



**Department
for Work &
Pensions**

www.dwp.gov.uk

Neil Couling,
Director General, Universal Credit
Programme
6th Floor, Caxton House
Tothill Street
London
SW1A 9NA

neil.couling@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 0207 245 3844

13 December 2018

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to let you know that the roll out of Universal Credit to all 637 Jobcentres across Great Britain is now complete. You will be aware that we started this process in May 2016, initially with a handful of offices, increasing the volume of offices only when we were certain Universal Credit could be deployed safely. Since August 2017 the number of people on the Universal Credit Full Service (UCFS) has increased from 200,000 to 1.4 million.

Over the next few years the caseloads on Universal Credit will grow steadily as all new claims to benefits and relevant changes of circumstances trigger applications for Universal Credit. As we have grown the service, we have re-trained and moved our resources from the legacy system of other DWP benefits, Local Authorities and HMRC to scale them down and grow the UC administration so that we have the necessary administrative capacity to support Universal Credit delivery. We will also continue to expand the UCFS IT system so that it can support claimants and the administration of the system at these growing volumes.

You will have seen too that Ministers have announced a number of important changes to the system, such as protection for those receiving the severe disability premium, introducing two-week benefit run-ons for those moving across from legacy benefits, and increasing work allowances. These changes will be introduced over the coming period subject to the passage by Parliament of the legislation.

You will also be aware that the final phase of the Universal Credit Programme, after a period of piloting, is scheduled to begin in November 2020: this is the managed migration of cases which do not have a relevant change of circumstance to trigger a move onto Universal Credit. It is vital we get this right, and a number of you are kindly working with us on the design of these plans, having already attended some workshops and participating in discussions. We look forward to continuing these with you. We welcome your engagement and have already made

some good progress together. We have initially focussed on Service Design – holding two workshops and webinars – and we will be holding a further two workshops in the New Year. We will then hold sessions on three other areas: the Delivery Model, Communications and Orientation and Supporting Vulnerable Customers. Your continued support as we progress these workshops would be much appreciated. We will continue to keep you all updated on the outputs and our progress.

Whilst the completion of the rollout of Universal Credit to every Jobcentre is an important milestone and marks the end of this important phase of the Programme, there is much still to do. So I want to record my thanks for your continuing input into this important reform, and my team and I look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Couling', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Neil Couling
Director General, Universal Credit Programme