

# Universal Credit – experimental official statistics to August 2014

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## Introduction

Universal Credit 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

## Key findings

Please note that this release contains finalised data for starters up to the second Thursday in August and finalised caseload data for each month from May 2013 to July 2014 based on a count date of the second Thursday of each month. Provisional caseload figures are also available for August 2014 (again, based on a 'count date' of the second Thursday of the month). This is an improvement of approximately six weeks, for finalised starters and provisional caseload figures and two weeks for finalised caseload figures, on the timeliness of the official statistics previously published.

Provisional figures will be finalised within the next monthly release.

## Starters

- Between April 2013 and August 2014<sup>1</sup>, a total of **13,260** people have started Universal Credit.
- The majority of starters to Universal Credit were males, nearly **70%**, and most, over **60%** were under 25 years old.

## Caseload

- Provisional caseload figures show that as at August 2014<sup>1</sup>, a total of **11,070** people were on the Universal Credit
- Over **80%** of the Universal Credit caseload were from Jobcentre Offices in the North West

<sup>1</sup> Statistics relate to the 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014 - please see the [Methodology](#) section

## In this Summary

There are some changes to the reporting periods in this release – please see the **Methodology** section for more details. These changes align reporting periods with the reporting periods for the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Claimant Count statistical series, and allow more timely statistics to be released.

This Summary contains statistics on Universal Credit covering the period to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014 (the ‘count date’) covering the 39 Jobcentre Offices and 10 Jobcentre Districts who had implemented Universal Credit up to this date (see **Section 5 – Further Roll Out** for more details). 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 and accepted their Claimant Commitment<sup>2</sup>. The reporting month in relation to **starts** to Universal Credit relates to a period from the second Friday in the previous month to the second Thursday in the current month, e.g. for August 2014 the starts recorded relate to the period 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014 to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014.
- 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 ‘count date’. A termination would be recorded either at the request of the individual or if their entitlement to Universal Credit ends, for example, they no longer satisfy the financial conditions to receive Universal Credit as they have capital over £16,000, or increased earnings which reduce their award to zero for six consecutive months. The latest overall Universal Credit caseload figure reported in this release relates to the second Thursday in August, i.e. 14<sup>th</sup> August. Please note that this figure is provisional and will be finalised in the next release (although the expectation is that the provisional figure will be within one per cent of the final figure).

**It is important to note that although new claims for Universal Credit were initially restricted to single, unemployed people without children these statistics include all people claiming Universal Credit, 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. Work is being undertaken within DWP to publish statistics that distinguish between these two groups by Autumn 2014.**

**The ONS they have already begun to produce an adjusted version of the Claimant Count<sup>3</sup>, which is a measure of the number of people who are claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed, using information contained within this publication.**

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/universal-credit-and-your-claimant-commitment-quick-guide>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/method-quality/specific/labour-market/claimant-count/indicative-representation-of-the-claimant-count-including-universal-credit-caseload-guidance-document.pdf>

## Future Releases

The next release of Universal Credit statistics will be on 15 October 2014 and will contain data to 11 September 2014.

