



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

Ministerial  
Correspondence  
Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
LONDON  
SW1H 9DA

0207 340 4000

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

[ministers@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ministers@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)

Lord Kirkwood

19<sup>th</sup> November 2018

Dear Archie,

I am writing to you on matters raised during the Statement that I made to the House on Universal Credit on 5th November.

You asked whether I could explain the sentence in the Secretary of State's Statement that deals with the minimum one-month period becoming a minimum of three months and in what circumstances someone could claim to need that.

We have made a number of positive changes to the original draft recommendations, which all help to ensure that people make a successful claim to Universal Credit during the managed migration process.

In this instance, the original draft regulations set a minimum of one month for a claim to be made. This has been changed after listening to stakeholders, who advised that vulnerable claimants and those who may find it difficult to make a claim, i.e., claimants who have disabilities, may need longer. For example, claimants may need additional time while they seek support from third parties to help them to make a claim. The revised draft regulations now set a minimum of three months for a UC claim to be made.

This minimum three-month period will apply to all claimants. However, during the testing of the managed migration process from July 2019, the Department will consider whether the minimum period of three months is suitable for all claimants or whether it needs extending if it becomes evident that certain claimants require more than three months to make a Universal Credit claim.

As well as the ability to extend the minimum period that a claimant has to

make a Universal Credit claim, the draft regulations also allow for this period to be extended if a claimant has a good reason. Circumstances that may be treated as good reason may include:

- having a mental-health condition;
- being disadvantaged (e.g., is homeless; has a disability; has learning difficulties
- having a domestic emergency; or
- having caring responsibilities.

This list is not exhaustive and each case will be considered on its merits, taking individual circumstances into account.

There is also no limit to the number of times that a claimant may ask for an extension to the deadline date. However, on each occasion, claimants must demonstrate a good reason for the extension to be agreed.

I hope you find this letter helpful. I have copied it to all peers who spoke in the debate and will place a copy in the House Library.

*Best wishes,  
Perd*

**BARONESS BUSCOMBE**

**MINISTER FOR WORK AND PENSIONS (LORDS)**