

Guide on action to be taken post Leave to Remain.

Universal Credit (UC) was introduced to Southampton Job Centre Plus (JCP) on 22.2.17. Prompt action is required at every stage since UC is not backdated and the claim process is multi-staged and undertaken online. After the claim process has been completed it then takes about 6 weeks for UC to begin. The client can apply for an advance payment.

1. Client needs to have an email account with a suitable name and password – they must remember them both and be familiar with using email, searching websites and word processing in order to claim UC. Clients can use free PCs in local library for 30 mins to 2 hours if they have a library card.
2. Client needs to draft a CV ready to upload to UC account – for advice, make appointment with CLEAR (after BRP has been received) or try nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk. Client will also need names and email addresses of referees e.g. English teacher, SWVG visitor, voluntary work etc.
3. Client could usefully begin to keep a paper diary of what they are doing to look for work, and get in the habit of make notes of names + dates + action to be taken when in phone or interview contact with DWP officials.
4. Client and visitor should organise a ring binder of plastic pockets of current documentation which is kept separate from a storage file of pre-LTR info. Many of the documents in the ring binder will need to be taken to appointments and kept to hand when using computers.
5. Client should consider housing, sofa surfing etc. Visitor emailed Churches Rent Deposit Scheme to arrange appointment. Interview took place 7 days later and a bond was issued, valid for 28 days. CRDS also provided a useful pack on how to find a room in a shared house.
6. My client received nothing direct from the HO re LTR, all correspondence came via the solicitor. e.g. the letter requiring biometrics to be done.
7. Client and visitor went to Eastleigh Post Office to get free photo and fingerprints done: open 9-5.30, best to avoid lunchtime. Info sheet to client said she should email a complex address the day after doing the biometrics to confirm that they had been done. Visitor arranged for solicitor to do this. 2 weeks later, Biometric residence permit (BRP) arrived at solicitors and was collected by client. BRP should be photocopied by client/visitor. BRP did not contain NI number (NINo), so an appointment needed to be booked at JCP to apply for one.
8. ASAP after BRP received, phone Nationwide on 08005540319 to make appointment to open bank account. 2 days later, client with visitor opened bank account at Nationwide 72-8 Above Bar St. BRP and a letter from UKVI addressed to client's home were used so client was able to open bank account, essential to apply for UC. Nationwide said that a letter from the solicitor addressed to Nationwide would also have been useful to open an account. Client was advised to take along to the bank as many official documents as they could with their name and address. This is also useful advice for all appointments and interviews. Barclays and Lloyds wouldn't allow an account to be opened, UC can't be paid in to some accounts e.g. Post Office card account.
9. 2 days later, client and visitor went to Job Centre Plus 18 Bernard St SO14 2HP 0345 604 3719 open 9-5 Mon to Fri except 10-5 on Weds. With help from JCP staff, client finished completing the on-line application for Universal Credit. A bank account and email address are necessary before UC is claimed. The client must go to

Southampton and Winchester Visitors Group *Working with asylum seekers and refugees*

Patrons: Miriam Margolyes OBE, John Pilkington, Dr Shirley Firth **Registered charity:** 1103093

SWVG P O Box 1615 Southampton, SO17 3WF

Email: admin@swvg-refugees.org.uk **Telephone:** 0750 317 6350 **Web:** www.swvg-refugees.org.uk

JCP and use the computers to apply on line. They must note down their user name and password and remember their answers to 2 questions and be able to spell out these answers over the phone. They should note down the name of anyone who helps them. Then, before the claim can be fully completed, the client needs to phone to arrange an identity verification interview. They should take along the BRP, debit card, HC2, tenancy agreement etc. DWP gave the client a 16 digit personal security number to use instead of the answers to the 2 questions.

10. As soon as BRP was received, visitor phoned 0345 6000643 Mon to Fri 8-6 to book an appointment to apply for a NiNo and were given a reference number. 4 days later, interview was held at JCP re NiNo, where the client needs to take along their BRP and proof of address (e.g.NASS 35). It may take 6 weeks for the NiNo to arrive by post. The client therefore needs to let the NiNo people know on line their change of address from the NASS accommodation.

11. 6 days after BRP was received, NASS 35 arrived stating client needs to leave house 20 days' later. The next day, the house manager visited to confirm the leaving date, stated that there could be no extension and provided a pack of info on looking for housing. The same day, client and visitor went to 2 Saints for help with housing.

12. As soon as possible after the NiNo interview, and definitely within 7 days of the UC log on, the client (and visitor) have to phone 0345 600 4272 (Mon to Fri 8-6) to arrange an identity verification interview for UC to which the client should take along the BRP, debit card, HC2, tenancy agreement etc. Thus, 2 identity verification interviews were held, both in JCP in Southampton, one for UC and one for NiNo. The client then needed to prepare for a commitments interview with a work coach by uploading their CV and answering questions on line. The agreed commitments then needed to be signed on line. If the client doesn't fulfil their commitments they can be sanctioned i.e. their benefits can be reduced.

From this point, it can then takes about 6 weeks for UC to begin. The client can apply for an advance.

The client can also consider applying for a refugee integration loan on-line.

Ongoing: The claimant must check the Journal on their UC account daily since they may have been given appointments via their journal. They also need to write up on their online journal what they are doing to look for a job.

Useful documents for client and visitor:-

[Help available from DWP to persons who have been granted LTR](#)

[Refugee integration loan to help with rent in advance - 14 page application form.](#)

[Information pack for Refugees – Refugee Action](#)

[Discretionary housing benefit, Southampton City Council.](#)

[CRDS information](#)

[Making a claim to UC](#)

Asylumhelpuk.org

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CAB - preparing for your UC interview

Sue Jessup

24.4.17

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