Claiming ‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit

‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance is a fortnightly payment that you can get on its own or at the same time as Universal Credit.

‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance is a contributory benefit. Normally, this means you’ll be able to get it if you’ve paid and/or been credited with enough National Insurance Contributions in the two full tax years before the year you’re claiming in.

If you are ill or have a health condition or disability that affects how much work you can do or stops you from working you may be able to get ‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance.

Eligibility

To get ‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance you usually need to have been working within the last 2 to 3 years, and have made (or been credited with) Class 1 National Insurance contributions (www.gov.uk/national-insurance). This can be through:

- employment
- self-employment
- other sources

You will also need to have a fit note (sometimes called ‘sick note’ or ‘doctor’s note’) but you can start making your claim before you have one. If you have only just become ill you can self-certify for the first 7 days.

You cannot claim ‘New Style’ ESA or Universal Credit if you get the severe disability premium, or are entitled to it, or you got or were entitled to the severe disability premium in the last month, and you’re still eligible for it. You might be able to claim other benefits (www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators).

How to claim

Fill in an NSESAF1 claim form to apply for ‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance. You can either:

- call the Universal Credit helpline to get one through the post or by email

If you can’t download the form or use the phone, you can get a claim form from your local Jobcentre Plus. You can also get the form in an accessible format, for example, braille, large print or audio CD by calling the Universal Credit helpline.

You may be required to attend a Work Capability Assessment to help DWP understand how your illness, health condition or disability affects your ability to work. If you’re claiming both Universal Credit and ‘New Style’ ESA, you’ll only attend one Work Capability Assessment.


How to claim


‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance

If you are ill or have a health condition or disability that affects how much work you can do or stops you from working you may be able to get ‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance.
Why should I claim ‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance?

Your (or your partner’s) savings will not affect how much ‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance you’re paid. If your partner works, it does not affect your claim.

Most income is not taken into account (but a personal pension can affect the amount you may get).

While you’re getting ‘New Style’ Employment and Support Allowance you’ll earn Class 1 National Insurance credits, which can help towards your State Pension and other contributory benefits in the future.

It is a regular fortnightly payment.

Below are some common situations that show what you may be able to claim depending on your circumstances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your situation</th>
<th>‘New Style’ ESA</th>
<th>Universal Credit</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You’ve lost your job and you’re too sick to work. You need help with living costs e.g. rent. You’ve paid and/or been credited with NI contributions in the last 2 to 3 years (employed or self-employed).</td>
<td>You can claim ‘New Style’ ESA – even if your partner works or you and your partner have savings over £16,000.</td>
<td>You can also claim Universal Credit if you (and your partner) have £16,000 or less in savings between you. Your partner’s income will be taken into account as you will need to claim Universal Credit as a couple. Universal Credit is a household assessment and you can receive an amount for children and housing costs. Any ‘New Style’ ESA you receive will also be taken into account as income but you may still get Universal Credit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You’ve lost your job and you’re too sick to work. You have not paid any NI contributions in the last 2 to 3 years.</td>
<td>You are unlikely to get ‘New Style’ ESA if you have not paid NI contributions.</td>
<td>You are unlikely to get Universal Credit because your savings are too high.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You’re ill and unable to work. You’ve paid and/or been credited with NI contributions in the last 2 to 3 years (employed or self-employed). Between you, you and your partner have more than £16,000 in savings.</td>
<td>You can claim ‘New Style’ ESA.</td>
<td>You can also claim Universal Credit as you and your partner have less than £16,000 in savings. Your partner’s income will be taken into account as you will need to claim Universal Credit as a couple. Universal Credit is a household assessment and you can receive an amount for children and housing costs. Any ‘New Style’ ESA you receive will also be taken into account as income but you may still get Universal Credit.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You’re ill and unable to work. You’ve paid and/or been credited with NI contributions in the last 2 to 3 years (employed or self-employed). Your partner works. Between you, you and your partner have less than £16,000 in savings.</td>
<td>You can claim ‘New Style’ ESA. as your partner’s work does not affect it.</td>
<td>If you and your partner have less than £16,000 of savings you might also get Universal Credit. This is because Universal Credit looks at your earnings not the number of hours you work.</td>
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<td>You work but you’re off sick and your Statutory Sick Pay has ended. You’ve paid and/or been credited with NI contributions in the last 2 to 3 years (employed or self-employed).</td>
<td>You can claim ‘New Style’ ESA.</td>
<td>If you and your partner have less than £16,000 of savings you might also get Universal Credit. Your pension income will be taken into account. Any ‘New Style’ ESA you receive will also be taken into account as income but you may still get Universal Credit.</td>
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<td>You’re ill and unable to work. You receive pension income from previous employment. You’ve paid and/or been credited with NI contributions in the last 2 to 3 years (employed or self-employed).</td>
<td>You can claim ‘New Style’ ESA. Your pension income may be taken into account.</td>
<td>You can also claim Universal Credit as it is a household assessment and you can receive an amount for children.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You’re ill and unable to work. You have children. You’ve paid and/or been credited with NI contributions in the last 2 to 3 years (employed or self-employed).</td>
<td>You can claim ‘New Style’ ESA as you have paid NI contributions so may qualify. ‘New Style’ ESA does not include additional amounts for children.</td>
<td>You can also claim Universal Credit, as it is a household assessment and you can receive an amount for your housing costs (<a href="http://www.gov.uk/housing-and-universal-credit">www.gov.uk/housing-and-universal-credit</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’re ill and unable to work. You live in rented accommodation, or have a mortgage or home loan, and need help to pay the cost. You’ve paid and/or been credited with NI contributions in the last 2 to 3 years (employed or self-employed).</td>
<td>You can claim ‘New Style’ ESA as you have paid NI contributions so may qualify. ‘New Style’ ESA does not include an additional amount for housing costs.</td>
<td>You can also claim Universal Credit, as it is a household assessment and you can receive an amount for your housing costs (<a href="http://www.gov.uk/housing-and-universal-credit">www.gov.uk/housing-and-universal-credit</a>).</td>
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