

To: UC Programme Board

From : JP Marks

UC Operations
Director General

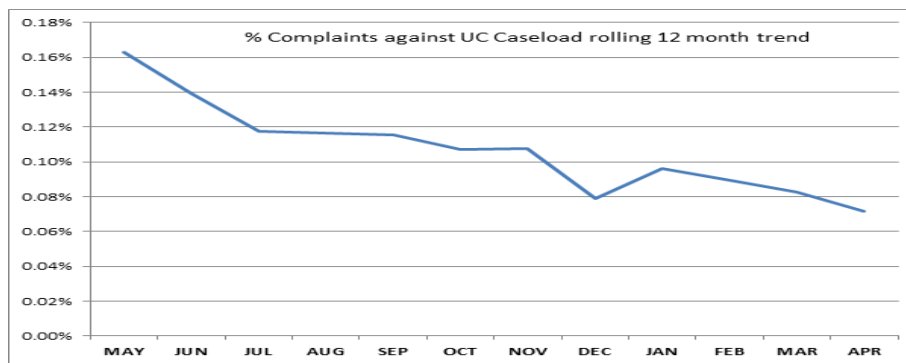
Universal Credit Operations Update

Summary

As at the 28 June 66 more Jobcentres are delivering Universal Credit Full Service, bringing the total sites to 349 (net of closures) with 727k claimants supported by 26 Service Centres. Live Service caseload continues to reduce and currently stands at 247k. Expansion continues to plan.

Our work on Decision Making and Habitual Residence Tests has improved performance. Together with improvements in Child and Housing verification, payments in full and on time have improved for 7 consecutive weeks. 1st AP is up 2% this month to 81%, and all assessment periods is up 2% to 91%.

At the last Board we discussed cultural transformation and how we evidence this e.g. the 2017/18 Q3 scorecard Claimant Service and Experience Survey saw satisfaction of Universal Credit Full Service claimants increase by a statistically significant 7% to 79%. It is also worth noting that complaints have halved in the year, from 1 complaint per 625 claimants (0.16%) in April 2017 to 1 complaint per 1429 claimants (0.07%) in May 2018.



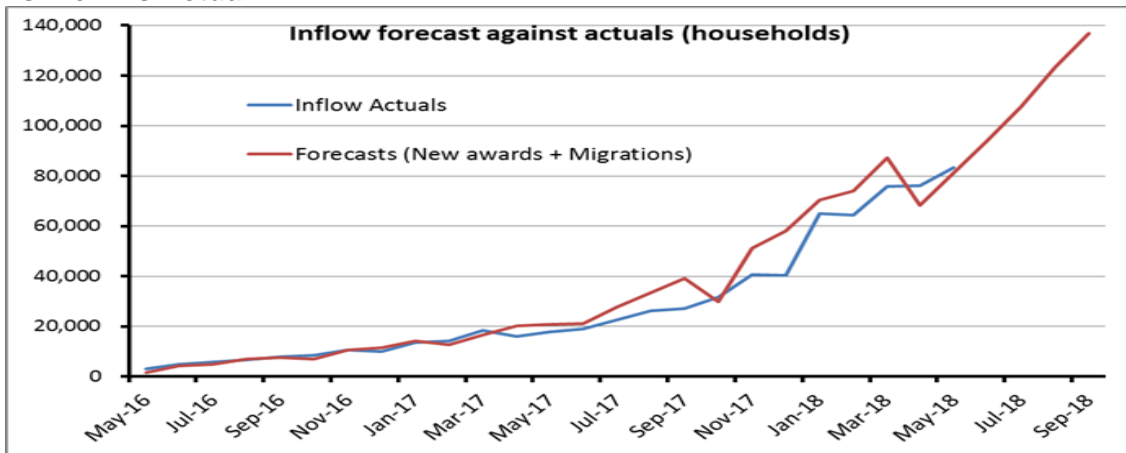
Integrated telephony call routing has now been deployed to 75% of the network. 7% of integrated calls spilled into the National network in June compared to 17% in May with an average speed of answer of 1 minute 40 seconds. However, volumes of telephone calls continue to present a challenge at national network levels – with steps to deploy additional resource in place, with plans to further improve Integrated Voice Recognition

A number of Real Time Earnings delays impacted Universal Credit, creating overpayments which require collection from claimants over the next 12 months. Work is ongoing to understand the causes of these problems, contingencies are being considered, including running payment calculations at 10am rather than 8am in the short term.

