

Universal Credit in Northern
Ireland: Sharing experiences,
suggesting changes

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Our project is about:



Documenting experiences of Universal Credit in Northern Ireland



Developing recommendations for where change is required



Working closely and in partnership with people on Universal Credit in 'experience panel sessions'



Providing opportunities for conversations between people with different forms of expertise on Universal Credit

Documenting experiences of Universal Credit



TOP UC ISSUES

I thought at the start this is better than going into the benefits office... I ended up having to go in anyway

I will not be getting a loan off them again... It's like going to a tick man.

It's made me worse... Stress. Worrying about how I'm going to pay the next bill. Sometimes you just feel like... you just can't go on.

TOP UC ISSUES

I was on the phone to the fellow... about maternity allowance... He says... you should... apply for universal credit... If he hadn't've said, no way I would've known to go and do that

Some of the comments was made was 'Oh, it'll be good because you can sit in the house in your pyjamas and do everything online', and I'm like you shouldn't assume everybody's just not wanting to work

TOP UC ISSUES: NI FEATURES

Different payment arrangements and supplementary payments a lifeline for many participants

Still an adjustment from fortnightly to twice monthly

Delayed commencement of direct payment to landlords

SSSC supplementary payment not being made automatically

Discretionary support grant hard to access

The future of Universal Credit: Recommendations for change



OUR VISION IS FOR: A social security system that treats everyone with dignity and respect as valued members of society

ADEQUACY OF BENEFITS: Universal Credit needs to be paid at a level that enables people to meet their living costs, including housing

FIVE WEEK WAIT : It is time to end the five week wait for Universal Credit

The future of Universal Credit: Recommendations for change



DEBT: Stop Universal Credit triggering debt

APPLICATION AND CASE MANAGEMENT: Make the process of applying for and managing a Universal Credit claim more user-friendly

ACCESS TO BETTER SUPPORT & BETTER TRAINED STAFF : Ensure that the staff delivering Universal Credit are well-trained, and that claimants have access to independent advice on their claim.

NI MITIGATIONS: End the cliff edge and ensure that people are aware of the entitlement they have because of being resident in Northern Ireland

WHAT NEXT....

Finalising recommendations / preparing reports

Do get in touch if you'd like to be kept informed or if you'd like to be involved in the sessions:

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