report looks at how the move to UC impacts people’s lives, including their finances, their ability to manage day-to-day, and their health. Also investigates whether claimants tend to delay their application after a change of circumstance, and what the reasons for this are.

Institute of Health Equity, [The Marmot Review 10 Years On](#), February 2020 – Report looking at changes in health inequalities and the social determinants of health in the decade since the Marmot Review. Recommendations for ensuring everyone has a minimum income for health living include redesigning Universal Credit, removing sanctions, and reducing conditionality in welfare payments.

StepChange, [Problem debt and the social security system](#), January 2020 – Report concluding that key design features of Universal Credit were driving hardship and problem debt. Recommended that the Government make short-term changes to “debt-proof” UC, and in the longer term develop a sustainable plan to reinstate the link between the value of working age support and the cost of living.

Gardiner L, and Finch D, [The long and winding road: the introduction and impact of Universal Credit in Liverpool City Region and the UK](#), Resolution Foundation, January 2020 – A report looking at how Universal Credit is working by examining its impact in a specific geographic location and making recommendations for improvements to Universal Credit.

Gardiner L, [The shifting shape of social security: Charting the size and shape of the British welfare system](#), Resolution Foundation, November 2019 – Report examining the evolution of the social security system and encompassing the transition from legacy benefits to Universal Credit.

McNeil C, et al. [Social \(in\)Security: Reforming the UK’s social safety net](#), Institute for Public Policy Research, November 2019 – The first paper from IPPR’s Fairer Welfare programme which aims to answer the question: ‘What succeeds in Universal Credit?’ Argues for greater investment in the social security system and for payments to be based, in future, on the amount needed for a basic minimum standard of living.

Gardiner L and Rahman F, [A fraying net: the role of a state safety net in supporting young people develop and transition to an independent healthy future](#), Resolution Foundation, October 2019 – Report including discussion of the impact of Universal Credit on the 16-24 age group.

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Unite Research, [Universal Credit: Not fit for purpose](#), September 2019 – Report from the trade union Unite, calling for Universal Credit to be scrapped, but also making suggestions for improvements to the current way the benefit is administered.

Thompson E, et al. [#Five weeks too long: why we need to end the wait for Universal Credit](#), Trussell Trust, September 2019 – Report examining the impact of the five-week wait, and setting out an analysis of proposed solutions.

Brewer M, et al. [Universal Credit and its impact on household incomes: the long and the short of it](#), Institute for Fiscal Studies, April 2019 – An analysis of the impact of UC on family incomes. Models the financial impact of Universal Credit on different household types.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, [Where next for Universal Credit and tackling poverty?](#), February 2019 – Report calling for faster improvements to the design, funding and delivery of Universal Credit.

Hobson F, et al. [Managing money on Universal Credit: How design and delivery of Universal Credit affects how people manage their money](#), Citizens Advice, February 2019 – Report examining how the design and administration of Universal Credit could be improved to help claimants manage money better.

The Trussell Trust, [The next stage of Universal Credit: moving onto the new benefit system and food bank use](#), October 2018 – Report looking at the roll-out of Universal Credit and food bank use.

Child Poverty Action Group, [CPAG's early warning system: report on Universal Credit's top issues](#), July 2018 – A report using evidence collected from welfare rights and other frontline advisers around the country about the impact of social security reform.

Howard M, [Universal Credit and Financial Abuse: Exploring the links](#), Women's Budget Group, Surviving Economic Abuse, and the End Violence Against Women Coalition, June 2018 – Report points out that paying Universal Credit as a single payment into one bank account for everyone in the household, rather than individual accounts, risks giving more power to abusers in homes where women live with domestic violence.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Understanding the impact of Universal Credit on the labour market](#), Ad hoc research report no. 64, June 2018 – Sets out how the DWP would examine evidence for how Universal Credit was working in the labour market.

Drake C, [Universal Credit and Debt: Evidence from Citizens Advice about how Universal Credit affects personal debt problems](#), Citizens Advice, September 2017 – Report discussing evidence that Universal Credit increases debt problems in contrast to legacy benefits. Examining the causes and suggesting possible solutions.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit Employment Impact Analysis](#), September 2017 – Report examining the short-term impact of Universal Credit on labour market outcomes.

Sandhu, K, [Universal Credit and impact on black and minority ethnic communities](#), Race Equality Foundation, June 2016 – Briefing paper summarising the details of Universal Credit, the plan for its roll out, and potential impact on minority ethnic communities.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit at Work](#), December 2015 – A progress report on how Universal Credit is “restoring work incentives, restoring fairness and transforming claimants’ lives”.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit at Work: Spring 2015](#), February 2015 – Sets out the Government’s progress on delivering Universal Credit, alongside emerging findings from analysis and evaluation of its impact.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit at Work](#), October 2014 – Report presenting evidence on the labour market impact of Universal Credit. Sets out the case for change, expected impacts, roll-out plans, costs and benefits, and emerging evidence on impacts.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit impact assessment](#), December 2012 – Impact assessment about Universal Credit introduced under the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

Keohane N and Shorthouse R, [Sink or Swim: the impact of Universal Credit](#), Social Market Foundation, September 2012 – Report assessing the impact of Universal Credit reforms on how low-income households budget and manage their finances.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit equality impact assessment](#), November 2011 – Equality impact assessment about Universal Credit introduced under the Welfare Reform Act 2012.