PDE have agreed our plans to recruit in targeted areas where hot spots have arisen. This is mitigation for the Programme Board Capacity risk and will help protect performance improvement in Q3/Q4. Work continues to ensure alignments manage this risk and maximise outcomes and we remain under budget, forecasting a £13m under spend at period 3.

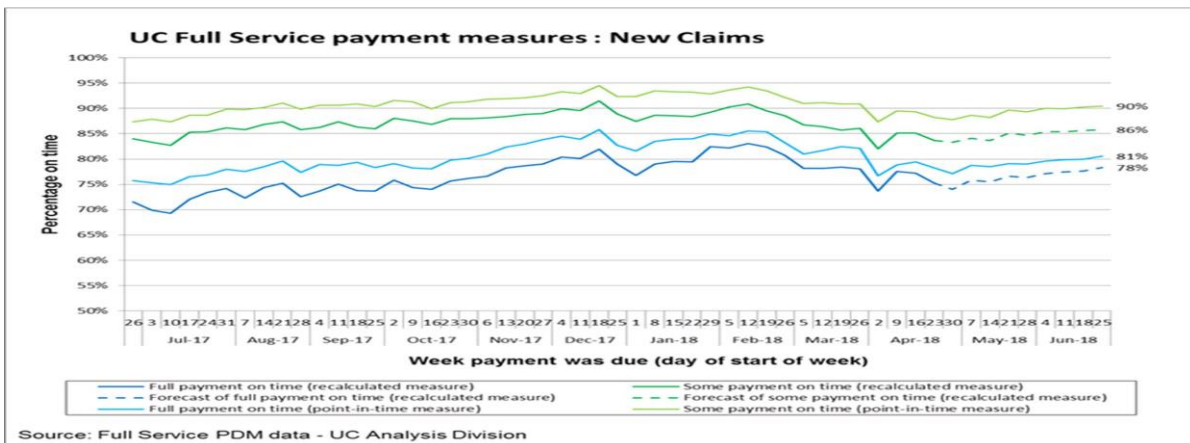
We are working to understand and address the causes of failure to attend appointments. We know that claimants are much less likely to be paid on time in the 1st Assessment Period if they fail to attend their initial appointment. Reducing the number of claimants who fail to attend or re-arrange this appointment is crucial in helping claimants to help themselves.

New Claims Flow vs Actual



Payment performance

This month we met with the Secretary and State and Minister of State and shared analysis on payment timeliness and the causes of blocked payment. These include high rates of non-attendance to agreed appointments and Claimant Commitments not being accepted. We are improving measurement to show cases which are available to pay and those blocked due to outstanding claimant and partner activity.

