

Universal Credit – experimental official statistics to March 2014

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Introduction

Universal Credit is a new benefit that has started to replace six existing benefits and tax credits with a single monthly payment. Universal Credit will eventually replace:

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

The main differences between Universal Credit and the current welfare system are:

- Universal Credit is available to people who are in work and on a low income, as well as to those who are out-of-work
- most people will apply online and manage their claim through an online account
- Universal Credit will be responsive – as people on low incomes move in and out of work, they'll get ongoing support
- most claimants on low incomes will still be paid Universal Credit when they first start a new job or increase their part-time hours
- claimants will receive a single monthly household payment, paid into a bank account in the same way as a monthly salary
- support with housing costs will usually go direct to the claimant as part of their monthly payment

Universal Credit was launched as a Pathfinder in areas of the North West commencing in April 2013. The four initial Pathfinder offices were Ashton-under-Lyne, Oldham, Warrington, and Wigan. Six further sites have now rolled out Universal Credit, which started with Hammersmith on 28 October, followed by Rugby and Inverness on 25 November, Harrogate and Bath on 24 February and Shotton on 7 April.

Key findings

Starters

- Between April 2013 and 31st March 2014, a total of 6,550 people have started on Universal Credit.
- Gender breakdowns of starters to Universal Credit show that the majority are males, with a male to female ratio around 7:3.
- The majority of new claims are for unemployed people aged under 25;

Caseload

- On the 31st March 2014, a total of 5,610 people were on the Universal Credit caseload.
- Over 6 in 10 of the Universal Credit caseload on 31st March 2014 are younger people, under the age of 25.

In this Summary

This Summary contains data on Universal Credit on the benefits starters and caseload to 31st March 2014. These have been developed and released in accordance with the Code of Practice for statistics and its supporting principles.

This report contains two measures:

- A **starter** to Universal Credit is defined as an individual who has completed the Universal Credit claim process, attended a Universal Credit interview with a work coach, and has received at least one Universal Credit payment. The reporting month in relation to **starts** to Universal Credit relates to the calendar month, i.e. the first day of the month up to and including the last day of the month.
- The caseload of Universal Credit claimants includes those who have started Universal Credit (as above) and have not had a termination recorded for this spell, up to the reporting point. The Universal Credit caseload figure reported here relates to the last day of the month, e.g. for November 2013, the measure is Universal Credit claimants on the 30th November 2013.

This report covers the period up to 31st March 2014 and includes summary statistics for the nine Jobcentre Plus offices, Ashton-under-Lyne, Oldham, Warrington, Wigan, Hammersmith, Rugby, Inverness, Harrogate and Bath who had implemented Universal Credit up to this reporting period. The postcodes covered by these offices begin:

- BA1, BA2, BA3, BS31, BS39
- CV21, CV22, HG1, HG2, HG3, HG4, HG5
- IV1, IV2, IV3, IV4, IV5, IV8, IV9, IV10, IV11, IV12, IV13, IV21, IV22, IV26, IV54, IV63
- LS17, M35, M43
- OL1, OL2, OL3, OL4, OL6, OL7, OL8, OL9
- PH19, PH20, PH21, PH22, PH23, PH24, PH25, PH26, PH32, SK16
- W6, W14, WA1, WA2, WA3, WA4, WA5, WA13, WN1, WN2, WN3, WN5, WN6, YO51

It is important to note that the Universal Credit statistics currently include all people claiming this benefit, both those people in work and out-of-work. People on Universal Credit who are in employment may or may not be receiving a Universal Credit payment. As new claims for Universal Credit in the Pathfinder stage have been restricted to single, unemployed people without children then most claimants will be unemployed. Work is being undertaken within DWP to publish statistics that distinguish between these two groups by mid-2014. The unemployed UC claimant information will be supplied to ONS but it is a matter for ONS to decide how they include them within the Claimant Count.

Future Releases

The next release of Universal Credit statistics will be in July 2014 and will contain data to 30 April 2014.

DWP plans to expand the range of statistics included in future editions of this release as their reliability is confirmed.