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

## Table of Contents

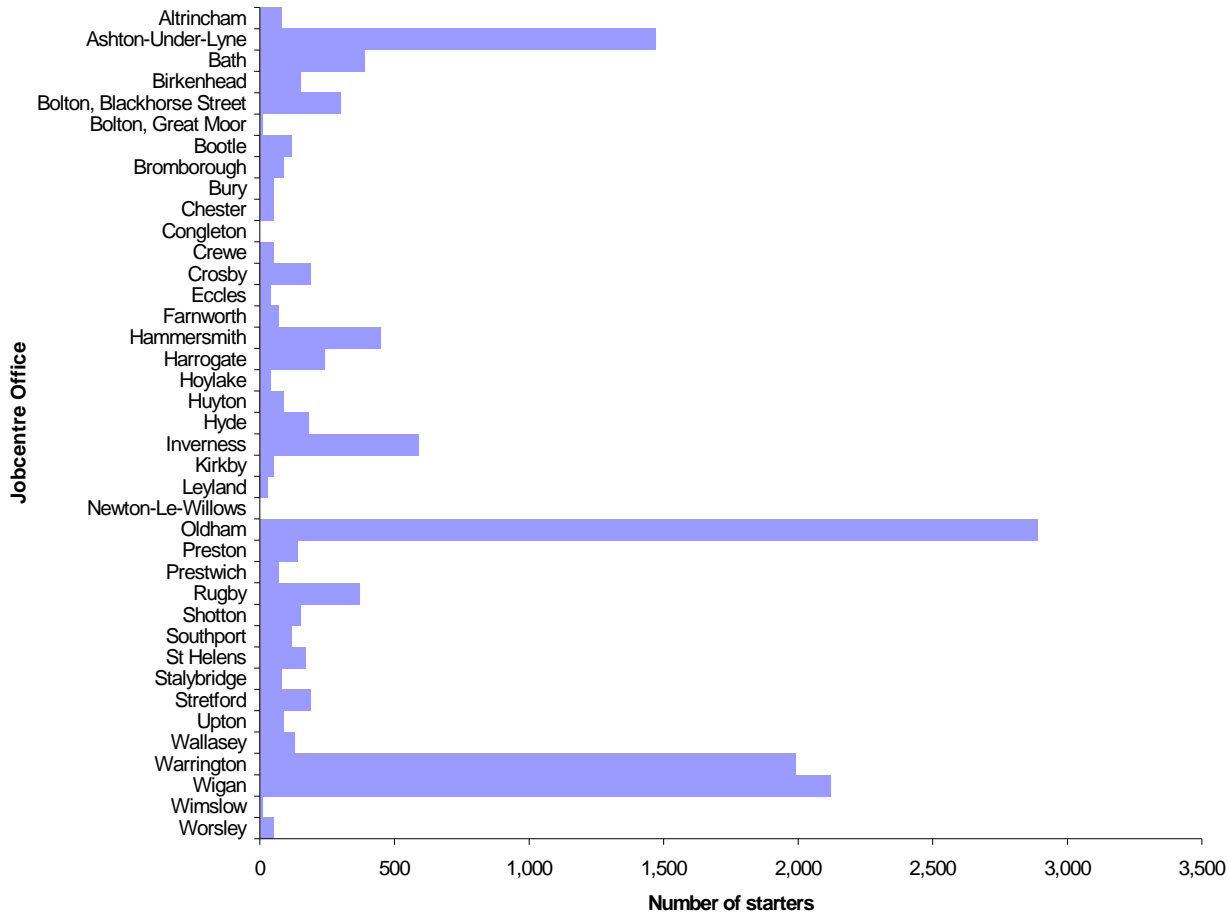
<b>SECTION 1. OFFICIAL STATISTICS AND COMMENTARY .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1A. ANALYSIS OF STARTERS .....	3
1B: ANALYSIS OF CASELOAD .....	4
<b>SECTION 2. TABLES ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT STARTERS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>SECTION 3. TABLES ON UNIVERSAL CREDIT CASELOAD .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>SECTION 4. METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>8</b>
4A. DATA SOURCE .....	8
4B. DEFINITIONS USED .....	8
<b>SECTION 5. FURTHER ROLL OUT .....</b>	<b>9</b>

# Section 1. Official statistics and commentary

\*\* Further breakdowns are available for some of the charts below in the accompanying Excel tables.

## 1a. Analysis of starters

Chart 1.1 Universal Credit starters, cumulative to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014, by Jobcentre Office



## Key messages

- Between 29<sup>th</sup> April 2013 and 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014, a total of **13,260** people have started on Universal Credit;
- Over **60%** 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;
- Nearly **70%** of starters to Universal Credit were males.

**Table 2.1** and **Supplementary Table 1.1** show a time series of monthly starts to Universal Credit, split by Jobcentre district.

- These show that the number of new on-flows has increased over the last 3 months with a significant increase in the latest month. This is mainly due to number of offices which have now implemented Universal Credit however the numbers have also risen in offices where Universal Credit was in operation prior to this point.
- By August 2014 the highest number of new starters in that month, were in Greater Manchester East and West followed by Merseyside.

