

Universal Credit Students Guide

Academic Year
2026-27

MAKING
LEARNING
WORK

Forth
Valley
College



UNIVERSAL CREDIT STUDENTS GUIDE

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

Universal Credit (UC) has been rolled-out across Scotland to replace six other benefits (Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support, and Housing Benefit).

Some students may be eligible to receive Universal Credit while studying, but it depends on your circumstances.

ARE YOU A 'STUDENT'?

You are considered a student for UC if you are:

- In full-time non-advanced education, which you started when you were under the age of 19, OR
- On a full-time course of advanced education, OR
- On another full-time course for which a loan, grant, or bursary is provided for your maintenance.

If, based on the above criteria, you would be considered a student then move on to the next section.

If you would **not** be considered a student on the basis of this criteria, then you should contact the job centre to find out how your Universal Credit claim will be affected while you are attending college.

DO YOU HAVE TO MEET THE WORK RELATED REQUIREMENTS?

If you claim Universal Credit (UC), what you have to do in terms of looking for work can range from having no work-related requirements to having to look for full-time work. To be exempt from meeting the work related requirements, you must meet **at least one** of the following criteria:

- You are responsible for a child. (Aged under 16 years of age, or 16-19 years of age and in full-time education.)
- You have limited capability for work (assessed by the DWP), and also receive disability living allowance (DLA), personal independence payments (PIP), child disability payment (CDP) or adult disability payments (ADP).
- You are under 21 years of age (or were under 21 years of age when your course started) and without parental support.
- You are a single foster carer (or some single kinship carers), or are in a couple and one of you is a foster parent.
- You are over pension age and your partner has not yet reached that age.

- You have a partner who is not a student, or who is a student and meets one of the above criteria.

If, based on the above criteria, you would be **exempt from the work-search requirements** of UC, then you will likely be able to **keep your claim** while studying.

If, based on the above criteria, you would **not be exempt from the work-search requirements**, then you will likely need to **close your claim**.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO NEXT?

Regardless of whether you will remain on UC or not while studying, you must inform DWP that you are entering education. They will then assess your eligibility to remain on UC based on your unique circumstances.

IF YOUR UC CLAIM STAYS OPEN WHILE YOU ARE STUDYING

If you are a **Full-Time Further Education (FE) student**, you can apply for the Universal Credit Top-Up Bursary (£28/week). This will not impact your UC payments.

If you are a **Full-Time Higher Education (HE) student**, you must declare your Student Income (loan and bursary) which will be deducted from your UC payments. You will not be eligible for Housing funding from the College, but you may be eligible for Childcare funding if you require it.

You can [find out more about these funds on our website](#) or by contacting us.

CONTACT US

If you have any questions about Universal Credit and your claim while studying, or about any other aspect of Student Funding, please contact the Student Funding Team for help. Phone and visit options are available Mon - Fri, 9am - 1pm during term time or schedule an appointment by email.

Phone: Student Funding 01324 403041

Email: funding@forthvalley.ac.uk (include your student ID no.)

Visit us: Falkirk Campus Student Hub



www.forthvalley.ac.uk