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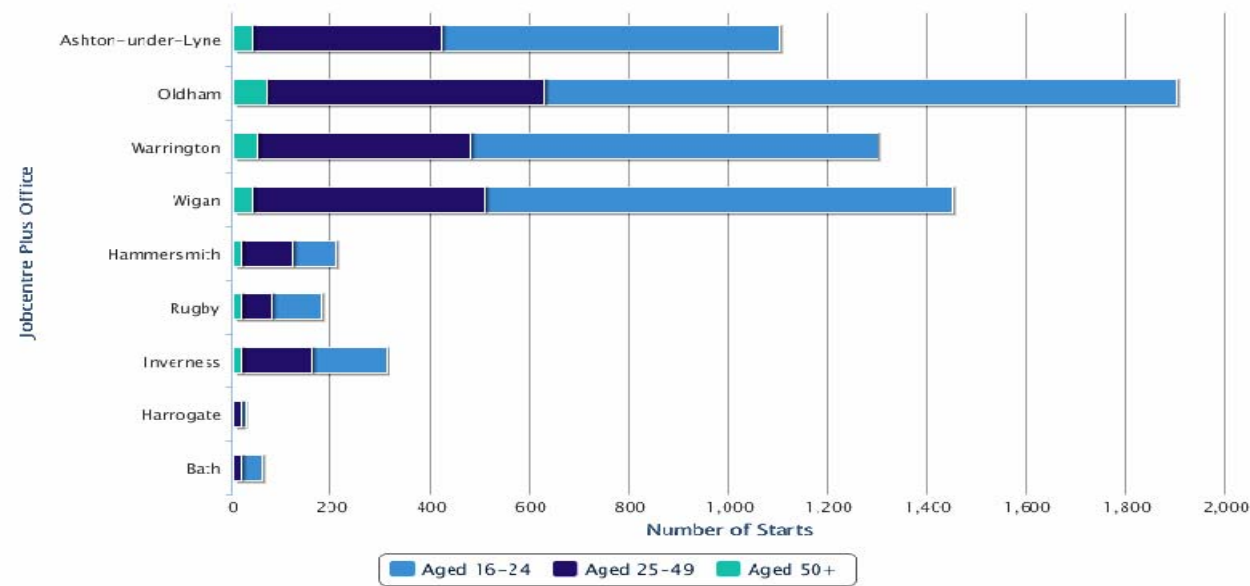
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Section 1. Official statistics and commentary

*** Further breakdowns are available for some of the charts below in Stat-Xplore – where available, click on link to explore further, or go directly to the Stat-Xplore visualisation page at: <https://sv.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/views/> ***

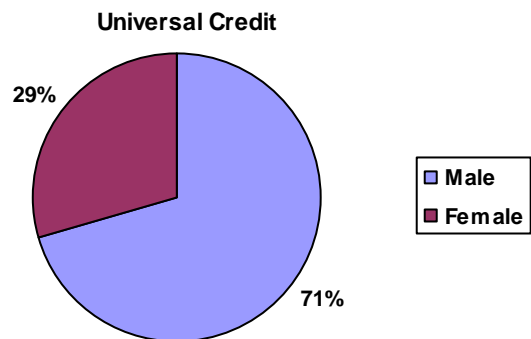
1a. Analysis of starters

Chart 1.1 Universal Credit starters, cumulative to 31st March 2014, by age band



Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Chart 1.2: Universal Credit starters, cumulative to 31st March 2014, by gender



Key messages

- Between April 2013 and 31st March 2014, a total of 6,550 people have started on Universal Credit;
- Over 6 in 10 of new claims are for people aged under 25 and reflect the initial take-on for Universal Credit, of single, non home owning, unemployed people without children;
- The ratio of male to female starters to Universal Credit is around 7:3.

Table 2.1 shows a time series of monthly starts to Universal Credit, split by office.

- This shows that in general each office showed an initial increase of new on-flows in the first few months of going live.
- By March 2014 the highest number of new starters, in that month, were in Oldham, followed by Warrington and then Wigan.

Chart 1.1 shows the cumulative number of new starters. During the period May to March 2014 6,550 people started on the benefit.

Chart 1.2 (and **table 2.2**) shows the proportion of the cumulative Universal Credit starters by gender, in the period looked at by this release you can see that the ratio of male to female starters is around 7:3.

1b: Analysis of caseload

Chart 1.3: Universal Credit caseload, as at end of month, by Jobcentre Plus office