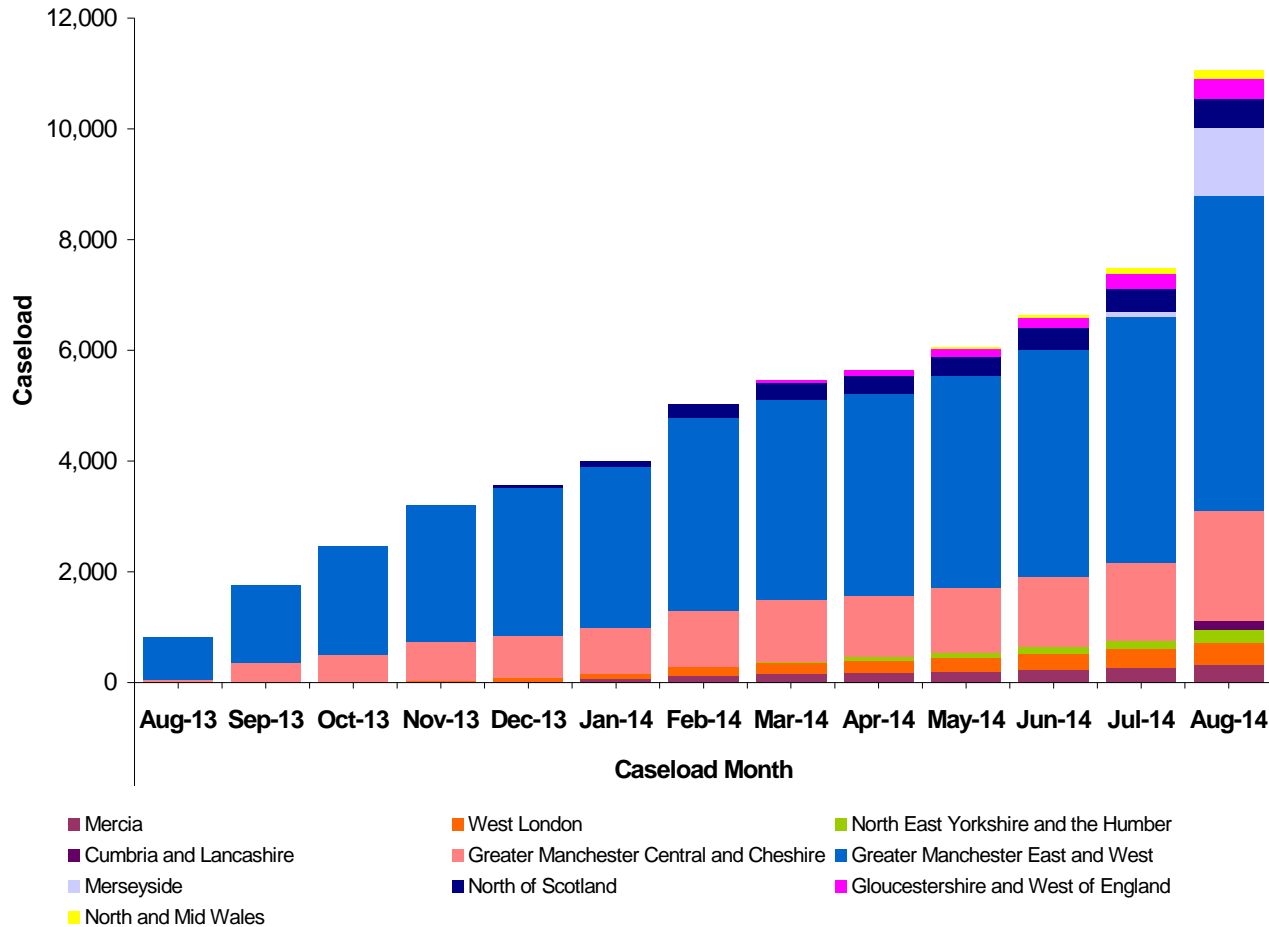
**Chart 1.1, Table 2.2 and Supplementary Tables (1.2 to 1.4)** show the cumulative number of new starters. During the period April 2013 to August 2014 **13,260** people started on the benefit. The majority of new starters were from offices in the four districts in the North West (Greater Manchester East and West, Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire, Merseyside and Cumbria and Lancashire) which had more than one office where Universal Credit was live. The other six districts had only one office in operation which is the main reason why the numbers for these areas were lower.