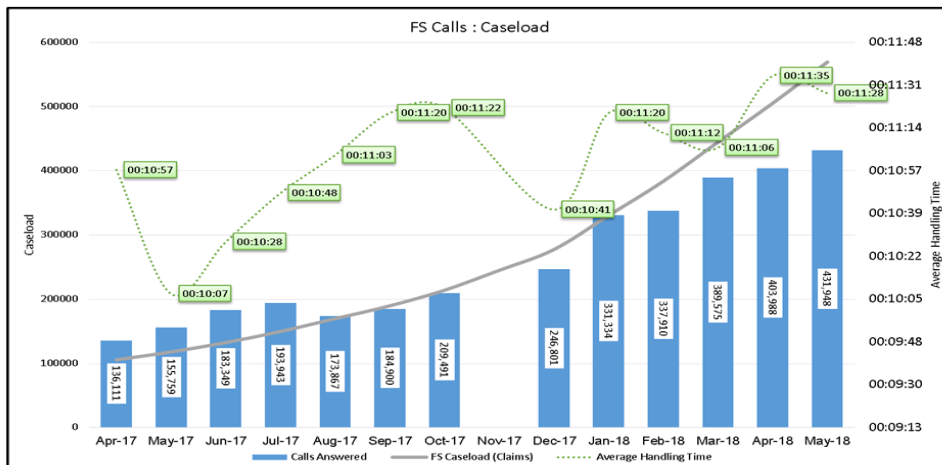


Source: Full Service PDM data - UC Analysis Division

Telephony

The ratio of calls to claimants continues to fall, reflecting our continued improving performance and maturing caseload.

FS Calls: Claims Ratio	
Jun-16	2.81
Jul-16	2.1
Aug-16	2.03
Sep-16	1.93
Oct-16	1.71
Nov-16	1.59
Dec-16	1.39
Jan-17	1.47
Feb-17	1.27
Mar-17	1.46
Apr-17	1.29
May-17	1.32
Jun-17	1.38
Jul-17	1.29
Aug-17	1.02
Sep-17	0.97
Oct-17	0.98
Nov-17	0
Dec-17	0.89
Jan-18	1
Feb-18	0.88
Mar-18	0.88
Apr-18	0.8
May-18	0.76



UCFS integrated telephony continues roll out and is expected to be completed in August. Nationally, telephony performance for June 17 – May 18 for calls answered was 88.7% with an average speed of answer of 4 minutes and 5 seconds.

To support national telephony, we have removed the 7.5 hours limit for case managers being deployed on telephony. We are now deploying these case managers on the phone for up to 10 hours. We have redeployed 30 FTE from tier 1 quality checking to telephony for the next 8 weeks. Work is ongoing to identify additional resource to be redeployed as telephony agents, such as from sites with lower caseloads which we expect to deploy at the end of July.

Advances

The proportion of claims with a New Claim or Benefit Transfer advance was 60% in May, up from 58% in April.

Decision Making

Head of Work for payment blockers reduced to 5.5 days in June from 7.9 days in May. This has been achieved by focusing on ‘Habitual Residency Test’ and ‘Prove You Can Apply’ cases and has made a significant contribution to increased payment timeliness.

A new way of allocating and prioritising work has been deployed, which prioritises work based on next payment due date. Decisions are now up to date with Decision Makers working on Assessment Period end dates 3 - 4 days into the future.

45 Live Service Decision Makers successfully moved into Full Service in June, together with 62 new Decision Makers (on temporary promotion) who have moved into Full Service training to ensure capacity to deal with increasing volumes.

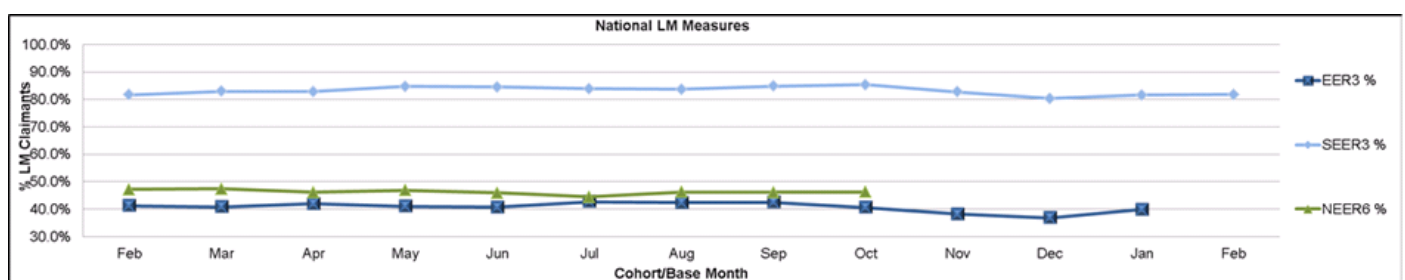
Work is underway to improve the Prove You Can Apply process, either by allowing more claimants to undergo the ‘fast-track’ process or reducing the number of claimants who then need a full Habitual Residence Test. Work to test conducting Prove You Can Apply over the phone continues with encouraging early results.

