

‘at a glance guide to’ UNIVERSAL CREDIT HOUSING COSTS differences

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UNIVERSAL CREDIT HOUSING COSTS (new system)	HOUSING BENEFIT/MORTGAGE INTEREST
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered by the Department for Work and Pensions(DWP). • Assessed and paid monthly. • Changes in housing costs are assessed for the whole month(needs to be declared within that assessment period if it’s an increase). • Payment normally direct to claimant, with discretion to pay to landlord (alternative payment arrangements). • Paid normally monthly, with discretion to pay more frequent than monthly(alternative payment arrangements). • Paid normally to one person in the family (benefit) unit with discretion to split payments between partners (alternative payment arrangements). • Paid to claimants up to State Pension Credit Age(after this they claim Housing Benefit along with their State Pension Credit). • Service Charges defined mainly by guidance to landlords. Eligible charges listed. • Size criteria- for over night carer to count client needs to be on PIP daily living or high or middle rate Care DLA. • Differences- Shared room rent- an extra route to avoid this by getting care component of disability living allowance at the middle or highest rate or attendance allowance or the daily living component of personal independence payment. No shared room rent where a client is above 35 regardless of type of accommodation lived in. or where the client is under 35 and is the subject of active multi-agency management with regards to arrangements for assessing etc. risks posed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administered by Local Authorities (rent)/ DWP(mortgages). • Assessed and paid weekly. • Changes in housing costs are assessed for the week. Normally apply from the week after the change occurred(if it’s a decrease)/ was declared(if it’s an increase) • Council tenants do not get direct payment. Housing association/ private tenants may get direct or not. • Paid at intervals of 1, 2, 4 weeks or a month depending on when rent is due. • HB paid to one claimant. • Paid to claimants aged over 16, including pensioners. • Detailed rules defined by regulations. Ineligible charges listed. • For over night carer to count client needs to be disabled- the same passporting benefits apply or documentation to show need would suffice. <p>Exceptions(even if the client (s) live in shared accommodation)-</p> <p>If the client or their partner-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client qualify for the severe disability premium • Client is age 18- under 22 and was in care on their 16th birthday.

by certain offenders.(note HB has a similar provision but says aged 25-35). Also where client has a non dependent living with them. Foster carer exemption does not apply.

- From June 2021, care leavers up to the age of 25 and those under the age of 25 who have spent at least three months in a homeless hostel will be exempt from the SAR in Universal Credit and Housing Benefit (previously due to be implemented in October 2023).

And for single claimants-

- Client is age 25- under 35 and has lived for a total of 3 months (whether or not continuously) in one or more hostels for homeless people and while they were living in a hostel they were offered and they accepted support services to assist them to be rehabilitated or resettled in the community.
- Client is age 25- under 35 and is the subject of active multi-agency management with regards to arrangements for assessing etc. risks posed by certain offenders.
- Client is under 35 and is foster carer
- Client is under 35 and requires an overnight carer
- **From June 2021**, care leavers up to the age of 25 and those under the age of 25 who have spent at least three months in a homeless hostel will be exempt from the SAR in Universal Credit and Housing Benefit (previously due to be implemented in October 2023).

- **Non Dependents- Flat rate deduction of £93.02 per month(2025/26). Renamed a 'Housing Cost Contribution'.**

- **Non Dependents- exempt renters- no housing cost contribution where- receives middle or high rate DLA care component, receives Attendance Allowance, receives the daily living component of a Personal Independence Payment, Armed Forces Compensation Payment, or would get the above but are in hospital, is registered blind.**

- **Non Dependents- exempt non dependents- no housing costs contribution where- receives middle or high rate DLA care component, receives Attendance Allowance, receives the daily living component of a Personal Independence Payment, Armed Forces Compensation Payment, or would get the above but are in hospital, anyone under 21, responsible for a child under 5, , getting State Pension Credit, getting carer's allowance, prisoners, a person who is a member of the armed forces away on operations.**

- **Death of someone in the family- under occupation criteria not enforced until 3 months after the death.**

- 6 different non dependent rates depending on income of non dependent- (2025/ 26 £19.65- £126.65 weekly)

- Similar but including those who have regained their sight within the last 28 weeks and those who get any rate of the care component of DLA.

- Under 18's(not under 21's)

HB included the following exceptions but UC doesn't- paid carer provided by a charity or voluntary organisation, full time students, those in hospital more than 52 weeks, those under 25 and on IS, JSA(IB), ESA(IR), UC without working those who get works based learning for young people training allowance

- Same exemptions regarding CA, AA, DLA, PIP, Armed forces Compensation Payment

- Under occupation entitlement not enforced for 12 months.

- **Temporary Absence Abroad- payable for up to 1 month(if not expected to be away for longer) or a further month if death in the family or up to 6 months for medical treatment abroad or 12 months with fear of violence.**
- **Lodgers- income from lodgers disregarded in full but an extra room is not allowed under size criteria.**
- **Temporary absence- payable for up to 6 months if not expected to be absence for more than 6 months.**
- **Housing Costs on two properties at the same time- possible for fear of violence(52 weeks) or disability adaptations(1 month).**
- **Prisoners- housing costs element only paid for up to 6 months if on remand or if sentenced then must be for not more than 6 months.**
- **Backdating on new claim- up to one month, on existing claim with reasons.**
- **Owner occupier Housing Costs- witing period of 3 months. If client comes off Universal Credit, needs to reserve waiting period.
No deductions for non dependents.**

- Payable normally for up to 13 weeks with some exceptions up to 52 weeks.
- Income above £20 is taken into account for HB calculation but an extra room is allowed under size criteria.
- Payable normally for up to 13 weeks with some exceptions up to 52 weeks.
- Also included a 4 week dual HB period for an unavoidable where there was liability for costs on 2 properties.
- Housing Benefit allow up to 3 month absences for prisoners and 12 months for those on remand.
- Similar provisions and time limits.
- Normally a 9 month period. Can work up to 16 hours and still get housing costs as part of IS, JSA(IB) or ESA(IR). Deductions for are made for non dependents.

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