**Table 2.2 and Supplementary Tables 1.2 and 1.4** show the proportion of the cumulative Universal Credit starters by gender, in the period looked at by this release you can see that nearly **70%** were males.

## 1b: Analysis of caseload

*Figures for August 2014 are provisional figures and will be finalised within the next monthly release.*

Chart 1.3: Universal Credit caseload, as at end of month, by Jobcentre District: Aug-13 to Aug-14



## Key messages

- On the 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014, the total caseload of Universal Credit claimants was **11,070** people;
- Nearly **60%** of the Universal Credit caseload on 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014 are younger people, under the age of 25. **Chart 1.3, Table 3.1 and Supplementary Table 2.1** show the time series of the monthly caseloads of Universal Credit. The highest caseload as at August 2014 is in Greater Manchester East and West followed by Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire.
- The caseload has shown a similar pattern to the figures for starters in that there has been a significant increase in the latest month.

**Chart 1.4, Table 3.1 and Supplementary Table 2.1** show the percentage of August 2014's caseload of Universal Credit, split by age. These show that over **60%** of claimants of Universal Credit in the latest month were under 25.

**Table 3.2, Table 3.3 and Supplementary Tables (2.2 to 2.7)** break the Universal Credit caseload, at 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014, down by further geographies (based on the latest held address of the claimant)

For further details of the Jobcentre Offices and Districts that have now implemented Universal Credit please see **Section 5 – Further Roll Out.**

## Section 2. Tables on Universal Credit starters

\*\* Further breakdowns of statistics in the tables below are available in the accompanying Excel tables \*\*

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.

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 District/Office.

**Table 2.1 Monthly numbers of starters to Universal Credit, Mar-14 to Aug-14**

		Start Month					
		Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14
<b>Total</b>		<b>780</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>880</b>	<b>3,650</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	560	440	390	450	560	2,420
	Female	230	180	160	190	330	1,220
<b>Age</b>	16-24	460	360	310	350	580	2,190
	25-49	290	230	200	240	270	1,240
	50+	40	40	30	30	40	220
<b>District</b>	Mercia	50	30	20	40	40	60
	West London	50	30	40	40	40	80
	North East Yorkshire and the Humber	20	40	30	40	30	70
	Cumbria and Lancashire	.	.	.	.	.	170
	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	160	100	90	100	170	580
	Greater Manchester East and West	390	300	260	290	380	1,270
	Merseyside	.	.	.	.	70	1,170
	North of Scotland	70	50	30	40	60	80
	Gloucestershire and West of England	40	60	50	60	70	110
	North and Mid Wales	.	-	20	30	40	60

**Table 2.2 Cumulative numbers of starters to Universal Credit, Mar-14 to Aug-14**

		Start Month					
		Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,940</b>	<b>7,560</b>	<b>8,100</b>	<b>8,730</b>	<b>9,610</b>	<b>13,260</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	4,840	5,280	5,660	6,110	6,660	9,090
	Female	2,100	2,280	2,440	2,620	2,950	4,170
<b>Age</b>	16-24	4,490	4,850	5,160	5,510	6,090	8,270
	25-49	2,180	2,410	2,610	2,850	3,120	4,350
	50+	260	300	340	370	410	630
<b>District</b>	Mercia	180	220	240	280	310	370
	West London	230	260	290	330	370	450
	North East Yorkshire and the Humber	20	70	100	140	170	240
	Cumbria and Lancashire	.	.	.	.	.	170
	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	1,400	1,500	1,590	1,690	1,860	2,440
	Greater Manchester East and West	4,740	5,040	5,300	5,590	5,970	7,230
	Merseyside	.	.	.	.	70	1,230
	North of Scotland	330	380	410	450	510	590
	Gloucestershire and West of England	40	100	150	210	270	390
	North and Mid Wales	.	-	20	50	90	150

## Section 3. Tables on Universal Credit caseload

*Figures for August 2014 are provisional figures and will be finalised within the next monthly release.*

