

Universal Credit – experimental official statistics to February 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 28th February 2014, a total of 5,910 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 28th February 2014, a total of 5,180 people were on the Universal Credit caseload.
- Over 6 in 10 of the Universal Credit caseload on 28th February 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 28th February 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 reporting month in relation to the caseload on Universal Credit 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 28th February 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. Please note that Harrogate and Bath only went live on 24th February 2014 therefore these statistics will only cover the first few days of Universal Credit in these offices. 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 June 2014 and will contain data to 31 March 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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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 28th February 2014, by age band

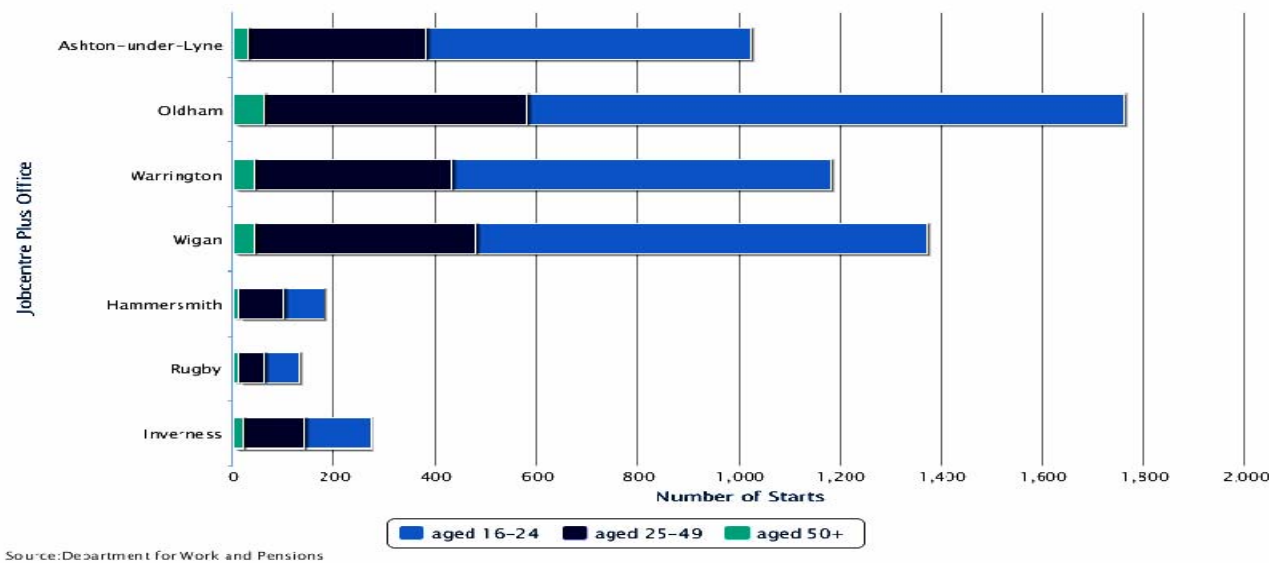
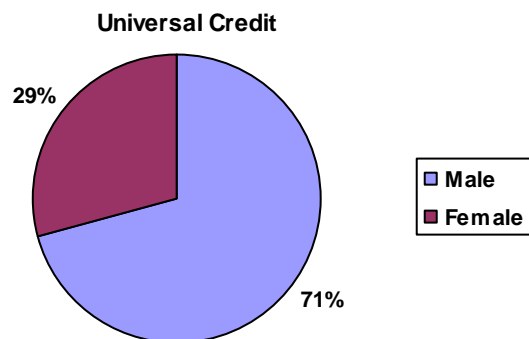


Chart 1.2: Universal Credit starters, cumulative to 28th February 2014, by gender



Key messages

- Between April 2013 and 28th February 2014, a total of 5,910 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 any 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.

