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## STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

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# 2015 No. 2006

## The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015

### PART 2

#### Universal credit

##### CHAPTER 1

##### Entitlement and awards

##### *Introductory*

#### Universal credit

- 6.—(1) A benefit known as universal credit is payable in accordance with this Part.
- (2) Universal credit may, subject as follows, be awarded to—
- (a) an individual who is not a member of a couple (a “single person”), or
  - (b) members of a couple jointly.
- (3) An award of universal credit is, subject as follows, calculated by reference to—
- (a) a standard allowance,
  - (b) an amount for responsibility for children or young persons,
  - (c) an amount for housing, and
  - (d) amounts for other particular needs or circumstances.

#### Commencement Information

- I1** Art. 6 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)
- I2** Art. 6 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)
- I3** Art. 6 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)
- I4** Art. 6 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

#### Claims

- 7.—(1) A claim may be made for universal credit by—
- (a) a single person, or
  - (b) members of a couple jointly.

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(2) Regulations may specify circumstances in which a member of a couple may make a claim as a single person.

#### Commencement Information

- I5** Art. 7 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, **art. 2(2)(a)**
- I6** Art. 7 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, **art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1** (with **art. 5**)
- I7** Art. 7 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 7**)
- I8** Art. 7 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)
- I9** Art. 7 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)

### Entitlement

#### Entitlement

- 8.—**(1) A single claimant is entitled to universal credit if the claimant meets—
- (a) the basic conditions, and
  - (b) the financial conditions for a single claimant.
- (2) Joint claimants are jointly entitled to universal credit if—
- (a) each of them meets the basic conditions, and
  - (b) they meet the financial conditions for joint claimants.

#### Commencement Information

- I10** Art. 8 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, **art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1** (with **art. 5**)
- I11** Art. 8 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 7**)
- I12** Art. 8 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)
- I13** Art. 8 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)

#### Basic conditions

- 9.—**(1) For the purposes of Article 8, a person meets the basic conditions who—
- (a) is at least 18 years old,
  - (b) has not reached the qualifying age for state pension credit,
  - (c) is in Northern Ireland,
  - (d) is not receiving education, and
  - (e) has accepted a claimant commitment.
- (2) Regulations may provide for exceptions to the requirement to meet any of the basic conditions (and, for joint claimants, may provide for an exception for one or both).

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(3) For the basic condition in paragraph (1)(a) regulations may specify a different minimum age for prescribed cases.

(4) For the basic condition in paragraph (1)(b) the qualifying age for state pension credit is that referred to in section 1(6) of the State Pension Credit Act (Northern Ireland) 2002.

(5) For the basic condition in paragraph (1)(c) regulations may—

- (a) specify circumstances in which a person is to be treated as being or not being in Northern Ireland;
- (b) specify circumstances in which temporary absence from Northern Ireland is disregarded;
- (c) modify the application of this Part in relation to a person not in Northern Ireland who is by virtue of sub-paragraph (b) entitled to universal credit.

(6) For the basic condition in paragraph (1)(d) regulations may—

- (a) specify what “receiving education” means;
- (b) specify circumstances in which a person is to be treated as receiving or not receiving education.

(7) For the basic condition in paragraph (1)(e) regulations may specify circumstances in which a person is to be treated as having accepted or not accepted a claimant commitment.

#### **Modifications etc. (not altering text)**

- C1** [Art. 9\(1\)\(a\)](#) modified (coming into force in accordance with reg. 1 of the amending Rule) by [The Universal Credit Regulations \(NorthernIreland\) 2016 \(S.R. 2016/216\)](#), [regs. 1, 12\(1\)](#)
- C2** [Art. 9\(1\)\(a\)](#) modified (coming into force in accordance with reg. 1 of the amending Rule) by [The Universal Credit Regulations \(NorthernIreland\) 2016 \(S.R. 2016/216\)](#), [regs. 1, 8\(1\)](#)
- C3** [Art. 9\(1\)\(d\)](#) excluded (coming into force in accordance with reg. 1 of the amending Rule) by [The Universal Credit Regulations \(NorthernIreland\) 2016 \(S.R. 2016/216\)](#), [regs. 1, 14](#)
- C4** [Art. 9\(1\)\(e\)](#) modified (coming into force in accordance with reg. 1 of the amending Rule) by [The Universal Credit Regulations \(NorthernIreland\) 2016 \(S.R. 2016/216\)](#), [regs. 1, 15\(1\)](#)

#### **Commencement Information**

- I14** [Art. 9](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(a\)](#)
- I15** [Art. 9](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(3\)-\(6\)](#), [Sch. 1](#) (with [art. 5](#))
- I16** [Art. 9](#) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))
- I17** [Art. 9](#) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))
- I18** [Art. 9](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

#### **Financial conditions**

**10.**—(1) For the purposes of Article 8, the financial conditions for a single claimant are that—

- (a) the claimant's capital, or a prescribed part of it, is not greater than a prescribed amount, and
- (b) the claimant's income is such that, if the claimant were entitled to universal credit, the amount payable would not be less than any prescribed minimum.

(2) For those purposes, the financial conditions for joint claimants are that—

- (a) their combined capital, or a prescribed part of it, is not greater than a prescribed amount, and

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- (b) their combined income is such that, if they were entitled to universal credit, the amount payable would not be less than any prescribed minimum.

#### Commencement Information

- I19** Art. 10 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(a)  
**I20** Art. 10 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)  
**I21** Art. 10 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)  
**I22** Art. 10 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)  
**I23** Art. 10 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

#### Restrictions on entitlement

- 11.—(1) Entitlement to universal credit does not arise—
- in prescribed circumstances (even though the requirements in Article 8 are met);
  - if the requirements in Article 8 are met for a period shorter than a prescribed period;
  - for a prescribed period at the beginning of a period during which those requirements are met.
- (2) A period prescribed under paragraph (1)(b) or (c) may not exceed 7 days.
- (3) Regulations may provide for exceptions to paragraph (1)(b) or (c).