Bennett F, [Universal Credit: the gender impact](#), Child poverty Action Group, 1 October 2011 – Report drawing on research from the Women’s Budget Group looking at how the introduction of Universal Credit may adversely affect women’s financial autonomy.

5. Roll-out, natural and managed migration

Policy in Practice, [Financial resilience and the transition to Universal Credit](#), September 2019 – This report looks at the range of challenges claimants face when transitioning from legacy benefits. Whilst it takes account of recent improvements, it identifies that many people are likely to continue to struggle with the transition onto Universal Credit.

Policy in Practice, [White paper: Migration to Universal Credit](#), June 2019 – Contains previously published analysis, commentary and case studies covering migration to Universal Credit to date.

Mind, [Universal Credit and managed migration](#), 2018 – Briefing on Government proposals for moving people receiving ESA to Universal Credit and the impact on people with mental health problems.

Social Security Advisory Committee, [Draft Universal Credit \(Managed Migration\) Regulations 2018: SSAC report and government statement](#), November 2018 – Report, together with the Government's response, on the draft regulations for migration to Universal Credit of legacy benefits and tax credits not experiencing a change of circumstances. Also covers transitional protection for claimants who would otherwise see a reduction in their cash entitlement on moving to UC.

Gateshead Council, [The impact of the roll out of Universal Credit in two North East England localities: A qualitative study](#), November 2018 – Report examining the impact of the roll out of Universal Credit in two localities in North East England.

Finch D, [The benefits of moving: Managing the transition of existing claimants to Universal Credit](#), Resolution Foundation, September 2018 – This note considers how best to avoid further implementation difficulties over the course of the managed migration. It sets out seven "key principles" that should be applied to the next phase of Universal Credit implementation.

National Audit Office, [Rolling out Universal Credit](#), June 2018, HC1123 – This report examines the DWP's progress in introducing Universal Credit. Describes the evolution of the Universal Credit programme since the "reset" and evaluates the Department's future plans.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit full service claimant survey](#), June 2018 – Findings from two waves of research with Universal Credit claimants.

Office for Budget Responsibility, [Welfare Trends Report](#), Cm 9562, January 2018 – This report examines the potential cost of full roll-out of Universal Credit.

Western N and Jew P, [All Change – The Impact of Universal Credit in Southwark and in Lambeth](#), United St Saviour's Charity, 2018 – This research aimed to document the impact of the UC migration for

residents living in Southwark and Lambeth, and to highlight effective ways of supporting them in the future.

HMRC, [The transition from tax credits to Universal Credit: qualitative and quantitative research with claimants](#), November 2017 – Findings from research to evaluate the experiences of people who had stopped getting tax credits and had moved to Universal Credit after a change in their circumstances.

National Audit Office, [Universal Credit: progress update](#), HC 786, November 2014 – Report looking at the approach adopted by the Department for Work and Pensions' approach to implementing Universal Credit since the "reset" of the programme in early 2013, and at how its plans had developed.

Citizens Advice, [Universal Credit: Managing Migration Pilot: Final Report: How can we support Universal Credit claimants to successfully manage under the new system](#), December 2013 – The managing migration pilot was designed to understand how many Citizens Advice clients would be affected by Universal Credit, and understand their demographic and capability profile. Also, to identify which services were needed to provide them with necessary support, and how effective these were at equipping clients to successfully manage the migration to Universal Credit.

6. Claims and payments

Patrick R and Lee T, [Advance to debt: Paying back benefit debt – what happens when deductions are made to benefit payments?](#) Covid Realities research project, January 2021 – Paper exploring the impact of repaying government debts on people who are already on very low incomes.

Weal R, et al. [Lift the burden: Tackling the government debts facing people at food banks](#), Trussell Trust, December 2020 – Reported that during summer 2020, 73% of people receiving Universal Credit were repaying an Advance Payment at the time they visited a food bank – up from 51% before the pandemic. Called on the DWP to, among other things, “press pause” on making deductions from people's benefit during the pandemic.

Social Security Advisory Committee, [Consent in Universal Credit](#), September 2020 – Statement from SSAC on discussions around whether the DWP should accept that representatives have “implicit consent”, or require that claimants give their “explicit consent”, before information can be disclosed to a representative.

National Audit Office, [Universal Credit: getting to first payment](#), HC 376, July 2020 – Report examining how the DWP is managing the process for making a claim for Universal Credit, and how the process impacts claimants.

Griffiths R, et al. [Uncharted Territory: Universal Credit, couples and money](#), University of Bath and University of Oxford, June 2020 – Based on interviews with nearly 100 participants in more than 50 claimant households across England and Scotland, argues that the way Universal Credit is designed and delivered “does not fit the way modern couples and families live their lives”. Issues include the fact that UC is a single payment between the partners in a couple – a design feature that some couples found difficult.

Brewer M and Handscomb K, [No work, no pay: supporting unemployed people through Coronavirus](#), Resolution Foundation, April 2020 – Briefing setting out recommendations as to how the DWP can deal with the high volume of new Universal Credit claimants, ensuring timely help for those effected by the Coronavirus. Covers the capital rules, advance payments, in-work benefits, and public awareness of UC.