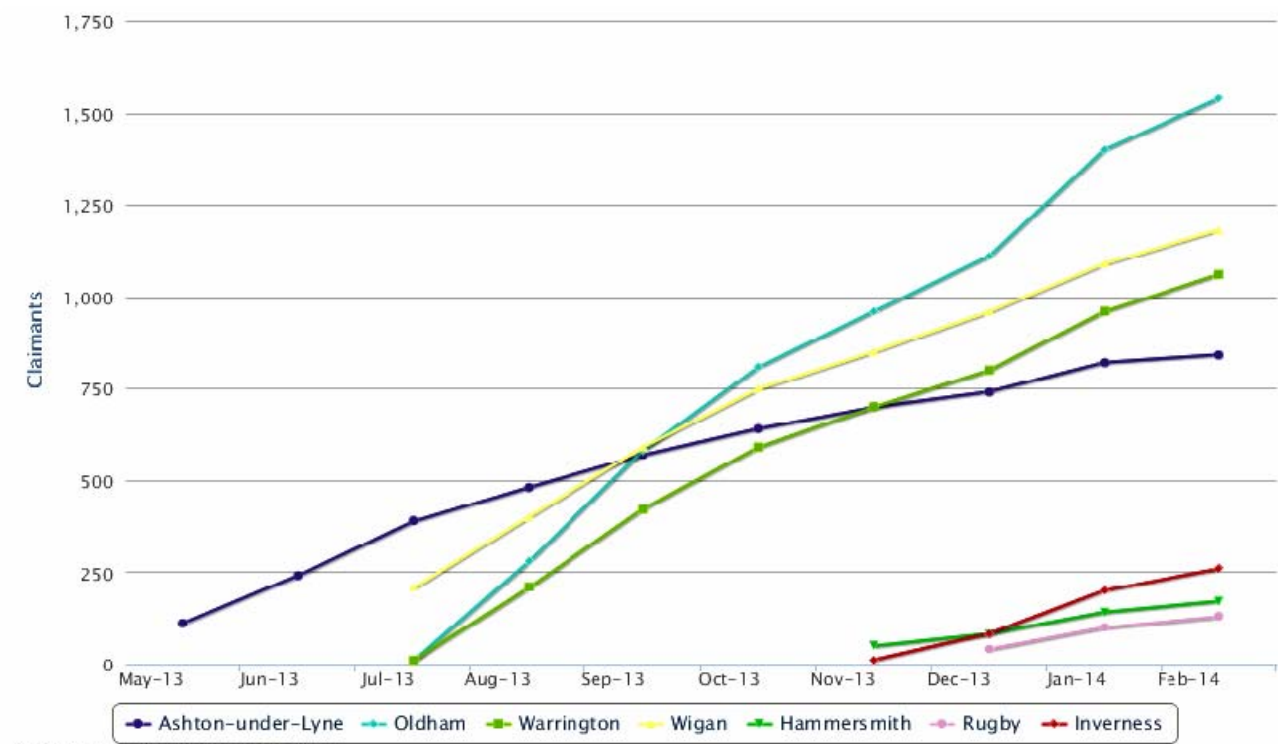
- This shows that in general each office showed an initial increase of new on-flows in the first few months of going live.
- By February 2014 the highest number of new starters, in that month, were in Oldham, followed by Warrington and then Wigan.

Chart 1.1 shows the cumulative number of new starters. During the period May to February 2014 5,910 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.

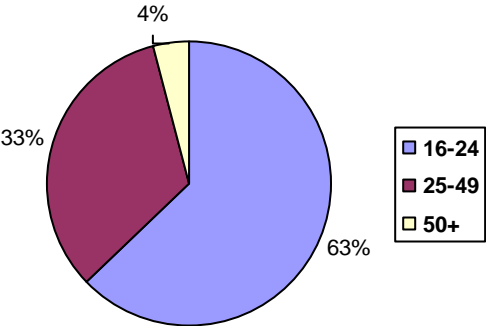
1b: Analysis of caseload

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



Source: Department for Work and Pensions

Chart 1.4: Universal Credit caseload, at 28th February 2014, by age band



Key messages

- On the 28th February 2014, the total caseload of Universal Credit claimants was 5,180 people;
- Over 6 in 10 claimants of the Universal Credit caseload on 28th February 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 February is in Oldham, followed by Wigan.