#### Commencement Information

- I24** Art. 11 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(a)  
**I25** Art. 11 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)  
**I26** Art. 11 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)  
**I27** Art. 11 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)  
**I28** Art. 11 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

#### Awards

#### Basis of awards

- 12.—(1) Universal credit is payable in respect of each complete assessment period within a period of entitlement.
- In this Part an “assessment period” is a period of a prescribed duration.
  - Regulations may make provision—
    - about when an assessment period is to start;
    - for universal credit to be payable in respect of a period shorter than an assessment period;
    - about the amount payable in respect of a period shorter than an assessment period.

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(4) In paragraph (1) “period of entitlement” means a period during which entitlement to universal credit subsists.

#### Commencement Information

- I29** Art. 12 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(a)  
**I30** Art. 12 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)  
**I31** Art. 12 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)  
**I32** Art. 12 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)  
**I33** Art. 12 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

#### Calculation of awards

- 13.**—(1) The amount of an award of universal credit is to be the balance of—
- the maximum amount (see paragraph (2)), less
  - the amounts to be deducted (see paragraph (3)).
- (2) The maximum amount is the total of—
- any amount included under Article 14 (standard allowance),
  - any amount included under Article 15 (responsibility for children and young persons),
  - any amount included under Article 16 (housing costs), and
  - any amount included under Article 17 (other particular needs or circumstances).
- (3) The amounts to be deducted are—
- an amount in respect of earned income calculated in the prescribed manner (which may include multiplying some or all earned income by a prescribed percentage), and
  - an amount in respect of unearned income calculated in the prescribed manner (which may include multiplying some or all unearned income by a prescribed percentage).
- (4) In paragraph (3)(a) and (b) the references to income are—
- in the case of a single claimant, to income of the claimant, and
  - in the case of joint claimants, to combined income of the claimants.

#### Commencement Information

- I34** Art. 13 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(a)  
**I35** Art. 13 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)  
**I36** Art. 13 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)  
**I37** Art. 13 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)  
**I38** Art. 13 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

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## *Elements of an award*

### **Standard allowance**

**14.—(1)** The calculation of an award of universal credit is to include an amount by way of an allowance for—

- (a) a single claimant, or
  - (b) joint claimants.
- (2) Regulations are to specify the amount to be included under paragraph (1).
- (3) Regulations may provide for exceptions to paragraph (1).

#### **Commencement Information**

- I39** Art. 14 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(a)
- I40** Art. 14 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)
- I41** Art. 14 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)
- I42** Art. 14 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)
- I43** Art. 14 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

### **Responsibility for children and young persons**

**15.—(1)** The calculation of an award of universal credit is to include an amount for each child or qualifying young person for whom a claimant is responsible.

[<sup>F1</sup>(1A) But the amount mentioned in paragraph (1) is to be available in respect of a maximum of two persons who are either children or qualifying young persons for whom a claimant is responsible.]

(2) Regulations may make provision for the inclusion of an additional amount [<sup>F2</sup>for each] child or qualifying young person [<sup>F3</sup>for whom a claimant is responsible who] is disabled.

(3) Regulations are to specify, or provide for the calculation of, amounts to be included under paragraph (1) or (2).

(4) Regulations may provide for exceptions to paragraph (1) [<sup>F4</sup>or (1A)] .

(5) In this Part, “qualifying young person” means a person of a prescribed description.

#### **Textual Amendments**

- F1** Art. 15(1A) inserted (11.3.2017) by The Welfare Reform and Work (Northern Ireland) Order 2016 (S.I. 2016/999), arts. 2(1), 10(2); S.R. 2017/46, art. 2(b)
- F2** Words in art. 15(2) substituted (11.3.2017) by The Welfare Reform and Work (Northern Ireland) Order 2016 (S.I. 2016/999), arts. 2(1), 10(3)(a); S.R. 2017/46, art. 2(b)
- F3** Words in art. 15(2) inserted (11.3.2017) by The Welfare Reform and Work (Northern Ireland) Order 2016 (S.I. 2016/999), arts. 2(1), 10(3)(b); S.R. 2017/46, art. 2(b)
- F4** Words in art. 15(4) inserted (11.3.2017) by The Welfare Reform and Work (Northern Ireland) Order 2016 (S.I. 2016/999), arts. 2(1), 10(4); S.R. 2017/46, art. 2(b)

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### Commencement Information

- I44** Art. 15 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, **art. 2(2)(a)**
- I45** Art. 15 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, **art. 4(3)-(6)**, **Sch. 1** (with **art. 5**)
- I46** Art. 15 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 7**)
- I47** Art. 15 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)
- I48** Art. 15 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)

### Housing costs

**16.—(1)** The calculation of an award of universal credit is to include an amount in respect of any liability of a claimant to make payments in respect of the accommodation the claimant occupies as his or her home.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1)—

- (a) the accommodation must be in Northern Ireland;
- (b) the accommodation must be residential accommodation;
- (c) it is immaterial whether the accommodation consists of the whole or part of a building and whether or not it comprises separate and self-contained premises.

(3) Regulations may make provision as to—

- (a) what is meant by payments in respect of accommodation for the purposes of this Article<sup>F5</sup> ...;
- (b) circumstances in which a claimant is to be treated as liable or not liable to make such payments;
- (c) circumstances in which a claimant is to be treated as occupying or not occupying accommodation as his or her home (and, in particular, for temporary absences to be disregarded);
- (d) circumstances in which land used for the purposes of any accommodation is to be treated as included in the accommodation.

(4) Regulations are to provide for the determination or calculation of any amount to be included under this Article.