Quality

From April we report on Claims Maintenance in addition to New Claims, giving a better indication of quality in the caseload; closer to the way tier 3 measures results. The ‘Scaling Measure’ for Claims Maintenance is 91% in month, with three month average available next month. For new claims the ‘Scaling Measure’ is 86% in month, with a rolling 3 month average of 88%.

Labour Market

Universal Credit Analysis Division are leading work with key stakeholders to continue to develop our measures.



Health

Health Confidence events supporting the wider Labour Market campaign are now complete. Excellent feedback was received and confidence levels after sessions were reported to have increased. Universal

Credit Leaders will cascade information from these events to sites over the next few weeks and work is now underway to showcase great examples of delivery and partnership working.

Work towards centralised Decision Making is ongoing. Scanners are now in operation in Glasgow allowing the returned case files from the Centre for Health and Disability Assessments to be scanned. This addresses storage concerns and allows for a more efficient transfer of case files, resulting in quicker decision making.

Claimant Orientation

We are seeing steady improvements to the Common Origin calls in both Live and Full Service and these have, once again reduced in June 2018. Further enhancements to the 'Interactive Voice Response' are being tested and will be implemented to deliver further improvement. We continue to work with GOV.UK to improve the presentation of content. Work with Universal Credit Programme colleagues will ensure that content can be shared via our 3rd party websites.

ID Verification

68.9% of claimants who made a UCFS declaration in June 2018 attempted to verify their ID via GOV.UK Verify, with 36.9% of those attempting successfully verifying ID online.

Housing

The number of Landlords using the Landlord Portal has increased by a further 50 to 265. Consequently, April saw more than 7,500 rent verification requests made via the Portal, equating to circa 60% of all Social Rented Sector rent verifications. Of these, 93% were verified within the 1st AP, compared to 68% for Non-Portal cases.

We have engaged widely with Private and Social Rental Sector Landlords at a National level to support understanding of Universal Credit. This includes:

- Quarterly meetings with representative organisations such as Residential Landlords Association (RLA) and National Housing Federation (NHF).
- The delivery of joint Landlord events throughout Great Britain, working collaboratively with representative organisations.
- Visits to Jobcentres for some national Landlord representatives. Residential Landlords Association produced a blog of their experience and Neil Couling has written an article about Universal Credit for their next newsletter.
- The production of a quarterly newsletter to Landlords. We hope to include this on GOV.UK to aid wider circulation.
- A dedicated 'UC and Rented Housing Guide for Landlords' on GOV.UK.

Complex Needs

The Complex Needs call held on 14 June focused on Refugees. Work ongoing to improve understanding of boundaries and DWP remit, ensuring we work collaboratively with partners and supporting organisations. Working across government, we are looking to improve the processes for those diagnosed with a terminal illness. This will be developed alongside wider strategic developments for vulnerable customers during managed migration.

UC Live Service

The Universal Credit Operational Executive Team have agreed the following steps to support a safe Live Service exit:

- Prioritising remaining task activity, with a focus on new work to increase productivity.
- Explore the possibility of re-routing appointment enquiry telephone calls to Jobcentres to support telephony. Some non-customer facing staff will be deployed to telephony.
- Roll out the findings from the Bishop Auckland trial on Transfers. This includes aligning appointments to 3 days after the Assessment Period end date and moving transfer cases into Full Service Case Management when on boarded allowing Case Managers to make the first payment.