National Audit Office, [Universal Credit advances fraud](#), HC 105, March 2020 – Report setting out findings on the estimated extent of fraud involving Universal Credit advances, and looking at what the DWP had done to detect, recover and prevent it.

Timmins N, [Universal Credit: getting it to work better](#), Institute for Government, March 2020 – Report looking at where further improvements to the delivery of Universal Credit could be made. It identifies two key areas, suggesting a ‘Welcome Grant’ for new claimants, and that historic benefit debts should be reduced or written off.

Shorthouse R, et al. [Helping hand? Improving Universal Credit](#), Bright Blue, March 2019 – This report looks at three aspects of claimant experiences: accessing Universal Credit, managing financially, and progressing in employment. Proposes policies to improve the experience of the significant minority of claimants struggling with key design features of UC.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit full service omnibus survey: Findings from two waves of tracking research with recent Universal Credit full-service claimants](#), February 2019 – Report examining awareness of how to claim Universal Credit and understanding of the claimant commitment.

Jeffrey R, [Making a Universal Credit Claim](#), Citizens Advice, July 2018 – Report using evidence gathered from Citizens Advice clients about issues around making claims for Universal Credit and delays in receiving payments, also suggesting possible solutions to the issues raised.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit Full Service Survey](#), June 2018 – Summary findings from two waves of quantitative research with Universal Credit Full Service claimants. Examines claimants' experiences of registering a claim and understanding of Universal Credit, their job search activity and attitudes to work, and experiences of budgeting and sanctions.

Howes S and Jones KM, [Computer Says 'No!': Stage 1, information provision](#), Child Poverty Action Group, May 2019 – Report examining the lack of clarity in information provided to claimants as to how the amounts awarded were calculated.

Howes S and Jones KM, [Computer says 'No!': Stage 2, challenging decisions](#), Child Poverty Action Group, July 2019 – A report looking at the high level of successful appeals by Universal Credit claimants who were denied financial support initially.

7. Children and childcare

Dromey J, et al. [Tackling single parent poverty after coronavirus](#), Learning and Work Institute and Gingerbread, December 2020 – Gives findings from research, supported by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, showing single parents have suffered a “double impact” from the pandemic, being more likely to have been working in the sectors and jobs hit hardest, and impacted disproportionately by the closure of schools and childcare. Sets out a “four-point plan” to address lone parent poverty after the pandemic, including high quality employment and skills support, improved support for childcare costs, and ensuring the social security system, including Universal Credit, provides sufficient and effective support.

Child Poverty Action Group, [Mind the gaps: reporting on families incomes during the pandemic](#), July 2020 – The ninth issue in a series of briefings, this issue looks at conditionality and debt recovery in Universal Credit.

Child Poverty Action Group, [Supporting families during the Covid 19 pandemic](#), June 2020 – Briefing covering changes to Universal Credit during the Coronavirus crisis.

Woudhuysen A, [Worse off: the impact of Universal Credit on families in Tower Hamlets](#), Child Poverty Action Group, October 2019 – Report of a qualitative research study of Universal Credit claimants with children.

Tucker J, [Universal Credit: what needs to change to reduce child poverty and make it fit for families](#), Child Poverty Action Group, June 2019 – This report summarises the changes CPAG believes should be made to Universal Credit in order to reduce child poverty.

Policy in Practice, [The Impact of Welfare Reform on Child Vulnerability](#), May 2019 – Analysis by Policy in Practice, on behalf of the Children's Commissioner, of local authority data on vulnerable children, to assess the impact of Universal Credit and associated welfare reforms would have on children in low-income households.

Centre for Social Justice, [The hidden parent poverty trap: child maintenance and Universal Credit](#), March 2019 – Report examining how child maintenance payments interact with Universal Credit and can affect incentives to work.

Centre for Social Justice [A bright start: improving childcare for disadvantaged families through Universal Credit](#), November 2018 – Report making proposals to better support families through Universal Credit.

Social Security Advisory Committee, [Young people living independently: a study by the Social Security Advisory Committee](#), May 2018 – Report focusing on the interactions of young independent people with the benefits system. Including recommendations on how this group could be better supported under Universal Credit particularly in housing costs.

[DWP response to SSAC report on young people living independently](#), Department for Work and Pensions, July 2018.

Joyce R and Waters T, [Free School Meals under Universal Credit](#), Institute for Fiscal Studies, April 2018 – Report examining eligibility for free school meals under Universal Credit, analysing who may gain and who may lose.

Children’s Society and Child Poverty Action Group, [Free school meals poverty trap: how work won’t pay for 280,000 families](#), March 2018 – Briefing note drawing on analysis that concludes that work incentives will be effected by the proposed earnings limit under Universal Credit.

Department for Education, [Consultation outcome: Eligibility for free school meals and the early years pupil premium under Universal Credit](#), March 2018 – The outcome of DfE consultation on setting eligibility criteria for Free School Meals for Universal Credit claimants.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Universal Credit Test and Learn Evaluation: Families](#), September 2017 – Findings from qualitative and quantitative research by Ipsos MORI with claimants.

Children’s Society, [Claiming after care: care leavers and the benefits system](#), August 2017 – This paper utilises case studies of care leavers and a focus group of jobcentre staff who have engaged with care leavers regularly. It looks at budgeting issues under Universal Credit and suggests that more “joined-up interaction” between local authorities and Job Centres could alleviate some of the issues care leavers face.