(5) Regulations may—

- (a) provide for exceptions to paragraph (1);
- (b) provide for inclusion of an amount under this Article in the calculation of an award of universal credit—
  - (i) to end at a prescribed time, or
  - (ii) not to start until a prescribed time.

### Textual Amendments

- F5** Words in **art. 16(3)(a)** omitted (6.4.2018) by virtue of **The Welfare Reform and Work (Northern Ireland) Order 2016 (S.I. 2016/999)**, **arts. 2(1), 15(10)**; S.R. 2018/66, **art. 2(1)** (with **art. 2(2)(3)**)

*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.  
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**Modifications etc. (not altering text)**

- C5** Art. 16(1) excluded (coming into force in accordance with reg. 1 of the amending Rule) by [The Universal Credit Regulations \(NorthernIreland\) 2016 \(S.R. 2016/216\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 4 para. 4**
- C6** Art. 16(1) excluded (coming into force in accordance with reg. 1 of the amending Rule) by [The Universal Credit Regulations \(NorthernIreland\) 2016 \(S.R. 2016/216\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 5 para. 4(1)**

**Commencement Information**

- I49** Art. 16 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), **art. 2(2)(a)**
- I50** Art. 16 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), **art. 4(3)-(6)**, **Sch. 1** (with [art. 5](#))
- I51** Art. 16 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), **art. 3** (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))
- I52** Art. 16 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), **art. 3** (with [art. 6](#))
- I53** [Art. 16](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), **art. 3** (with [art. 6](#))

**Other particular needs or circumstances**

17.—(1) The calculation of an award of universal credit is to include amounts in respect of such particular needs or circumstances of a claimant as may be prescribed.

(2) The needs or circumstances prescribed under paragraph (1) may include—

- <sup>F6</sup>(a) .....
- (b) the fact that a claimant has limited capability for work and work-related activity;
- (c) the fact that a claimant has regular and substantial caring responsibilities for a severely disabled person.

(3) Regulations are to specify, or provide for the determination or calculation of, any amount to be included under paragraph (1).

(4) Regulations may—

- (a) provide for inclusion of an amount under this Article in the calculation of an award of universal credit—
  - (i) to end at a prescribed time, or
  - (ii) not to start until a prescribed time;
- (b) provide for the manner in which a claimant's needs or circumstances are to be determined.

**Textual Amendments**

- F6** [Art. 17\(2\)\(a\)](#) omitted (27.9.2017) by virtue of [The Welfare Reform and Work \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2016 \(S.I. 2016/999\)](#), arts. 2(1), **11**; [S.R. 2017/166](#), [art. 3\(a\)](#)

**Commencement Information**

- I54** Art. 17 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), **art. 2(2)(a)**
- I55** Art. 17 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), **art. 4(3)-(6)**, **Sch. 1** (with [art. 5](#))
- I56** [Art. 17](#) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), **art. 3** (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))
- I57** [Art. 17](#) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), **art. 3** (with [art. 6](#))



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**I58** [Art. 17](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

## CHAPTER 2

### Claimant responsibilities

#### *Introductory*

#### **Work-related requirements: introductory**

**18.**—(1) This Chapter provides for the Department to impose work-related requirements with which claimants must comply for the purposes of this Part.

(2) In this Part “work-related requirement” means—

- (a) a work-focused interview requirement (see Article 20);
- (b) a work preparation requirement (see Article 21);
- (c) a work search requirement (see Article 22);
- (d) a work availability requirement (see Article 23).

(3) The work-related requirements which may be imposed on a claimant depend on which of the following groups the claimant falls into—

- (a) no work-related requirements (see Article 24);
- (b) work-focused interview requirement only (see Article 25);
- (c) work-focused interview and work preparation requirements only (see Article 26);
- (d) all work-related requirements (see Article 27).

#### **Commencement Information**

**I59** [Art. 18](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(b\)\(i\)](#)

**I60** [Art. 18](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(3\)-\(6\)](#), [Sch. 1](#) (with [art. 5](#))

**I61** [Art. 18](#) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))

**I62** [Art. 18](#) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

**I63** [Art. 18](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

#### **Claimant commitment**

**19.**—(1) A claimant commitment is a record of a claimant's responsibilities in relation to an award of universal credit.

(2) A claimant commitment is to be prepared by the Department and may be reviewed and updated as the Department thinks fit.

(3) A claimant commitment is to be in such form as the Department thinks fit.

(4) A claimant commitment is to include—

- (a) a record of the requirements that the claimant must comply with under this Part (or such of them as the Department considers it appropriate to include),

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- (b) any prescribed information, and
- (c) any other information the Department considers it appropriate to include.

(5) For the purposes of this Part a claimant accepts a claimant commitment if, and only if, the claimant accepts the most up-to-date version of it in such manner as may be prescribed.

#### Commencement Information

- I64** [Art. 19](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(b\)\(i\)](#)
- I65** [Art. 19](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(3\)-\(6\)](#), [Sch. 1](#) (with [art. 5](#))
- I66** [Art. 19](#) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))
- I67** [Art. 19](#) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))
- I68** [Art. 19](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

### *Work-related requirements*

#### **Work-focused interview requirement**

**20.**—(1) In this Part a “work-focused interview requirement” is a requirement that a claimant participate in one or more work-focused interviews as specified by the Department.

(2) A work-focused interview is an interview for prescribed purposes relating to work or work preparation.

(3) The purposes which may be prescribed under paragraph (2) include in particular that of making it more likely in the opinion of the Department that the claimant will obtain paid work (or more paid work or better-paid work).

(4) The Department may specify how, when and where a work-focused interview is to take place.

