UNIVERSAL CREDIT UC50 / WCA50 SELF HELP GUIDE

How to fill in your form step-by-step

CHECK AND SEND SERVICE

Thursday
10:30 – 12:00

We have quick review slots available on Thursdays to look over your form and suggest any minor changes before you send it. Please note, this is not a full form-filling service, but a chance to check your answers together and make any final adjustments.

First – how the UC50 actually works

The Work Capability Assessment is not about your diagnosis alone.

It is about how your condition affects your ability to function and work

The DWP uses descriptors and points to decide if you have Limited Capability for Work.

Generally:

15 points or more	can mean Limited Capability for Work (LCW)
Some circumstances	may qualify you for LCWRA regardless of points

Key words to use

Use these words where appropriate:

Aid	Equipment you use
Prompting	Encouragement or reminders
Supervision	Someone keeping you safe
Assistance	Physical help
Support	Help from another person

Writing tip VERY IMPORTANT

For every question, try using:

> "Because of my condition, I cannot do this reliably. I need **[help/support]**. Without this help, **[what happens]**. This happens **[how often]**."

Always include:

- What condition affects you
- What happens on bad days
- What help you need
- What happens without help
- Real-life examples

> **Always give a real example.**

Mobilising (moving around)

This looks at:

- Walking
- Moving around outdoors
- Using mobility aids

Consider:

- How far you can walk
- Pain
- Breathlessness
- Fatigue
- Falls

Example

"Because of my arthritis, I cannot walk more than 50 metres reliably. I experience severe pain and need to stop and rest. If I continue walking, my pain increases significantly and I become unsteady."

Standing and sitting

This looks at whether you can:

- Stay seated
- Stay standing
- Change positions

Example

"I cannot sit for longer than 20 minutes without significant pain. I need to regularly change position and stand to relieve discomfort."

Reaching

This means:

- Reaching overhead
- Reaching forwards
- Using your arms effectively

Example

"I cannot reliably reach cupboards above shoulder height because of shoulder pain and weakness."

Picking up and moving objects

This looks at:

- Carrying items
- Lifting objects
- Moving everyday items

Example

"Due to weakness in my hands, I frequently drop objects and struggle to carry shopping safely."

Using your hands

This means:

- Turning taps
- Using buttons
- Holding pens
- Opening packaging

Example

"My hand pain makes it difficult to grip objects. I struggle using keys, opening containers and fastening buttons."

Communicating

This includes:

- Speaking
- Being understood
- Communicating information

Example

"Because of my anxiety, I struggle to communicate with unfamiliar people and often become unable to speak during appointments."

Understanding communication

This means:

- Understanding instructions
- Following conversations
- Processing information

Example

"I often need information repeated as I struggle to process verbal instructions."

Staying safe and navigating

This looks at:

- Awareness of danger
- Keeping yourself safe
- Following routes

Example

"Because of seizures, I need supervision when outside as I am at risk of sudden loss of consciousness."

Continence

This includes:

- Bladder problems
- Bowel problems
- Managing accidents

Example

"I experience frequent incontinence and need immediate access to toilet facilities throughout the day."

Learning tasks

This means:

- Learning new information
- Following instructions
- Understanding new processes

Example

"Due to cognitive difficulties, I struggle to learn new tasks without repeated support and guidance."

Coping with change

This applies if you:

- Become distressed by changes
- Need routine
- Find unexpected events overwhelming

Example

"Changes to routine cause significant anxiety and distress. I need support to manage unexpected situations."

Getting about

This means:

- Travelling
- Leaving home
- Going to unfamiliar places

Example

"I cannot travel alone due to severe anxiety and panic attacks."

Social engagement

This looks at:

- Mixing with other people
- Attending appointments
- Managing social situations

Example

"I avoid contact with unfamiliar people because of anxiety and need support to attend appointments."

Starting and completing tasks

This means:

- Motivation
- Concentration
- Completing activities

Example

"Due to depression, I struggle to start everyday tasks and require prompting from family members."

Substantial risk VERY IMPORTANT

Even if you don't score enough points, you should explain if:

- Working would worsen your health
- Working could put you at risk
- Work-related activities could cause harm

> **This is very important to mention.**

Evidence HELPS A LOT

Useful evidence includes:

- GP letters
- Consultant reports
- Occupational therapy reports
- Mental health team letters
- Physiotherapy reports
- Care plans

Don't delay returning the form if you are waiting for evidence. You can often send evidence later.

Simple way to think about the UC50

It is not about your diagnosis.

It is about:

- What you struggle to do
- What help you need
- What happens without help

Always ask yourself:

> **"What would happen if I had to do this on my own, every day, reliably?"**

Keeping a diary VERY HELPFUL

Why keeping a diary is important

A diary is useful evidence to help the DWP understand how your condition affects you day to day, including:

- Daily living activities
- Mobility and getting around

> **You are the best person to explain your difficulties.**

Writing a diary

Your diary should record:

- What they struggle with
- What help they need
- What could happen without help
- How often this happens

What the diary should show

The diary should clearly show how they cannot do activities reliably, meaning:

- Not safely
- Not to a good standard
- Not often enough
- Takes too long

If this applies, you should say they cannot do it.

Keeping a diary: what to include IMPORTANT

You may score points if:

- You need aids or equipment
- You need prompting or reminders
- You need help from another person
- Tasks take them a long time
- You can only manage at certain times
- You have good and bad days
- You are unsafe on your own
- You need supervision

> **If any of these apply, include them in the diary.**

Work Capability daily diary

Date / Time	Activity	What I struggled with	Help Needed	What happened without help

UC50 / WCA50 glossary QUICK GUIDE

Key rule - Reliably

You must be able to do something:

- Safely
- Repeatedly
- To a good standard
- In a reasonable time

Types of help

Assistance	Physical help from another person
Supervision	Someone watching to keep you safe
Prompting	Reminders or encouragement
Aid	Equipment that helps you

Important terms

Descriptor	A statement used to assess your ability
LCW	Limited Capability for Work
LCWRA	Limited Capability for Work and Work-Related Activity
Substantial Risk	Risk to your health or someone else's health if you were expected to work