**Table 3.1 Caseload of Universal Credit, Mar-14 to Aug-14**

		Caseload Month					
		Mar-14	Apr-14	May-14	Jun-14	Jul-14	Aug-14
<b>Total</b>		<b>5,450</b>	<b>5,640</b>	<b>6,060</b>	<b>6,630</b>	<b>7,460</b>	<b>11,070</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	3,830	3,950	4,240	4,650	5,160	7,570
	Female	1,620	1,690	1,810	1,980	2,300	3,500
<b>Age</b>	16-24	3,430	3,500	3,690	4,000	4,510	6,610
	25-49	1,800	1,900	2,080	2,320	2,600	3,880
	50+	210	240	280	310	350	580
<b>District</b>	Mercia	160	180	200	240	270	320
	West London	200	220	250	280	330	400
	North East Yorkshire and the Humber	20	60	90	130	160	230
	Cumbria and Lancashire	.	.	.	.	-	170
	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	1,110	1,110	1,170	1,260	1,410	1,990
	Greater Manchester East and West	3,630	3,660	3,840	4,110	4,450	5,690
	Merseyside	.	.	.	.	70	1,230
	North of Scotland	290	310	340	380	430	510
	Gloucestershire and West of England	40	100	140	190	260	370
North and Mid Wales	.	-	20	50	90	150	
<b>Duration</b>	Up to 3 months	2,550	2,500	2,090	1,790	2,050	5,050
	3 - 6 months	1,780	1,630	2,080	2,330	2,400	1,860
	More than 6 months	1,110	1,510	1,880	2,510	3,010	4,170

**Table 3.2 Universal Credit Caseload by Local Authority: 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014**

Local Authority	Caseload	Local Authority	Caseload
Oldham	2,240	Bury	140
Wigan	1,560	Knowsley	130
Warrington	1,480	Preston	110
Tameside	1,250	Salford	90
Highland (Islands)	500	Cheshire East	60
Wirral	490	South Ribble	60
Sefton	440	Cheshire West and Chester	50
Bolton	360	West Lancashire	20
Hammersmith & Fulham	360	Kensington & Chelsea	20
Bath & North East Somerset	350	Manchester	20
Rugby	310	Halton	10
Trafford	260	Rochdale	10
Harrogate	220	Birmingham	10
St. Helens	200	Other local authority <sup>5</sup>	200
Flintshire	140		

**Table 3.2 Universal Credit Caseload by Parliamentary Constituency: 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014**

<b>Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Caseload</b>	<b>Parliamentary Constituency</b>	<b>Caseload</b>
Oldham West and Royton	1,170	Preston	80
Ashton-under-Lyne	950	Altrincham and Sale West	80
Wigan	930	Wirral South	70
Oldham East and Saddleworth	900	Worsley and Eccles South	60
Warrington North	780	Bolton West	50
Warrington South	710	South Ribble	40
Makerfield	610	Bury North	40
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	460	City of Chester	40
Hammersmith	360	Crewe and Nantwich	40
Rugby	300	Skipton and Ripon	40
Denton and Reddish	240	Ross, Skye and Lochaber	40
Bootle	240	Salford and Eccles	30
Bath	230	Ribble Valley	20
Stalybridge and Hyde	230	Wyre and Preston North	20
Birkenhead	190	Wythenshawe and Sale East	20
Bolton South East	180	Kensington	20
Harrogate and Knaresborough	180	West Lancashire	20
Stretford and Urmston	160	Congleton	10
Wallasey	150	Leigh	10
Alyn and Deeside	140	Tatton	10
Bolton North East	130	Weaver Vale	10
North East Somerset	120	Eddisbury	10
St Helens North	120	Manchester Central	10
Knowsley	110	Rochdale	10
St Helens South and Whiston	110	Blackley and Broughton	10
Sefton Central	110	Ellesmere Port and Neston	10
Bury South	100	Manchester, Withington	10
Southport	90	Selby and Ainsty	10
Wirral West	80	Other Parliamentary Constituency <sup>5</sup>	220

<sup>5</sup>Note 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 data from systems within local offices and records of Universal Credit benefit payments made by the Department.

This and other 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 therefore been badged as being Experimental Statistics<sup>6</sup>. Users are invited to comment on the development and relevancy of these statistics at this stage.

### 4b. Definitions used

A starter to Universal Credit is defined as an individual who has completed the Universal Credit claim process and accepted their Claimant Commitment. This reflects the number of individuals who have actually started Universal Credit.

Figures show the first successful claim per individual. Subsequent claims by the same individual will not be counted in this release. Work is currently ongoing to identify and include these cases in future publications. The number of individuals with multiple starts to Universal Credit, up to the reporting point, is negligible.