#### Commencement Information

- I69** [Art. 20](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(b\)\(i\)](#)
- I70** [Art. 20](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(3\)-\(6\)](#), [Sch. 1](#) (with [art. 5](#))
- I71** [Art. 20](#) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))
- I72** [Art. 20](#) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))
- I73** [Art. 20](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

#### **Work preparation requirement**

**21.**—(1) In this Part a “work preparation requirement” is a requirement that a claimant take particular action specified by the Department for the purpose of making it more likely in the opinion of the Department that the claimant will obtain paid work (or more paid work or better-paid work).

(2) The Department may under paragraph (1) specify the time to be devoted to any particular action.

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*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
*Changes to legislation: The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

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- (3) Action which may be specified under paragraph (1) includes in particular—
- (a) attending a skills assessment;
  - (b) improving personal presentation;
  - (c) participating in training;
  - (d) participating in an employment programme;
  - (e) undertaking work experience or a work placement;
  - (f) developing a business plan;
  - (g) any action prescribed for the purpose in paragraph (1).
- (4) In the case of a person with limited capability for work, the action which may be specified under paragraph (1) includes taking part in a work-focused health-related assessment.
- (5) In paragraph (4) “work-focused health-related assessment” means an assessment by a health care professional approved by the Department which is carried out for the purpose of assessing—
- (a) the extent to which the person's capability for work may be improved by taking steps in relation to that person's physical or mental condition, and
  - (b) such other matters relating to that person's physical or mental condition and the likelihood of that person obtaining or remaining in work or being able to do so as may be prescribed.
- (6) In paragraph (5) “health care professional” means—
- (a) a registered medical practitioner,
  - (b) a registered nurse,
  - (c) an occupational therapist or physiotherapist registered with a regulatory body established by an Order in Council under section 60 of the Health Act 1999, or
  - (d) a member of such other profession regulated by a body mentioned in section 25(3) of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002 as may be prescribed.

#### Commencement Information

- I74** [Art. 21](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(b\)\(i\)](#)
- I75** [Art. 21](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(3\)-\(6\)](#), [Sch. 1](#) (with [art. 5](#))
- I76** [Art. 21](#) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))
- I77** [Art. 21](#) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))
- I78** [Art. 21](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

#### Work search requirement

- 22.**—(1) In this Part a “work search requirement” is a requirement that a claimant take—
- (a) all reasonable action, and
  - (b) any particular action specified by the Department,
- for the purpose of obtaining paid work (or more paid work or better-paid work).
- (2) The Department may under paragraph (1)(b) specify the time to be devoted to any particular action.

*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
**Changes to legislation:** *The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

(3) Action which may be specified under paragraph (1)(b) includes in particular—

- (a) carrying out work searches;
- (b) making applications;
- (c) creating and maintaining an online profile;
- (d) registering with an employment agency;
- (e) seeking references;
- (f) any action prescribed for the purpose in paragraph (1).

(4) Regulations may impose limitations on a work search requirement by reference to the work to which it relates; and the Department may in any particular case specify further such limitations on such a requirement.

(5) A limitation under paragraph (4) may in particular be by reference to—

- (a) work of a particular nature,
- (b) work with a particular level of remuneration,
- (c) work in particular locations, or
- (d) work available for a certain number of hours per week or at particular times,

and may be indefinite or for a particular period.

#### Commencement Information

- I79** [Art. 22](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(b\)\(i\)](#)
- I80** [Art. 22](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(3\)-\(6\)](#), [Sch. 1](#) (with [art. 5](#))
- I81** [Art. 22](#) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))
- I82** [Art. 22](#) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))
- I83** [Art. 22](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

#### Work availability requirement

**23.—(1)** In this Part a “work availability requirement” is a requirement that a claimant be available for work.

(2) For the purposes of this Article “available for work” means able and willing immediately to take up paid work (or more paid work or better-paid work).

(3) Regulations may impose limitations on a work availability requirement by reference to the work to which it relates; and the Department may in any particular case specify further such limitations on such a requirement.

(4) A limitation under paragraph (3) may in particular be by reference to—

- (a) work of a particular nature,
- (b) work with a particular level of remuneration,
- (c) work in particular locations, or
- (d) work available for a certain number of hours per week or at particular times,

and may be indefinite or for a particular period.

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*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
*Changes to legislation: The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

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(5) Regulations may for the purposes of paragraph (2) define what is meant by a person being able and willing immediately to take up work.

#### **Commencement Information**

- I84** Art. 23 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(b)(i)
- I85** Art. 23 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)
- I86** Art. 23 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)
- I87** Art. 23 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)
- I88** Art. 23 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

#### *Application of work-related requirements*

#### **Claimants subject to no work-related requirements**

**24.**—(1) The Department may not impose any work-related requirement on a claimant falling within this Article.

(2) A claimant falls within this Article if—

- (a) the claimant has limited capability for work and work-related activity,
- (b) the claimant has regular and substantial caring responsibilities for a severely disabled person,
- (c) the claimant is the responsible carer for a child under the age of one, or
- (d) the claimant is of a prescribed description.

(3) Regulations under paragraph (2)(d) may in particular make provision by reference to one or more of the following—

- (a) hours worked;
- (b) earnings or income;
- (c) the amount of universal credit payable.

(4) Regulations under paragraph (3) may—

- (a) in the case of a claimant who is a member of a couple, make provision by reference to the claimant alone or by reference to the members of the couple together;
- (b) make provision for estimating or calculating any matter for the purpose of the regulations.

(5) Where a claimant falls within this Article, any work-related requirement previously applying to the claimant ceases to have effect.

(6) In this Part “responsible carer”, in relation to a child means—

- (a) a single person who is responsible for the child, or
- (b) a person who is a member of a couple where—
  - (i) the person or the other member of the couple is responsible for the child, and
  - (ii) the person has been nominated by the couple jointly as responsible for the child.