8. Housing

National Housing Federation, [Universal Credit in a time of crisis](#), April 2021 – Report setting out findings from NHF research with housing associations on rent collection and support for tenants during the coronavirus pandemic. Findings from a tracking survey of 23 housing associations in England before and during the coronavirus pandemic, and interviews with 10 of those surveyed.

Homeless Link, [Homelessness and welfare benefits in London](#), March 2021 – Report looks at the impact of three key policies – Universal Credit, Local Housing Allowance, and the Benefit Cap – on homelessness and cost of accommodation in the private rented sector across London.

Hunter P, [Falling behind: The impact of Universal Credit on rent arrears for council tenants in London](#), Smith Institute, July 2020 – Report commissioned by Southwark Council, with the support of eleven other London local authority landlords and coordinated by London Councils.

Smith Institute, [Safe as houses 3: have government reforms to Universal Credit reduced the rent arrears of Southwark's tenants?](#), August 2019 – The aim of this report was to better understand the impact that Universal Credit was having on the rent payment behaviour of Southwark's social housing tenants.

Kleynhans S and Weekes T, [From the frontline: Universal Credit and the broken housing safety net](#), Shelter, August 2019 – Report examining the impact of Universal Credit over the last six years, including the role of frozen LHA rates.

Simcock T and Kaehne A, [State of the PRS \(Q1 2019\) A survey of private landlords and the impact of welfare reforms](#), Residential Landlords Association, July 2019 – Report argued that the roll-out of Universal Credit was causing problems for landlords and tenants in the private rented sector.

Birchall L, [Patching the Safety Net - Measuring the Impact of Universal Credit on tenants and landlords](#), ALMOS, July 2019 – NFA and ARCH 2019 survey into the impact of Universal Credit.

Northern Housing Consortium, [The impact of Universal Credit: Revisited](#), June 2019 – Follow up report based on findings from organisations in the North of England calling for a pause in the roll-out of Universal Credit to give DWP the opportunity to iron out the “persisting flaws” required to make the system workable for all.

National Housing Federation, [We're calling on the Government to fix flaws in the Universal Credit system](#), March 2019 – Briefing calling for improvements in Universal Credit and suggesting six changes the NHF would like to see made.

Windle G, et al. [The Impact of Universal Credit: examining the risk of debt and hardship among Social housing tenants](#), Peabody, 2019 – Report focusing on the issues Peabody residents have experienced when

moving from legacy benefits to Universal Credit. It looks at rent arrears, and particularly vulnerable and disabled tenants.

Smith Institute, [Safe as houses 2: A follow on report on the impact of Universal Credit on Southwark Council's housing tenant rent payment behaviour](#), November 2018 – Report looking at the effect of Universal Credit on rent payment for social housing tenants in Southwark a year on from the initial report 'Safe as houses 1'.

Howarth P, et al. [Universal Credit: making it work for supported housing residents](#), Policy in Practice, October 2018 – Report looking at the claims process for people living in supported housing. The research analyses four areas: existing processes for making a claim; barriers to and problems maintaining a claim; measures to support a claim; and further measures that could be introduced to help those in supported housing.

Simcock T, [Investigating the effect of welfare reform on private renting](#), Residential Landlords Association, October 2018 – Report looking at welfare reforms and the private rented sector, including the effect of Universal Credit on landlords. Research based on results from an RLA survey of UK landlords.

Birchall L, [Carrying the debt](#), ALMOS, July 2018 – Measuring the impact of Universal Credit on tenants and landlords – survey results 2018.

National Housing Federation, [Universal Credit and rent accounts: potential impacts](#), July 2018 – Briefing outlining information on the roll-out of UC and existing research on UC and rent accounts. Explores evidence on whether claimants are building up higher arrears under UC in comparison with legacy benefits.

St Mungo's, [Homelessness and Universal Credit](#), 2018 – Report making recommendations to identify and respond to issues faced by people experiencing homelessness to ensure that UC can deliver its stated principles.

Northern Consortium, [Impact of Universal Credit – The Frontline Perspective: Final report](#), December 2017 – This report was the culmination of a year-long study and draws on the results of four surveys into the impacts of UC on housing organisations and their tenants in the North of England.

Smith Institute, [Safe as houses: the impact of Universal Credit on tenants and their rent payment behaviour in the London Boroughs of Southwark and Croydon and Peabody](#), October 2017 – An analysis of the roll-out of Universal Credit full service, which examined the experience and rent payment behaviours among social housing tenants before, during and after their claim for UC.

Crisis, [Response to the Work and Pensions Select Committee inquiry into the Universal Credit](#), March 2017 – Provides evidence of the impact of Universal Credit, highlighting the impact of both its intended design and administrative problems experienced during the roll-out including recommendations for improvements.

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Derham R, [Universal Credit: How to support your clients and adapt your service: a guide for help to rent projects](#), Crisis, July 2016 – Report outlining possible issues with the roll-out of Universal Credit for help to rent projects and focusing on the housing element of UC.

9. Disability

Department for Work Pensions, [Work aspirations and support needs of claimants in the ESA support group and Universal Credit equivalent](#), February 2020 – Research exploring the experiences and needs of claimants receiving the Limited Capability for Work and Work Related Activity (LCWRA) element of Universal Credit.

