

Requirement to accept a claimant commitment

Accepting the Claimant Commitment

If a claimant attends the office for their initial commitment meeting, they should be asked if they accept the content of their claimant commitment. If they say yes they should be encouraged and influenced to accept their commitments whilst in the office, using a Web Access Device or their own device. This is in the best interests of the claimant to help ensure they are paid promptly.

Cooling off period

If a claimant is unable to accept the commitment in the office (or does not accept the content of the commitment) it must be explained that failure to accept within 7 calendar days will result in the claim being closed.

If claimants do not accept a claimant commitment they are not entitled to Universal Credit. This means that the claimant and their partner where relevant, will not receive any Universal Credit. This includes all payments, for example housing and child payments.

Second Opinion

A claimant may request a second opinion on the detail and reasonableness of work availability and work search requirements they have been set. Only one request is allowed for every new or updated commitment. This is only relevant to claimants subject to intensive conditionality.

Where a second opinion review means the commitment is amended, the original date of claim should stand. Where the second opinion review does not amend the commitment, the claimant should accept the original version and the date of claim becomes the date of acceptance.

If the commitment is not accepted, a condition of entitlement has not been met and the claim should be closed.

Each time a commitment is updated with new requirements the claimant will have the ability to ask for a review of their requirements. This will involve a different person interviewing the claimant to review the commitment that the claimant has not accepted. If they decide that the requirements originally set were reasonable, the claim will be ended and the claimant will need to submit a new claim.

If it is decided that the original requirements were unreasonable, they should be amended and a new commitment created. If the claimant does not accept this commitment they are advised that the claim will end. This includes where this is a couple claim.

During the review period the claimant should be informed of the consequences of not accepting their commitment and their partner should be informed that their claim will also close. The review process will supersede the cooling off period of 5 working days. If a review finds the claimant's concerns meritless then a new claim will be required (even if the full 5 days of a cooling period have not yet expired).

Requirement to accept a claimant commitment / temporary removal

There may be circumstances where the requirement to accept a commitment is temporarily removed. This is expected only when the claimant is prevented from accepting due to exceptional circumstances. An example is where the claimant is suddenly or unexpectedly incapacitated or where there is administrative failure or crisis. Once the crisis is over, a commitment will need to be accepted.

Where the claimant lacks capacity and are either physically or mentally unable to accept a commitment and this is unlikely to change we will lift the requirement to accept one.

Appointees are not able to accept a commitment on behalf of a claimant.

Examples where the requirement can be temporarily lifted are:

- a person is undergoing medical treatment as an in-patient in a hospital
- a claimant or office has an exceptional domestic emergency such as fire or flood
- the office the person would be required to attend to accept their commitment is closed and alternative arrangements are not possible

This list is not complete and is to show some circumstances that are exceptional.

[Back to Claimant Commitment hub](#)