*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
**Changes to legislation:** *The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

### Commencement Information

- I89** Art. 24 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, **art. 2(2)(b)(i)**
- I90** Art. 24 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, **art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1** (with **art. 5**)
- I91** Art. 24 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 7**)
- I92** Art. 24 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)
- I93** Art. 24 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)

### Claimants subject to work-focused interview requirement only

**25.—(1)** A claimant falls within this Article if—

- (a) the claimant is the responsible carer for a child who is aged [<sup>F7</sup>one] , or
- (b) the claimant is of a prescribed description.

(2) The Department may, subject to this Part, impose a work-focused interview requirement on a claimant falling within this Article.

(3) The Department may not impose any other work-related requirement on a claimant falling within this Article (and, where a claimant falls within this Article, any other work-related requirement previously applying to the claimant ceases to have effect).

### Textual Amendments

- F7** Word in **art. 25(1)(a)** substituted (27.9.2017) by **The Welfare Reform and Work (Northern Ireland) Order 2016 (S.I. 2016/999), arts. 2(1), 12(1)(a); S.R. 2017/166, art. 3(b)**

### Commencement Information

- I94** Art. 25 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, **art. 2(2)(b)(i)**
- I95** Art. 25 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, **art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1** (with **art. 5**)
- I96** Art. 25 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 7**)
- I97** Art. 25 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)
- I98** Art. 25 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, **art. 3** (with **art. 6**)

### Claimants subject to work preparation requirement

**26.—(1)** A claimant falls within this Article if the claimant does not fall within Article 24 or 25 and—

- (a) the claimant has limited capability for work,
- [<sup>F8</sup>(aa) the claimant is the responsible carer for a child who is aged 2,] or
- (b) the claimant is of a prescribed description.

(2) The Department may, subject to this Part, impose a work preparation requirement on a claimant falling within this Article.

*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.  
Changes to legislation: The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

(3) The Department may also, subject to this Part, impose a work-focused interview requirement on a claimant falling within this Article.

(4) The Department may not impose any other work-related requirement on a claimant falling within this Article (and, where a claimant falls within this Article, any other work-related requirement previously applying to the claimant ceases to have effect).

<sup>F9</sup>(5) .....

**Textual Amendments**

**F8** Art. 26(1)(aa) inserted (27.9.2017) by [The Welfare Reform and Work \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2016 \(S.I. 2016/999\)](#), arts. 2(1), **12(1)(b)**; S.R. 2017/166, art. 3(b)

**F9** Art. 26(5) omitted (27.9.2017) by virtue of [The Welfare Reform and Work \(Northern Ireland\) Order 2016 \(S.I. 2016/999\)](#), arts. **2(1)**, 12(1)(c); S.R. 2017/166, art. **3(b)**

**Commencement Information**

**I99** Art. 26 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), art. **2(2)(b)(i)**

**I100** Art. 26 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), art. 4(3)-(6), **Sch. 1** (with art. 5)

**I101** Art. 26 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), art. **3** (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)

**I102** Art. 26 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), art. **3** (with art. 6)

**I103** Art. 26 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), art. **3** (with art. 6)

**Claimants subject to all work-related requirements**

27.—(1) A claimant not falling within any of Articles 24 to 26 falls within this Article.

(2) The Department must, except in prescribed circumstances, impose on a claimant falling within this Article—

- (a) a work search requirement, and
- (b) a work availability requirement.

(3) The Department may, subject to this Part, impose either or both of the following on a claimant falling within this Article—

- (a) a work-focused interview requirement;
- (b) a work preparation requirement.

**Commencement Information**

**I104** Art. 27 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), art. **2(2)(b)(i)**

**I105** Art. 27 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), art. 4(3)-(6), **Sch. 1** (with art. 5)

**I106** Art. 27 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), art. **3** (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)

**I107** Art. 27 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), art. **3** (with art. 6)

**I108** Art. 27 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), art. **3** (with art. 6)

*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
*Changes to legislation: The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

### *Work-related requirements: supplementary*

#### **Connected requirements**

**28.**—(1) The Department may require a claimant to participate in an interview for any purpose relating to—

- (a) the imposition of a work-related requirement on the claimant;
- (b) verifying the claimant's compliance with a work-related requirement;
- (c) assisting the claimant to comply with a work-related requirement.

(2) The Department may specify how, when and where such an interview is to take place.

(3) The Department may, for the purpose of verifying the claimant's compliance with a work-related requirement, require a claimant to—

- (a) provide to the Department information and evidence specified by the Department in a manner so specified;
- (b) confirm compliance in a manner so specified.

(4) The Department may require a claimant to report to the Department any specified changes in the claimant's circumstances which are relevant to—

- (a) the imposition of work-related requirements on the claimant;
- (b) the claimant's compliance with a work-related requirement.

#### **Commencement Information**

**I109** [Art. 28](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(3\)-\(6\)](#), [Sch. 1](#) (with [art. 5](#))

**I110** [Art. 28](#) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2017/216](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#)) (as amended (15.1.2018) by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 7](#))

**I111** [Art. 28](#) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/1](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

**I112** [Art. 28](#) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by [S.R. 2018/97](#), [art. 3](#) (with [art. 6](#))

#### **Imposition of requirements**

**29.**—(1) Regulations may make provision—

- (a) where the Department may impose a requirement under this Part, as to when the requirement must or must not be imposed;
- (b) where the Department may specify any action to be taken in relation to a requirement under this Part, as to what action must or must not be specified;
- (c) where the Department may specify any other matter in relation to a requirement under this Part, as to what must or must not be specified in respect of that matter.

(2) Where the Department may impose a work-focused interview requirement, the Department must have regard to such matters as may be prescribed.

(3) Where the Department may specify a particular action under Article 21(1) or 22(1)(b), the Department must have regard to such matters as may be prescribed.

(4) Where the Department may impose a requirement under this Part, the Department may revoke or change what has been imposed or specified.



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(5) Where the Department may specify any action to be taken in relation to a requirement imposed under this Part, the Department may revoke or change what has been specified.