Salvation Army, [Understanding Benefits and Mental Health: A national rethink on how government supports vulnerable people moving onto universal credit](#), January 2020 – Reports results from a survey of 160 individuals in England and Wales referred by Jobcentre to Salvation Army employment support programmes about their experience with the benefits system. Warns that millions could struggle to access a “complicated, bureaucratic and digital by default” Universal Credit system.

Disability Benefits Consortium, [Mending the holes: restoring the lost disability elements to Universal Credit](#), September 2019 – Analysis of the income reduction for disabled people because of the reduction or withdrawal of elements related to disability that were available in the legacy system.

Royston S, [Has Welfare become unfair: the impact of welfare changes on disabled people](#), Disability Benefits Consortium, July 2019 – Report looking at changes to the benefits system, including the impact of Universal Credit on disabled people.

Rahman A, [Universal Credit for single disabled people](#), Citizens Advice, October 2018 – Report examining the effect of the introduction of Universal Credit on single people with disabilities and health conditions.

MND Association, [The implications of Universal Credit for people living with Motor Neurone Disease \(MND\)](#), June 2018 – Report commissioned from Policy in Practice examining aspects of Universal Credit that have the most impact on people living with MND.

Citizens Advice, the Children’s Society, and Disability Rights UK, [Holes in the safety net: The impact of Universal Credit on disabled people and their families](#), October 2012 – Report on the findings of an inquiry that took evidence from around 3,500 disabled people and their families about the likely impact the introduction of Universal Credit.

10. People from abroad

Child Poverty Action Group, [Falling through the net – Briefing 3](#), April 2021 – Third in a series of briefings highlight persistent gaps in support, drawing on evidence from CPAG's Early Warning System (EWS) which collects case studies from frontline practitioners. Briefing covers families unable to access support through Universal Credit because they lack a National Insurance number.

Gardner Z, [Migrants with No Recourse to Public Funds' Experiences During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, March 2021 – Report concludes that the 'No Recourse to Public Funds' policy is a public health risk, and increases the risk of destitution amongst migrant families.

Child Poverty Action Group, [Mind the gaps – reporting on families' incomes during the pandemic – Briefing 14](#), October 2020 – Final report looking back at the top issues raised by practitioners via CPAG's Early Warning System over the previous six months. Notes high number of cases involving migrants experiencing problems claiming benefits due to complex rules regarding the right to reside (for EU nationals), or unable to claim because their immigration status makes them ineligible for benefits.

McKechnie K, [The Impact of COVID-19 on Migrants](#), Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland, July 2020 – Report drawing on evidence gathered via CPAG Scotland's Early Warning System, concentrating on the impact of COVID on migrants living in Scotland and highlighting that social security policy and administration has left some migrants with little or no income during the pandemic.

Parkes H and Morris M, [Testing times: Universal credit and the habitual residence test](#), Institute for Public Policy Research, July 2020 – Research commissioned by Islington Council following concerns that local residents were experiencing issues with the Habitual Residence Test, which resulted in them being incorrectly denied benefits or facing significant delays to their entitlements.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Analysis relating to the access to income-related benefits for EEA and non-EEA migrants](#), August 2017 – Two-part analysis of the effect of the measures introduced since 2013 to restrict EEA migrant access to benefits.

11. Employment and conditionality

11.1 In-work claimants

Manchester Metropolitan University's Centre for Decent Work and Productivity (CDWP), [Universal Credit and In-Work Conditionality - a productive turn?](#) February 2020 – Report giving findings from interviews with 12 employers, to gather insights on their understanding on the nature of work and productivity as well as their views on in-work conditionality. Researchers conclude that “rigid expectations placed on UC claimants to increase their hours or pay are at odds with the realities of working life in the UK labour market”.

Department for Work and Pensions, [In-work progression trial: further impact assessment and cost benefit analysis](#), October 2019 – This is a follow-up publication to [Universal Credit: In-work progression randomised control trial: summary research findings](#), September 2018. Related documents and reports:

- [Universal Credit: In-work progression randomised controlled trial: Impact Assessment](#), Department for Work and Pensions, September 2018
- [Universal Credit: In-work progression randomised controlled trial: findings from quantitative survey and qualitative research](#), Department for Work and Pensions, September 2018

Jones K, et al. [Universal Credit and in-work conditionality: a productive turn?](#), Productivity Insights Network, October 2019 – Report looking at the responsibilities placed on in-work claimants by conditionality and the “in-work progression” policy.

Citizens Advice Sheffield, [Does Universal Credit help work progression?: The experience of part-time workers receiving Universal Credit](#), August 2019 – This report looks at work progression and uses evidence gathered in interviews with claimants in Sheffield.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Employer engagement survey 2018](#), March 2019 – Third wave of a cross-sectional representative survey of GB employers. Includes statistics on awareness of Universal Credit and impacts on business.

Finch D and Gardiner L, [Back in Credit: Universal Credit after budget 2018](#), Resolution Foundation, November 2018 – Report looking at the increase in work allowances announced in the 2018 budget and the effect this change could have on work incentives.

Tucker J and Norris D, [Rough Justice: Problems with monthly assessment of pay and circumstances in Universal Credit, and what can be done about them](#), Child Poverty Action Group, August 2018 – This report identifies a number of problems with assessment of income and circumstances caused by the ‘whole month’ approach of UC. Set out proposals for improvement.

