

Fail to attend

Contents

[The requirement to attend](#)

[Failure to attend initial evidence interview](#)

[Failure to attend personal security number appointment](#)

[Failure to attend habitual residence test interview](#)

[Failure to attend first commitments meeting](#)

[Failure to attend work focused interviews](#)

[Failure to attend a self-employment gateway or quarterly review interview](#)

[Non-mandatory work-focused appointments](#)

[Reasons for missing interviews](#)

[Sanctions overview](#)

The requirement to attend

Universal Credit claimants are required to attend appointments when they make a new claim and at intervals during their claim.

Claimants are also expected to notify DWP in good time, if they cannot attend an interview. Where a claimant fails to attend they are contacted to find out the reasons for their non-attendance.

Where a claimant fails to attend can they be contacted

If a claimant fails to attend and cannot be contacted they must be informed they have seven days to provide a reason and that they should book a new appointment. The message also explains that their payment may be affected if they fail to attend that new appointment without good reason.

All the options for engaging with the claimant must be explored, including by exception, a home visit, if appropriate, before a sanction can be considered. Home visit referrals must be made immediately, when needed, especially where a claimant is known to have complex needs a health condition or a vulnerability.

Staff will not proactively rebook subsequent appointments. They must only be booked if contact is established with the claimant and they agree to the appointment being rebooked.

When a claimant fails to tell us why they have not attended, a decision is needed to determine if an open ended sanction should be applied.

Considerations for all those who fail to attend

Where a claimant fails to attend the following must be considered:

1. rebooking the appointment and reviewing the claimant commitment if the claimant makes, contact within seven days and the reason given would have led to either:
 - a. an easement
 - b. Switching-off work availability and work-related requirements, at the time the appointment was booked or took place
 - c. acceptance of one of the reasons listed in the Fail to attend – good reason guidance
2. if there is an ongoing open ended sanction in place and the claimant fails to attend the same rebooked appointment, they are not referred for a sanction again. The reason for this is they have not met the original compliance condition for the first failure to attend. Refer to preventing multiple sanction referrals.
3. if the reasons for missing an interview, given within seven days can be accepted as a good reason locally, if the claimant has three consecutive locally allowed decisions the next decision must be referred for a decision

Where a claimant repeatedly fails to comply with their commitment or requirements it is important to ensure there is no underlying reason behind this which may have affected the original decision to:

- set the original requirement
- refer a doubt for a decision
- to apply a sanction

Where we know that the claimant has complex needs, is vulnerable or has health issues that could reasonably have affected their attendance, this is taken into account. If the claimant has complex needs, staff must not make a local decision to apply a sanction.

Where a claimants fail to attend a mandatory interview or meeting and it is clear they do not have good reason a sanction may be applied.

Failure to attend initial evidence interview

The following appointments are Initial Evidence Interviews (IEI):

- [personal security number](#) and evidence

- personal security number and prove you can apply
- Standard Identity (ID)
- standard identity and evidence
- biographical identity
- biographical identity and [habitual residency test](#)

If the claimant fails to attend their initial evidence interview (IEI), they are notified through their journal to make contact to book another appointment. If there is no contact, their claim is closed one calendar month plus one day from their date of declaration.

If the claimant re-books the appointment within that time but fails to attend again, the one calendar month will still count from the date of declaration.

Failure to attend personal security number appointment

If the claimant fails to attend the issue personal security number appointment, it is not a reason for closing the claim and a sanction cannot be applied.

Failure to attend habitual residence test interview

Where the claimant fails to attend a habitual residence test interview, they are notified through their journal to make contact to book another appointment. If there is no contact, their claim is closed one calendar month from their date of declaration.

If the claimant re-books the appointment within that time but fails to attend again, the one calendar month will still count from the date of declaration.

Failure to attend a first commitments meeting

A claimant is not entitled to Universal Credit until they have accepted a claimant commitment. In the case of a couple claim, both partners need to attend and accept their claimant commitment in order to be entitled to Universal Credit.

Unless it is identified that the claimant has complex needs the claim will be closed the day after the appointment that the claimant failed to attend.

If a claimant fails to attend but later makes contact, it is important to ensure safeguards are in place by seeking to understand why the claimant failed to attend and consider any complex needs.

Claimants with complex needs can be contacted and have their appointments rebooked. If contact is made it is important to make it clear that unless the claimant attends next time they will not be able to complete their claim. This includes claimants who don't attend because they have gone on holiday abroad.

If necessary, a home visit can be considered when a claimant is unable to attend the office.

Claimants are notified that they may request a written explanation of the decision to close the claim within one month of the date on the notification letter. They are also informed if they disagree with the decision to close their claim they may request a reconsideration within one month of the date on the notification letter. If they disagree with the reconsideration decision they can appeal to a Tribunal.

Failure to attend work-focused interviews

Some claimants are required to participate in work-focused interview (WFI). If a claimant fails to attend a work focused interview a low or lowest level sanction may be applied to their Universal Credit award. Lowest level sanctions are for claimants who are in the Work-Focused Interview requirement only conditionality group and don't have a good reason for failing to attend. Refer to Sanctions.

The compliance condition to stop this open ended sanction, is the claimant arranging and attend another work focused interview. The claimant must be made aware of the consequences of not engaging immediately.

Failure to attend a self-employment gateway or quarterly review interviews

Claimants, who declare self-employment during their claim, and fails to attend the gateway interview or quarterly review meeting will have the same sanctions applied as if they had fail to attend a work-focused interview.

Non-mandatory work-focused appointments

If a claimant fails to attend a non-mandatory work focused interview, a sanction cannot be applied. A sanction will only apply to mandatory interviews that the claimant fails to attend.

Reasons for missing interviews

Before referring for a decision to sanction, staff obtain and consider the claimants' reasons for not meeting the conditionality requirements.

Where the claimant has provided a reason for failing to attend, a check is made to see if the reason can be accepted as a good reason and allowed locally. Claimants can be treated as having good reason without referral if they suffer a bereavement for instance.

It is important that the claimant is made aware that they need to provide their reasons for failing to attend and they are given the opportunity to do so.

Sanctions overview

Sanctions support Universal Credit conditionality by encouraging claimant compliance with their agreed claimant commitment.

It is important that claimants fully understand they have a responsibility to carry out the activities agreed in their claimant commitment, including attendance at interviews and meetings or face the risk of reduced payments following a sanction.

The claimant must also be made aware of the consequences of not attending on the date and time agreed.

[Back to contents](#)