(6) Notification of a requirement imposed under this Part (or any change to or revocation of such a requirement) is, if not included in the claimant commitment, to be in such manner as the Department may determine.

(7) Regulations must make provision to secure that, in prescribed circumstances, where a claimant has recently been a victim of domestic violence—

- (a) a requirement imposed on that claimant under this Part ceases to have effect for a period of 13 weeks, and
- (b) the Department may not impose any other requirement under this Part on that claimant during that period.

(8) For the purposes of paragraph (7)—

- (a) “domestic violence” has such meaning as may be prescribed;
- (b) “victim of domestic violence” means a person on or against whom domestic violence is inflicted or threatened (and regulations under paragraph (7) may prescribe circumstances in which a person is to be treated as being or not being a victim of domestic violence);
- (c) a person has recently been a victim of domestic violence if a prescribed period has not expired since the violence was inflicted or threatened.

#### Commencement Information

- I113** Art. 29 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(b)(i)
- I114** Art. 29 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)
- I115** Art. 29 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)
- I116** Art. 29 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)
- I117** Art. 29 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

#### Compliance with requirements

**30.** Regulations may make provision as to circumstances in which a claimant is to be treated as having—

- (a) complied with or not complied with any requirement imposed under this Part or any aspect of such a requirement, or
- (b) taken or not taken any particular action specified by the Department in relation to such a requirement.

#### Commencement Information

- I118** Art. 30 in operation at 2.5.2016 by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(b)(ii)

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*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
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## *Reduction of benefit*

### **Higher-level sanctions**

**31.—**(1) The amount of an award of universal credit is to be reduced in accordance with this Article in the event of a failure by a claimant which is sanctionable under this Article.

(2) It is a failure sanctionable under this Article if a claimant falling within Article 27—

- (a) fails for no good reason to comply with a requirement imposed under a work preparation requirement to undertake a work placement of a prescribed description;
- (b) fails for no good reason to comply with a requirement imposed under a work search requirement to apply for a particular vacancy for paid work;
- (c) fails for no good reason to comply with a work availability requirement by not taking up an offer of paid work;
- (d) by reason of misconduct, or voluntarily and for no good reason, ceases paid work or loses pay.

(3) It is a failure sanctionable under this Article if by reason of misconduct, or voluntarily and for no good reason, a claimant falling within Article 24 by virtue of paragraph (3) of that Article ceases paid work or loses pay so as to cease to fall within that Article and to fall within Article 27 instead.

(4) It is a failure sanctionable under this Article if, at any time before making the claim by reference to which the award is made, the claimant—

- (a) for no good reason failed to take up an offer of paid work, or
- (b) by reason of misconduct, or voluntarily and for no good reason, ceased paid work or lost pay,

and at the time the award is made the claimant falls within Article 27.

(5) For the purposes of paragraphs (2) to (4) regulations may provide—

- (a) for circumstances in which ceasing to work or losing pay is to be treated as occurring or not occurring by reason of misconduct or voluntarily;
- (b) for loss of pay below a prescribed level to be disregarded.

(6) Regulations are to provide for—

- (a) the amount of a reduction under this Article;
- (b) the period for which such a reduction has effect, not exceeding 18 months in relation to any failure sanctionable under this Article.

(7) Regulations under paragraph (6)(b) may in particular provide for the period of a reduction to depend on either or both of the following—

- (a) the number of failures by the claimant sanctionable under this Article;
- (b) the period between such failures.

(8) Regulations may provide—

- (a) for cases in which no reduction is to be made under this Article;
- (b) for a reduction under this Article made in relation to an award that is terminated to be applied to any new award made within a prescribed period of the termination;
- (c) for the termination or suspension of a reduction under this Article.

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### **Commencement Information**

**I119** Art. 31 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(b)(iii)

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*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
*Changes to legislation: The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

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- I120** Art. 31 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)
- I121** Art. 31 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)
- I122** Art. 31 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)
- I123** Art. 31 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

### Other sanctions

**32.**—(1) The amount of an award of universal credit is to be reduced in accordance with this Article in the event of a failure by a claimant which is sanctionable under this Article.

(2) It is a failure sanctionable under this Article if a claimant—

- (a) fails for no good reason to comply with a work-related requirement;
- (b) fails for no good reason to comply with a requirement under Article 28.

(3) But a failure by a claimant is not sanctionable under this Article if it is also a failure sanctionable under Article 31.

(4) Regulations are to provide for—

- (a) the amount of a reduction under this Article, and
- (b) the period for which such a reduction has effect.

(5) Regulations under paragraph (4)(b) may provide that a reduction under this Article in relation to any failure is to have effect for—

- (a) a period continuing until the claimant meets a compliance condition specified by the Department,
- (b) a fixed period not exceeding 26 weeks which is—
  - (i) specified in the regulations, or
  - (ii) determined in any case by the Department, or
- (c) a combination of both.

(6) In paragraph (5)(a) “compliance condition” means—

- (a) a condition that the failure ceases, or
- (b) a condition relating to future compliance with a work-related requirement or a requirement under Article 28.

(7) A compliance condition specified under paragraph (5)(a) may be—

- (a) revoked or varied by the Department;
- (b) notified to the claimant in such manner as the Department may determine.

(8) A period fixed under paragraph (5)(b) may in particular depend on either or both the following—

- (a) the number of failures by the claimant sanctionable under this Article;
- (b) the period between such failures.

(9) Regulations may provide—

- (a) for cases in which no reduction is to be made under this Article;
- (b) for a reduction under this Article made in relation to an award that is terminated to be applied to any new award made within a prescribed period of the termination;

*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.  
Changes to legislation: The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

(c) for the termination or suspension of a reduction under this Article.