Social Security Advisory Committee, [In-work progression and Universal Credit: a study by the SSAC: Occasional paper No 19](#), November 2017 – Report offering suggestions to improve the in-work support regime for both work coaches and claimants.

Department for Work and Pensions, [DWP response to SSAC report on In-Work progression and Universal Credit](#), March 2018.

Department for Work and Pensions, [Understanding how Universal Credit influences employment behaviour: Findings from qualitative and experimental research with claimants](#), September 2017.

Pennycook M and Whittaker M, [Conditions uncertain: Assessing the implications of Universal Credit in-work conditionality](#), Resolution Foundation, October 2012—Briefing note examining the extension of conditionality to in-work claimants.

11.2 Self-employment

Citizens Advice, [Universal Credit and Modern Employment](#), April 2018 – Reports explore the changes to people’s work incentives on Universal Credit and the specific issues for those in non-traditional work. They also look at ways these problems could be addressed to make the new benefit fit for purpose in the modern labour market.

Low Incomes Tax Reform Group, [Self-employed claimants of Universal Credit: Lifting the burdens](#), October 2017 – Report examining issues for self-employed people under Universal Credit, including the Minimum Income Floor and fluctuating incomes.

Social Market Foundation, [Tough gig: Tackling low paid self-employment in London and the UK](#), October 2016 – Report looking at issues affecting the self-employed, including the Minimum Income Floor in Universal Credit.

11.3 Conditionality and Sanctions

Webster, D, [Briefing: Benefit Sanctions Statistics](#), Child Poverty Action Group website, March 2021 – Briefing providing a commentary on statistics released by DWP on 23 February 2021, giving sanction decisions up to the end of October 2020. Also covers other recent developments regarding conditionality and sanctions.

Dewar L and Clery E, [Left Behind: Single parents with pre-school aged children and job-seeking under universal credit in London](#), Gingerbread, September 2020 – Report exploring the impact of extending the job-seeking requirement under Universal Credit to parents whose youngest child is aged three or four, focusing on single parents in London.

Social Security Advisory Committee, [The effectiveness of the claimant commitment in Universal Credit: A study by the Social Security Advisory Committee Occasional Paper No. 21](#), September 2019 – This report assesses the effectiveness of the claimant commitment in UC. It also outlines a set of recommendations to improve the functioning of the claimant commitment.

University of York, [Final findings report: Welfare Conditionality Project 2013 – 18](#), June 2018 – Final report of a major five-year collaborative project involving six universities in England and Scotland.

University of York, [Final Findings: Welfare Conditionality](#), May 2018 – Key findings from the welfare conditionality project, based on qualitative research with policy stakeholders, frontline welfare practitioners and welfare service users.

Gingerbread, [Where next on Universal Credit?](#) May 2018 – Report concludes that Universal Credit was “not working for single parents”. Includes recommendations to better ensure UC meets the Government’s objectives of a simplified benefits system and supporting families into work.

Dewar L and Ben-Galim D, [An impossible bind: requirements to work under Universal Credit](#), Gingerbread, November 2017 – This report examines the effect of conditionality under Universal Credit requiring the parents of three and four year olds to look for work or risk being sanctioned.

Fletcher D and Wright S, [A hand up or a slap down? Criminalising benefit claimants in Britain via strategies of surveillance, sanctions and deterrents](#), Sheffield Hallam University, 2017.

National Audit Office, [Benefit sanctions](#), HC 628, November 2016 – This report examines the Department for Work and Pensions’ administration of benefit sanctions in Great Britain.

12. Decisions and appeals

Howes S and Jones KM, [Computer says 'no': Stage 2, challenging decisions](#), Child Poverty Action Group, July 2019 – Report looking at problems with understanding decisions, challenging errors and protecting the rights of people claiming Universal Credit.

Howes S and Jones KM, [Computer Says 'No!': Stage 1, information provision](#), Child Poverty Action Group, May 2019 – Report examining the lack of clarity in information provided to claimants as to how the amounts awarded were calculated.

13. Devolved nations

13.1 Northern Ireland

Harding S, [The Impact of Universal Credit on Women](#), Consortium for the Regional Support for Women in Disadvantaged and Rural Areas, September 2020 – Report looks at evidence gathered by the WRC to analyse the impact of Universal Credit on women in Northern Ireland.

Patrick R and Simpson M, [Universal Credit could be a lifeline for Northern Ireland, but it must be designed with people who use it](#), Joseph Rowntree Foundation, June 2020 – Report examining how Universal Credit works in Northern Ireland, using evidence from claimant experiences and making recommendations for improvements, including how devolved-level innovations may have lessons for the rest of the UK.

Patrick R and Simpson M, [Universal Credit in Northern Ireland: Interim Report](#), Ulster University, 2019 – Report giving an overview of UC in Northern Ireland. It looks at differences in how UC operates in NI and how roll-out was proceeding.

Department for Communities, [Explanatory memorandum to the Universal Credit \(Managed Migration and Miscellaneous Amendments\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\)](#), July 2019

Northern Ireland Audit Office, [Welfare Reforms in Northern Ireland](#), January 2019 – Report focuses on some of the key welfare reforms and local mitigation measures and assesses their impact. Part 4 looks at Universal Credit and changes to the administration of benefit payments.

