

Going abroad

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Introduction

British citizens, except those who have been abroad for more than one month, will be considered habitually resident if they have been continually resident in the Common Travel Area (UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and the Republic of Ireland). The normal Universal Credit entitlement, conditionality and sanctions rules will apply.

British citizens returning to the UK after being abroad for more than a month have to satisfy the Habitual Residence Test. [See e-HRT](#). The Universal Credit payment award is not exportable and cannot be paid abroad in any circumstances.

Temporary absences abroad

There is a basic requirement to be in Great Britain in order to be entitled to Universal Credit, but there are limited exceptions under which a person is still entitled to Universal Credit whilst temporarily absent from Great Britain.

When a Universal Credit claimant leaves Great Britain a check must be made to see if the claimant's absence falls within one of the exceptions. The exceptions are:

- absences that are not expected to exceed, and do not exceed one month which can be extended by a further month where a close relative dies whilst abroad (this is the case when the Secretary of State considers that it would be unreasonable to expect the claimant to return to GB within that month)
- absences that are not expected to exceed, and do not exceed six months where the person is receiving medical treatment or accompanying a close relative who is receiving such treatment
- absences that are not expected to exceed, and do not exceed six months where the person is a mariner or continental shelf worker

Going on holiday

If a non-European Economic Area (EEA) national is entitled to Universal Credit prior to going abroad for a short holiday and the absence does not exceed more than 1 month, then they are not required to verify their immigration status through the non-standard claimant process.

If an EEA national with a permanent right of residence leaves the UK for a period abroad that does not fall into the rights for temporary absence then their right of permanent residence needs to be re-verified through the Habitual Residence Test.

An EEA national automatically loses their right of permanent residence if they have been absent from UK for a period exceeding 2 consecutive years.

If a family member with a permanent right of residence leaves the UK for a period abroad that does not fall into the rights for temporary absence then their right of permanent residence needs to be re-verified. They must go through the non-standard claimant process for migrants.

Being on holiday would not be considered good reason for not carrying out any work search, preparation or availability requirements.

If a claimant is unable to accept a Claimant Commitment as part of their new claim to Universal Credit and would fail the good reason test because they have gone on holiday abroad, they should be required to make a new claim. This is because they do not have entitlement to Universal Credit if they are not available to accept their Claimant Commitment.

For more information around absences see [Temporary absences \(in development\)](#).

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