**Commencement Information**

- I124 Art. 32 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(b)(iii)
- I125 Art. 32 in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(3)-(6), Sch. 1 (with art. 5)
- I126 Art. 32 in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, art. 3 (with art. 6) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, art. 7)
- I127 Art. 32 in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, art. 3 (with art. 6)
- I128 Art. 32 in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, art. 3 (with art. 6)

**Hardship payments**

33.—(1) Regulations may make provision for the making of additional payments by way of universal credit to a claimant (“hardship payments”) where—

- (a) the amount of the claimant's award is reduced under Article 31 or 32, and
  - (b) the claimant is or will be in hardship.
- (2) Regulations under this Article may in particular make provision as to—
- (a) circumstances in which a claimant is to be treated as being or not being in hardship;
  - (b) matters to be taken into account in determining whether a claimant is or will be in hardship;
  - (c) requirements or conditions to be met by a claimant in order to receive hardship payments;
  - (d) the amount or rate of hardship payments;
  - (e) the period for which hardship payments may be made;
  - (f) whether hardship payments are recoverable.

**Commencement Information**

- I129 Art. 33 in operation at 2.5.2016 by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(b)(iv)

*Administration*

**Concurrent exercise of certain functions by Department for Employment and Learning**

<sup>F10</sup>34. ....

**Textual Amendments**

- F10 Art. 34 omitted (8.5.2016) by virtue of The Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 (S.R. 2016/76), art. 1(2), Sch. 6 para. 62 (with art. 9(2)) (Omitted before coming into operation)

**Commencement Information**

- I130 Art. 34 in operation at 27.9.2017 by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(1)(2)(a)

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*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
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## Delegation and contracting out

**35.**—(1) The functions of the Department under Articles 18 to 30 may be exercised by, or by the employees of, such person as the Department may authorise for the purpose (an “authorised person”).

(2) An authorisation given by virtue of this Article may authorise the exercise of a function—

- (a) wholly or to a limited extent;
- (b) generally or in particular cases or areas;
- (c) unconditionally or subject to conditions.

(3) An authorisation under this Article—

- (a) may specify its duration;
- (b) may be varied or revoked at any time by the Department;
- (c) does not prevent the Department or another person from exercising the function to which the authorisation relates.

(4) Anything done or omitted to be done by or in relation to an authorised person (or an employee of that person) in, or in connection with, the exercise or purported exercise of the function concerned is to be treated for all purposes as done or omitted to be done by or in relation to the Department or (as the case may be) an officer of the Department.

(5) Paragraph (4) does not apply—

- (a) for the purposes of so much of any contract made between the authorised person and the Department as relates to the exercise of the function, or
- (b) for the purposes of any criminal proceedings brought in respect of anything done or omitted to be done by the authorised person (or an employee of that person).

(6) Where—

- (a) the authorisation of an authorised person is revoked, and
- (b) at the time of the revocation so much of any contract made between the authorised person and the Department as relates to the exercise of the function is subsisting,

the authorised person is entitled to treat the contract as repudiated by the Department (and not as frustrated by reason of the revocation).

<sup>F11</sup>(7) .....

### Textual Amendments

**F11** Art. 35(7) omitted (8.5.2016) by virtue of [The Departments \(Transfer of Functions\) Order \(Northern Ireland\) 2016 \(S.R. 2016/76\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 6 para. 63](#) (with art. 9(2)) (Art. 35(7) omitted before art. 35 comes into operation)

### Commencement Information

**I131** Art. 35 in operation at 27.9.2017 by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(1\)\(2\)\(b\)](#)

*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
*Changes to legislation: The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details)*

## CHAPTER 3

### Supplementary and general

#### *Supplementary and consequential*

#### **Supplementary regulation-making powers**

36. Schedule 1 contains supplementary regulation-making powers.

##### **Commencement Information**

**I132** [Art. 36](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)\(i\)](#)

#### **Supplementary and consequential amendments**

37. Schedule 2 contains supplementary and consequential amendments.

##### **Commencement Information**

**I133** [Art. 37](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)\(i\)](#)

**I134** [Art. 37](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(1\)\(2\)\(g\)](#)

#### **Power to make supplementary and consequential provision etc.**

38.—(1) The Department may by regulations make such consequential, supplementary, incidental or transitional provision in relation to any provision of this Part as the Department considers appropriate.

(2) Regulations under this Article may amend, repeal or revoke any statutory provision (whenever passed or made).

##### **Commencement Information**

**I135** [Art. 38](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)\(i\)](#)

#### *Universal credit and other benefits*

#### **Abolition of benefits**

39.—(1) The following benefits are abolished—

- (a) income-based jobseeker's allowance under the Jobseekers Order;
- (b) income-related employment and support allowance under Part 1 of the Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007;
- (c) income support under section 123 of the Contributions and Benefits Act;
- (d) housing benefit under section 129 of that Act.

(2) In paragraph (1)—

- (a) “income-based jobseeker's allowance” has the same meaning as in the Jobseekers Order;

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(b) “income-related employment and support allowance” means an employment and support allowance entitlement to which is based on section 1(2)(b) of the Welfare Reform Act (Northern Ireland) 2007.

(3) Schedule 3 contains consequential amendments.

#### Commencement Information

- I136** Art. 39(1)(a)(b)(2) in operation at 27.9.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/190, **art. 6** (with arts. 7, 8, 10-25, Sch. 3)
- I137** Art. 39(1)(a)(b)(2) in operation at 15.11.2017 and 13.12.2017 for specified purposes by S.R. 2017/216, **art. 4** (with **art. 5**) (as amended (15.1.2018) by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 7**)
- I138** Art. 39(1)(a)(b)(2) in operation at 17.1.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/1, **art. 4** (with **art. 5**) (as amended (19.7.2018) by S.R. 2018/138, **art. 8**)
- I139** Art. 39(1)(a)(b)(2) in operation at 16.5.2018 and further specified dates for specified purposes by S.R. 2018/97, **art. 4** (with **art. 5**) (as amended (19.7.2018) by S.R. 2018/138, **art. 9**)
- I140** Art. 39(3) in operation at 2.5.2016 by S.R. 2016/215, **art. 2(2)(c)(i)**

PROSPECTIVE

#### Universal credit and the state pension credit

**40.** Schedule 4 provides for a housing element of state pension credit in consequence of the abolition of housing benefit by Article 39.