NI Housing Executive, [Welfare Reform in Northern Ireland: a scoping report](#), 2018 – Analysis of the potential impact of changes to welfare provisions and particularly the introduction of Universal Credit, on tenants, landlords and homeowners.

13.2 Scotland

Scottish Parliament Social Security Committee, [The social security response to Covid-19](#), March 2021 – Report highlights concerns about people unable to access social security support during the pandemic. Among other things, recommends that the Scottish and UK Governments work together to consider the feasibility of a “Citizens Basic Income”, and that the UK Government regard remove the five-week wait for a first payment of UC, abolish the two-child limit and the Benefit Cap, and make permanent the £20 a week temporary increases to UC and WTC.

Scottish Government, [Homelessness and Universal Credit: research report](#), March 2021 – Literature review looking at the relationship between Universal Credit and homelessness.

Robertson L, et al. [How well is Universal Credit supporting people in Glasgow?](#), Joseph Rowntree Foundation, June 2020 - Report setting out recommendations in light of claimants’ experiences in Glasgow.

Citizens Advice Scotland, [Universal Credit Debate \(Scottish Labour Party\) - Citizens Advice Scotland briefing](#), November 2019 – Briefing setting out issues faced by Universal Credit claimants in Scotland.

Scottish Government, [Welfare reform: annual report 2019](#), September 2019 – Analysis of social security reforms, particularly the effects of the benefit freeze, two-child limit and Universal Credit work allowance changes.

Shelter Scotland, [The impact of Social Security on housing in Scotland: Topic Briefing](#), July 2019 – Briefing looking at the impact of welfare reform on housing, including the implementation of Universal Credit.

Scottish Association for Mental Health, [Universal Credit and mental health: recommendations for change](#), March 2019 – Report exploring the experiences of people with mental health problems in Scotland. Looking at their interaction with Universal Credit and suggesting changes to improve the experience.

Scottish Parliament Social Security Committee, [Social security and in-work poverty](#), February 2019 – Report setting out findings from the Committee's inquiry into the potential impact of Universal Credit on in-work poverty, which looked at recent research on trends in low wages and in-work poverty, and indicators of increasing financial need in working households, including use of food banks.

Scottish Government, [2018 Annual Report on Welfare reform](#), September 2018 – The second chapter of the report provides an update on Universal Credit and its roll-out.

Scobie A, [Bridge or barrier: vulnerable claimants experiences of full-service Universal Credit in Stirling district](#), Citizens Advice Scotland, August 2018 – Report explores the difficulties vulnerable claimants may have claiming Universal Credit and then maintaining their claim.

Menu for Change, [Insights into the Impact of Universal Credit on Food Insecurity](#), June 2018 – Report citing issues with unpredictable payments causing budgeting problems and driving people into food poverty.

The Scotland Institute, [Universal Credit: Implications for Scotland](#), September 2016 – Report looking at the roll-out of Universal Credit in Scotland and whether the devolved government might be able to mitigate the effects on Scottish benefits claimants.

13.3 Wales

Welsh Government, [Understanding the impact of Universal Credit on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Rent Arrears in Wales: Final Report](#), July 2020 – Final report from a year-long research project undertaken for the Welsh Government by Jane Aston Research Associates and Policy in Practice, on the impact of Universal Credit focusing on housing related costs for claimants in Wales.

Welsh Government, [Analysis of the impact of the UK Government's welfare reforms on households in Wales](#), January 2019 – Looks at the impact of welfare reforms, including the roll-out of Universal Credit.

Stirling T, et al. [Universal Credit: Implications for devolved policies and services](#), Bevan Foundation, October 2018 – Report exploring the roll-out of Universal Credit in Wales and its possible consequences, and what the Welsh Government might do to mitigate those effects.

National Assembly for Wales Equality, Local Government and Communities Committee, [Making the economy work for people on low incomes](#), May 2018 – Report recommended that, among other things, the Welsh Government considers seeking powers over the administration of Universal Credit akin to those available to the Scottish Government ([Welsh Government response](#) July 2018).

Protheroe A, et al. [The experience of Universal Credit: a tenant's perspective](#), Cardiff Metropolitan University, March 2017 – Report exploring tenants' experiences of UC, barriers to engaging with their landlord and solutions to overcome these barriers.

14. Universal Credit in the coronavirus crisis

[Coronavirus: Withdrawing crisis social security measures](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-8973, 30 April 2021 – This paper outlines the social security changes made by the Department for Work and Pensions and other Government departments, in response to the coronavirus crisis, as well as expectations for their withdrawal and plans for the economic recovery.

Baumberg Geiger B, et al. [Non-take-up of benefits at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic](#), Welfare at a Social Distance Project, April 2021 – Report presenting the findings of exploratory research into the estimated 430,000-560,000 people who were eligible for UC during the start of the COVID-19 pandemic but did not claim it.

- [Welfare at a Social Distance](#) is a major national research project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council as part of UK Research and Innovation's rapid response to COVID-19. It is looking at how people are accessing social security and employment support during the COVID-19 crisis and its aftermath. Further reports published so far as part of the project are listed below.