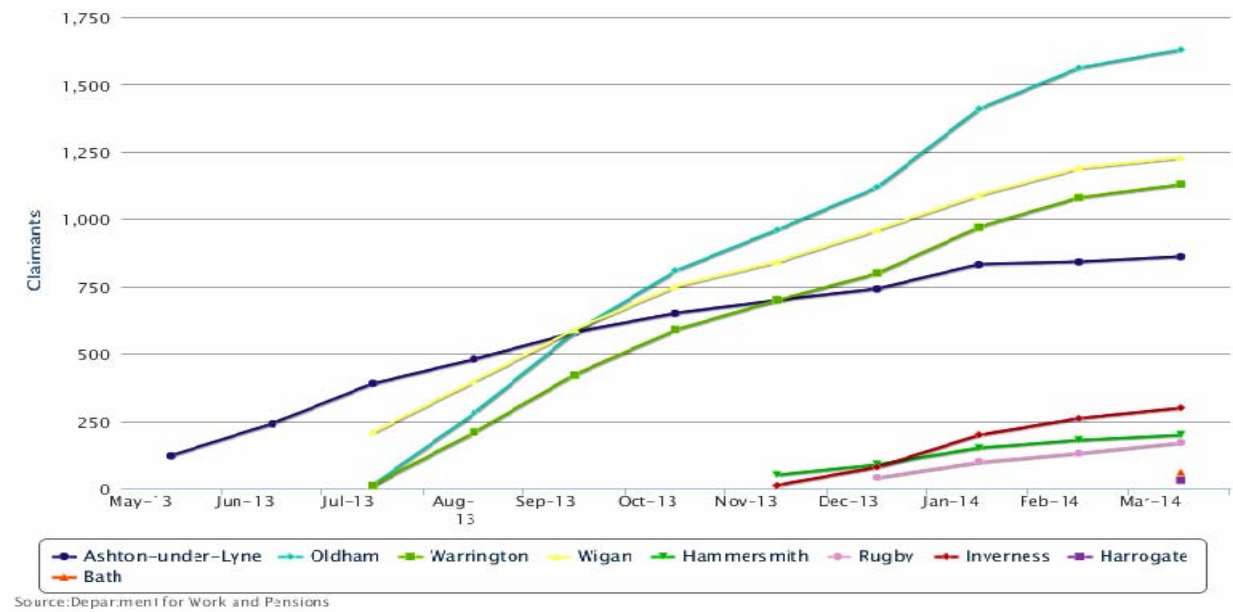
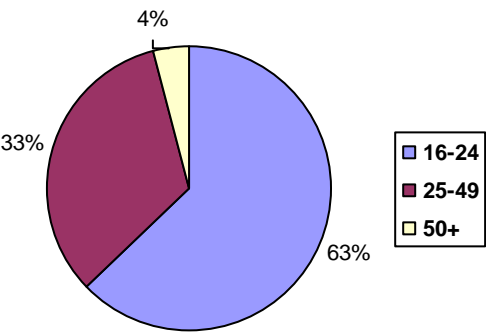


Chart 1.4: Universal Credit caseload, at 31st March 2014, by age band



Key messages

- On the 31st March 2014, the total caseload of Universal Credit claimants was 5,610 people;
- Over 6 in 10 claimants of the Universal Credit caseload on 31st March 2014 are younger people, less than the age of 25.

Chart 1.3 (and **table 3.1**) shows the time series of the monthly caseloads of Universal Credit. The highest caseload at end of March is in Oldham, followed by Wigan.

Chart 1.4 (and **table 3.1**) shows the percentage of March's caseload of Universal Credit, split by age. This shows that over 6 in 10 claimants of Universal Credit in the latest month were under 25.

Table 3.2 and **3.3** break the Universal Credit caseload, at 31st March 2014, down by further geographies (based on the latest held address of the claimant).

Section 2. Tables on Universal Credit starters

** Further breakdowns of statistics in the tables below are available in Stat-Xplore – go to <https://sv.stat-xplore.dwp.gov.uk/views/> to explore further **

The following definitions and conventions are used in the next two sections

"-" Nil or Negligible;

"." Not applicable;

Figures are rounded to the nearest ten.

Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Figures are refreshed each time they are published and are subject to change.

Local Authorities and Parliamentary Constituencies are assigned by matching the claimant's postcode against the relevant postcode directory and may therefore differ to those given by Jobcentre Office.

Table 2.1 Monthly numbers of starters to Universal Credit

		2013							2014			
		May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Total		120	120	400	780	900	750	650	630	1010	630	560
Gender	Male	80	90	250	530	640	550	470	460	710	470	390
	Female	40	40	150	250	270	200	190	170	300	160	170
Age	16-24	70	80	280	540	640	470	400	350	580	380	330
	25-49	40	40	110	220	250	260	220	250	370	230	190
	50+	-	-	10	20	20	20	30	40	50	30	40
Jobcentre Office	Ashton-Under-Lyne	120	120	170	100	120	100	90	60	100	60	60
	Wigan	.	.	210	200	210	180	150	130	160	130	90
	Warrington	.	.	10	210	230	190	140	110	190	120	100
	Oldham	.	.	10	270	340	270	210	180	320	170	130
	Hammersmith	.	.	.	.	.	-	50	40	60	30	30
	Rugby	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	40	50	40	40
	Inverness	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	70	120	70	40
	Harrogate	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	30
	Bath	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	50