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. A termination would be recorded either at the request of the individual or if their entitlement to Universal Credit ends, for example, they no longer satisfy the financial conditions to receive Universal Credit as they have capital over £16,000, or increased earnings which reduce their award to zero.

Previous releases of official statistics on Universal Credit related to a 'count date' of the last day of the month (for example, 31<sup>st</sup> May 2014). For this release, and future releases, the count date will relate to the second Thursday of the month. This aligns the count date used by the ONS Claimant Count statistics, and also enables more timely information to be released on Universal Credit.

The reporting month in relation to **starts** to Universal Credit relates to a period from the second Friday in the previous month to the second Thursday in the current month, e.g. for August 2014 the starts recorded relate to the period 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014 to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014.

The reporting month for **caseload** figures relates to the second Thursday in that month i.e. for August 2014 it will be the number of people on the Universal Credit caseload as at 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014.

The table below shows the Universal Credit caseload figures using both count dates from the beginning of 2014, so that users can assess the impact of this change.

Reporting Month	Previously published figures (last day of the month)	Published figures (second Thursday of the month)
Jan-14	4,690	4,010
Feb-14	5,230	5,020
Mar-14	5,580	5,450
Apr-14	6,000	5,640
May-14	6,570	6,060
Jun-14	Not Available	6,630

<sup>6</sup> For further details of experimental statistics, see: <http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/news/assessment-and-designation-of-experimental-statistics.html>



## Section 5. Further roll out

Universal Credit, which is already available in a number of areas<sup>7</sup> across England, Scotland and Wales, continued its roll out across the North West of England from 23rd June 2014. From 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014 Universal Credit also expanded to include claims from couples

Universal Credit will continue its roll out to Jobcentres in the North West until the whole region is covered. In total 90 Jobcentres, or 1 in 8 Jobcentres in Britain, will offer the service once the North West expansion has been completed. There were a total of 39 offices delivering Universal Credit in the period in which these statistics cover.

Further information can be found in the table below and at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/north-west-universal-credit-expansion>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/universal-credit-to-take-the-first-new-claims-for-couples>

**Table 5.1 Universal Credit Jobcentre Office and District by implementation date: 29<sup>th</sup> April 2013 to 14<sup>th</sup> August 2014**

Jobcentre Office	Jobcentre District	Implementation Date
Ashton-Under-Lyne	Greater Manchester East and West	29 <sup>th</sup> April 2013
Wigan	Greater Manchester East and West	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2013
Warrington	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2013
Oldham	Greater Manchester East and West	29 <sup>th</sup> July 2013
Hammersmith	West London	28 <sup>th</sup> October 2013
Rugby	Mercia	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
Inverness	North of Scotland	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
Harrogate	North East Yorkshire and the Humber	24 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
Bath	Gloucestershire and West of England	24 <sup>th</sup> February 2014
Shotton	North and Mid Wales	7 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
Hyde	Greater Manchester East and West	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Stalybridge	Greater Manchester East and West	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Stretford	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Altrincham	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014
Southport	Merseyside	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Crosby	Merseyside	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Bootle	Merseyside	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Bolton, Great Moor Street	Greater Manchester East and West	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Bolton, Blackhorse Street	Greater Manchester East and West	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Farnworth	Greater Manchester East and West	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2014
Birkenhead	Merseyside	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Bromborough	Merseyside	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Hoylake	Merseyside	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Upton	Merseyside	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Wallasey	Merseyside	7 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Leyland	Cumbria and Lancashire	14 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Preston	Cumbria and Lancashire	14 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Bury	Greater Manchester East and West	14 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Prestwich	Greater Manchester East and West	14 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Eccles	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2014
Worsley	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2014
Huyton	Merseyside	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2014
Kirkby	Merseyside	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2014
St Helens	Merseyside	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2014
Newton-Le-Willows	Merseyside	21 <sup>st</sup> July 2014
Chester	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	28 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Congleton	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	28 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Crewe	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	28 <sup>th</sup> July 2014
Wilmslow	Greater Manchester Central and Cheshire	28 <sup>th</sup> July 2014

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/jobcentres-where-you-can-claim-universal-credit>