Institute for Government and the Social Security Advisory Committee, [Jobs and benefits: The Covid-19 challenge](#), March 2021 – Joint report setting out a series of recommendations for improving the UK's system of benefit and employment support in the light of issues raised by the Covid-19 pandemic. Includes, in relation to Universal Credit, raising the capital limit and indexing it automatically, introducing a non-repayable "starter payment" for new claimants not eligible for legacy benefit runs, reviewing the level of support provided by UC and other benefits, and recycling savings from falling caseloads to improve work incentives by changing work allowances and/or reducing the taper rate.

Brewer M and Handscomb K, [The debts that divide us: Flash findings from a survey of families claiming Universal Credit](#), February 2021 – Based on a survey undertaken in January 2021, this spotlight report found that over three-in-ten people who had started claiming Universal Credit during the pandemic have either acquired new debts, or seen their existing debts grow.

Edmiston D, et al. [Navigating Pandemic Social Security: Benefits, Employment and Crisis Support during COVID-19](#), Welfare at a Social Distance Project, February 2021 – Report addressing two questions: what is the nature and extent of support received by benefit claimants? And how have benefits, employment and crisis support been affected by COVID-19?

Summers K, et al. [Claimants' experiences of the social security system during the first wave of COVID-19](#), Welfare at a Social Distance Project, February 2021 – Drawing on data from a national study examining working-age benefits (including Universal Credit) during the pandemic,

this report provides an understanding of the experiences of benefit claimants during the first wave of COVID-19.

Resolution Foundation, [Half-measures: The Chancellor's options for Universal Credit in the Budget](#), 19 February 2021 – A blog post looking at the options for Universal Credit in the Spring Budget 2021.

Centre for Policy Studies, [The Universal Credit Uplift: The Way Forward](#), 24 January 2021 – The briefing paper presents alternatives to maintaining the temporary increases to Universal Credit. These include cutting the taper rate from 63% to 55%, and increasing the generosity of uprating in April 2021.

[Coronavirus: Universal Credit during the crisis](#), Commons Library Briefing Paper CBP-8999, 15 January 2021 – Explores how Universal Credit has coped and changed during the coronavirus crisis so far, and at challenges that lie ahead.

Social Security Advisory Committee, [A review of the COVID-19 temporary measures](#), 18 November 2020 – A review of the DWP's response to the pandemic, including discussion of the challenges of unwinding measures and recommendations.

Institute for Public Policy research and Trades Union Congress, [A family stimulus: Supporting children, families and the economy through the pandemic](#), 26 October 2020 – This paper makes the case for a "family stimulus" – a boost to the income of families through the social security system and targeted investment in childcare.

Child Poverty Action Group, [Mind the gaps and falling through the net briefings](#), 16 April 2020 to 25 February 2021 – This series uses CPAG's "Early Warning System" which collects case studies from frontline practitioners working directly with families on problems they are seeing with the social security system.

Nicholas Timmins, Institute for Government blog, [Coronavirus should trigger long-term reforms to Universal Credit](#), 19 October 2020 – This blog post explores what could be done to make Universal Credit work better.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation, [Strengthen social security for a stronger economy](#), 16 October 2020 – This report presents the argument for making the £20 uplift to the standard allowance of Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit permanent, and extending it to legacy benefits.

Citizens Advice, [Life on less than zero](#), 13 October 2020 – This short report looks at the role of the temporary increases to Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit in supporting Citizens Advice debt advice clients.

Centre for Social Justice, [Unfinished Business: Next steps for welfare reform in post-Covid Britain](#), 11 October 2020 – Presents recommendations for reforms to Universal Credit in light of the pandemic.

Edmiston D, et al. [Who are the new COVID-19 cohort of benefit claimants?](#) Welfare at a Social Distance Project Rapid Report, September

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2020 – Provides a broad outline of the demographic profile of existing and new benefit claimants pre and post COVID-19, drawing on results of an online survey conducted by YouGov between 21 May and 15 June 2020.

Citizens Advice, [Lockdown Lifeline: Ensuring adequate support across the benefits system during the Covid-19 pandemic](#), 10 July 2020 – A report calling for further urgent measures to fill ongoing gaps and help shore up people's incomes in the crisis.

Work and Pensions Committee, [DWP's response to the coronavirus outbreak](#), HC 178, 22 June 2020 – Looking at the DWP's response to the pandemic.

Resolution Foundation, [This time is different – Universal Credit's first recession](#), May 2020 – Report utilising data from an online survey conducted by YouGov. Evaluated how well UC was working and how claimants were faring. The report looks at overall policy, the systems design and operational delivery.

Nicholas Timmins, [Credit where it is due: Universal Credit during the coronavirus lockdown](#), Institute for Government, 4 May 2020 – A blog praising Universal Credit for its capacity to process the surge in claims in the early Spring of 2020, and looking ahead to future challenges.

Brewer M and Handscomb K, [No work, no pay: supporting unemployed people through Coronavirus](#), Resolution Foundation, April 2020 – Briefing setting out recommendations as to how the DWP could deal with the high volume of new Universal Credit claimants, ensuring timely help. The Briefing covers the capital rules, advance payments, in-work benefits, and public awareness of UC.

Fran Bennett, [Coronavirus – the making or the unmaking of Universal Credit](#), University of Bath Institute for Policy Research blog, 6 April 2020 – An early analysis of the changes made to Universal Credit and its role in the coronavirus crisis.

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