Table 2.2 Cumulative numbers of starters to Universal Credit

		2013							2014			
		May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Total		120	240	640	1420	2320	3070	3720	4350	5360	5990	6550
Gender	Male	80	170	420	960	1590	2140	2600	3060	3770	4240	4630
	Female	40	70	220	470	730	930	1120	1290	1590	1750	1920
Age	16-24	70	150	430	970	1600	2070	2470	2820	3400	3780	4100
	25-49	40	80	190	410	660	920	1140	1380	1760	1980	2180
	50+	-	10	20	40	60	80	110	150	210	230	270
Jobcentre Office	Ashton-Under-Lyne	120	240	410	510	630	730	810	880	980	1030	1100
	Wigan	.	.	210	410	620	810	960	1090	1240	1370	1460
	Warrington	.	.	10	220	450	640	780	890	1080	1200	1300
	Oldham	.	.	10	280	630	900	1100	1290	1610	1780	1910
	Hammersmith	.	.	.	.	.	-	50	90	150	180	210
	Rugby	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	50	100	140	180
	Inverness	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	80	200	270	310
	Harrogate	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	30
	Bath	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	60

Section 3. Tables on Universal Credit caseload

Table 3.1 Caseload of Universal Credit at the end of each month

		2013								2014		
		May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
	Total	120	240	630	1370	2170	2790	3280	3820	4730	5250	5610
Gender	Male	80	170	410	920	1490	1960	2310	2700	3340	3730	3970
	Female	40	70	210	450	690	840	970	1120	1390	1520	1640
Age	16-24	70	150	420	940	1510	1890	2170	2460	2980	3290	3510
	25-49	40	80	180	390	610	830	1010	1220	1560	1740	1860
	50+	-	10	20	40	50	70	100	140	190	210	250
Jobcentre Office	Ashton-Under-Lyne	120	240	390	480	580	650	700	740	830	840	860
	Wigan	.	.	210	400	590	750	840	960	1090	1190	1230
	Warrington	.	.	10	210	420	590	700	800	970	1080	1130
	Oldham	.	.	10	280	580	810	960	1120	1410	1560	1630
	Hammersmith	.	.	.	.	.	-	50	90	150	180	200
	Rugby	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	40	100	130	170
	Inverness	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	80	200	260	300
	Harrogate	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	30
	Bath	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	60
Duration	Up to 3 months	120	240	620	1270	1960	2220	2120	1890	2180	2210	2170
	3 - 6 month	.	.	10	100	220	560	1070	1730	2030	1990	1740
	More than 6 months	.	.	.	.	.	20	90	210	530	1050	1710

Table 3.2 Universal Credit Caseload by Local Authority: at the end of March 2014

	31 st March
Oldham	1,620
Wigan	1,180
Warrington UA	1,080
Tameside	840
Highland	300
Hammersmith and Fulham	180
Rugby	170
Bath and North East Somerset UA	60
St. Helens	40
Harrogate	30
West Lancashire	20
Halton UA	10
Manchester	10
Kensington and Chelsea	10
Rochdale	10
Cheshire West and Chester UA	10
Other local authority¹	70

Table 3.3 Universal Credit Caseload by Parliamentary Constituency: at the end of March 2014

	31st March
Oldham West and Royton	840
Ashton-under-Lyne	780
Wigan	690
Oldham East and Saddleworth	640
Warrington North	570
Warrington South	510
Makerfield	480
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	270
Hammersmith	180
Rugby	160
Denton and Reddish	120
Stalybridge and Hyde	70
Bath	40
St Helens North	40
Ross, Skye and Lochaber	30
Harrogate and Knaresborough	20
North East Somerset	20
West Lancashire	20
Kensington	10
Leigh	10
Weaver Vale	10
Halton	10
Bolton West	10
Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross	10
Other constituency ¹	100

¹Note the “Other” categories will contain claimants that were originally based in Universal Credit areas when their claim started but have since moved to another area.

Section 4. Methodology

4a. Data Source

These official statistics have been compiled using manually captured data from systems within local offices and records of Universal Credit benefit payments made by the Department.

The initial systems based on manually captured data are being de-commissioned so the next set of statistics on Universal Credit (published in July 2014) will be based on new, more automated data sources. These new data sources will, in time, allow a progressively wider range of breakdowns to be published as the new IT systems are introduced. The methodology used and definitions of the official statistics will be updated within subsequent releases, along with information on the impact of any changes to the time series already released.

These statistics have been developed using guidelines set out by the UK Statistics Authority, and are new official statistics undergoing evaluation they have accordingly been badged as being Experimental Statistics². Users are invited to comment on the development and relevancy of these statistics at this stage

² For further details of experimental statistics, see: <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/assessment-and-designation-of-experimental-statistics.html>

4b. Definitions used

A starter to Universal Credit is defined as an individual who has completed the Universal Credit claim process, attended a Universal Credit interview with a personal adviser, and has received a Universal Credit payment.

Figures show the first successful claim per individual.

A Universal Credit claimant is recorded as being on the caseload if they have started Universal Credit and are not recorded (up to the reporting point) as having terminated their Universal Credit spell.

Section 5. Further roll out

The expansion of Universal Credit to couples and the whole of the north west of England will start in June 2014.