

Expected hours

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Expected hours

The expected hours of work-related activities that the claimant is required to do each week is used to calculate their earnings threshold.

The Universal Credit service defaults to the **maximum** expected hours of work-related activities per week for the relevant Labour Market regime. The maximum expected hours for claimants in the Intensive Work Search regime is 35 hours per week. However, this can be adjusted to take into account any health condition or caring responsibilities the claimant may have.

Labour Market regime	Default maximum hours per week
Intensive Work Search regime – main carer for youngest dependent child aged 13 or over Light Touch regime	35
Intensive Work Search regime – main carer for youngest dependent child aged 5 to 12	25
Intensive Work Search regime - main carer for youngest dependent child aged 3 to 4	16
Work Preparation regime (limited capability for work post Work Capability Assessment)	16
Work Focused Interview regime	16
No Work Related Requirements	0
Working Enough	0

Tailoring expected hours

If a claimant has a health condition or caring responsibilities, they may not be able to meet the maximum expected hours of work-related activity. The expected hours must be reduced if the claimant has a health condition or caring responsibilities that have an impact on what they can do.

The expected hours can be tailored to allow a claimant to do fewer hours of work-related activity per week where appropriate - for example, if a claimant is doing voluntary work that counts towards the maximum expected hours.

Although the expected hours can be tailored to the claimant's circumstances, they cannot be increased above the maximum number of expected hours. If the claimant says they want to do more hours of work-related requirements, the additional hours are not recorded on the commitment. These are done purely voluntarily by the claimant.

Availability

A claimant in the Intensive Work Search regime is required to look for and be immediately available for any work:

- regardless of the type and salary as long as the salary is at or above National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage
- on a full-time basis, generally:
 - a minimum of 35 hours (to take them above their conditionality earnings threshold)
 - up to 40 hours a week for 16 or 17 year olds
 - up to 48 hours a week for over 18s
- within 90 minutes of their home by their normal method of transport

In certain circumstances, a claimant can place limitations on their work availability. See Availability for work.

Example:

A claimant allocated to the Intensive Work Search regime pre-Work Capability Assessment could have reduced expected hours and a limitation on their work availability to suit their health condition.