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

Table 3.2 and **3.3** break the Universal Credit caseload, at 28th February 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
Total		120	120	400	780	900	740	650	630	990	590
Gender	Male	80	90	250	530	630	540	460	460	700	440
	Female	40	40	150	250	270	200	180	170	290	150
Age	16-24	70	80	280	540	630	460	400	340	570	350
	25-49	40	40	110	220	250	250	220	240	370	220
	50+	-	-	10	20	20	20	30	40	50	30
Jobcentre Office	Ashton-Under-Lyne	120	120	170	100	120	100	80	60	100	50
	Wigan	.	.	210	200	220	180	150	130	160	120
	Warrington	.	.	10	210	220	190	140	110	180	110
	Oldham	.	.	10	270	340	270	210	180	320	160
	Hammersmith	.	.	.	.	.	-	50	40	60	30
	Rugby	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	40	50	40
	Inverness	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	70	120	70
	Harrogate	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-
	Bath	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-

Table 2.2 Cumulative numbers of starters to Universal Credit

		2013								2014	
		May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Total		120	240	640	1,420	2,320	3,060	3,710	4,330	5,320	5,910
Gender	Male	80	170	420	950	1,590	2,130	2,590	3,040	3,740	4,180
	Female	40	70	220	470	740	940	1,120	1,290	1,580	1,730
Age	16-24	70	150	430	970	1,610	2,070	2,470	2,810	3,390	3,740
	25-49	40	80	190	410	650	910	1,130	1,370	1,740	1,950
	50+	-	10	20	40	60	80	110	150	200	220
Jobcentre Office	Ashton-Under-Lyne	120	240	410	510	630	720	810	870	970	1,030
	Wigan	.	.	210	410	630	810	960	1,090	1,240	1,360
	Warrington	.	.	10	220	440	640	780	890	1,070	1,180
	Oldham	.	.	10	280	630	890	1,100	1,280	1,600	1,760
	Hammersmith	.	.	.	.	.	-	50	90	150	180
	Rugby	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	50	100	140
	Inverness	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	80	200	270
	Harrogate	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-
	Bath	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-

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
Total		110	240	620	1,370	2,170	2,790	3,270	3,810	4,700	5,180
Gender	Male	80	160	410	910	1,480	1,950	2,300	2,690	3,320	3,680
	Female	40	70	210	460	690	840	970	1,120	1,380	1,500
Age	16-24	70	150	430	950	1,510	1,890	2,170	2,460	2,970	3,260
	25-49	40	80	180	380	600	820	1,000	1,220	1,550	1,720
	50+	-	10	20	40	50	70	100	140	180	210
Jobcentre Office	Ashton-Under-Lyne	110	240	390	480	570	640	700	740	820	840
	Wigan	.	.	210	400	590	750	850	960	1,090	1,180
	Warrington	.	.	10	210	420	590	700	800	960	1,060
	Oldham	.	.	10	280	580	810	960	1,110	1,400	1,540
	Hammersmith	.	.	.	.	.	-	50	80	140	170
	Rugby	.	.	.	.	.	.	-	40	100	130
	Inverness	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	80	200	260
	Harrogate	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-
	Bath	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	-
Duration	Up to 3 months	110	240	620	1,270	1,960	2,210	2,110	1,880	2,150	2,150
	3 - 6 month	.	.	10	100	210	560	1,070	1,730	2,020	1,980
	More than 6 months	.	.	.	.	.	10	90	210	530	1,050

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

	28 th February
Oldham	1,530
Wigan	1,130
Warrington UA	1,010
Tameside	820
Highland	260
Hammersmith and Fulham	160
Rugby	130
St. Helens	40
Halton UA	10
Kensington and Chelsea	10
Manchester	10
Rochdale	10
West Lancashire	10
Other local authority¹	70

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

	28th February
Oldham West and Royton	790
Ashton-under-Lyne	760
Wigan	660
Oldham East and Saddleworth	610
Warrington North	550
Makerfield	470
Warrington South	460
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	230
Hammersmith	160
Rugby	130
Denton and Reddish	120
Stalybridge and Hyde	70
St Helens North	40
Ross, Skye and Lochaber	20
Halton	10
Kensington	10
Leigh	10
Manchester Central	10
Weaver Vale	10
West Lancashire	10
Other constituency ¹	90

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 data from systems within local offices and records of Universal Credit payments made by the Department.

These are the first set of official statistics to be released on Universal Credit, using a new data source and a new methodology. The 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 Statistics. Users are invited to comment on the development and relevancy of these statistics at this stage.

As the data available for Universal Credit evolves over time, the methodology used and definitions may develop also. Users of these statistics are, therefore, asked to note the status as experimental official statistics² and that subsequent releases may include revisions to the time series already released.

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.