#### Universal credit and working-age benefits

**41.** Schedule 5 makes further provision relating to universal credit, jobseeker's allowance and employment and support allowance.

#### Commencement Information

- I141** Art. 41 in operation at 2.5.2016 by S.R. 2016/215, **art. 2(2)(c)(i)**

#### Migration to universal credit

**42.** Schedule 6 contains provision about the replacement of benefits by universal credit.

#### Commencement Information

- I142** Art. 42 in operation at 2.5.2016 by S.R. 2016/215, **art. 2(2)(c)(i)**

### General

#### Capability for work or work-related activity

- 43.—**(1) For the purposes of this Part a claimant has limited capability for work if—
- the claimant's capability for work is limited by his or her physical or mental condition, and
  - the limitation is such that it is not reasonable to require the claimant to work.

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- (2) For the purposes of this Part a claimant has limited capability for work-related activity if—
- (a) the claimant's capability for work-related activity is limited by his or her physical or mental condition, and
  - (b) the limitation is such that it is not reasonable to require the claimant to undertake work-related activity.
- (3) The question whether a claimant has limited capability for work or work-related activity for the purposes of this Part is to be determined in accordance with regulations.
- (4) Regulations under this Article must, subject as follows, provide for determination of that question on the basis of an assessment (or repeated assessments) of the claimant.
- (5) Regulations under this Article may for the purposes of an assessment—
- (a) require a claimant to provide information or evidence (and may require it to be provided in a prescribed manner or form);
  - (b) require a claimant to attend and submit to a medical examination at a place, date and time determined under the regulations.
- (6) Regulations under this Article may make provision for a claimant to be treated as having or not having limited capability for work or work-related activity.
- (7) Regulations under paragraph (6) may provide for a claimant who fails to comply with a requirement imposed under paragraph (5) without a good reason to be treated as not having limited capability for work or work-related activity.
- (8) Regulations under paragraph (6) may provide for a claimant to be treated as having limited capability for work until—
- (a) it has been determined whether or not that is the case, or
  - (b) the claimant is under any other provision of regulations under paragraph (6) treated as not having it.
- (9) Regulations under this Article may provide for determination of the question of whether a claimant has limited capability for work or work-related activity even where the claimant is for the time being treated under regulations under paragraph (6) as having limited capability for work or work-related activity.

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#### **Commencement Information**

**I143** [Art. 43](#) in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by [S.R. 2016/215](#), [art. 2\(2\)\(c\)\(ii\)](#)

**I144** [Art. 43](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 in so far as not already in operation by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(1\)\(2\)\(c\)](#)

#### **Information**

**44.** Information supplied under Chapter 2 or Article 43 is to be taken for all purposes to be information relating to social security.

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#### **Commencement Information**

**I145** [Art. 44](#) in operation at 27.9.2017 by [S.R. 2017/190](#), [art. 4\(1\)\(2\)\(d\)](#)

#### **Couples**

- 45.—(1)** In this Part “couple” means—
- (a) a man and woman who are married to each other and are members of the same household;



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*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
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- (b) a man and woman who are not married to each other but are living together as husband and wife;
- (c) two people of the same sex who are civil partners of each other and are members of the same household;
- (d) two people of the same sex who are not civil partners of each other but are living together as civil partners.

(2) For the purposes of this Article, two people of the same sex are to be treated as living together as if they were civil partners if, and only if, they would be treated as living together as husband and wife were they of opposite sexes.

(3) For the purposes of this Article regulations may prescribe—

- (a) circumstances in which the fact that two persons are husband and wife or are civil partners is to be disregarded;
- (b) circumstances in which a man and a woman are to be treated as living together as husband and wife;
- (c) circumstances in which people are to be treated as being or not being members of the same household.

#### **Commencement Information**

**I146** Art. 45 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(c)(ii)

**I147** Art. 45 in operation at 27.9.2017 in so far as not already in operation by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(1)(2)(e)

#### **Interpretation of Part 2**

**46.** In this Part—

- “assessment period” has the meaning given by Article 12(2);
- “child” means a person under the age of 16;
- “claim” means claim for universal credit;
- “claimant” means a single claimant or each of joint claimants;
- “couple” has the meaning given by Article 45;
- “disabled” has such meaning as may be prescribed;
- “joint claimants” means members of a couple who jointly make a claim or in relation to whom an award of universal credit is made;
- “limited capability for work” and “limited capability for work-related activity” are to be construed in accordance with Article 43(1) and (2);
- “qualifying young person” has the meaning given in Article 15(5);
- “regular and substantial caring responsibilities” has such meaning as may be prescribed;
- “responsible carer”, in relation to a child, has the meaning given in Article 24(6);
- “severely disabled” has such meaning as may be prescribed;
- “single claimant” means a single person who makes a claim for universal credit or in relation to whom an award of universal credit is made as a single person;
- “single person” is to be construed in accordance with Article 6(2)(a);
- “work” has such meaning as may be prescribed;
- “work availability requirement” has the meaning given by Article 23(1);

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- “work preparation requirement” has the meaning given by Article 21(1);  
 “work search requirement” has the meaning given by Article 22(1);  
 “work-focused interview requirement” has the meaning given by Article 20(1);  
 “work-related activity”, in relation to a person, means activity which makes it more likely that the person will obtain or remain in work or be able to do so;  
 “work-related requirement” has the meaning given by Article 18(2).

#### Commencement Information

- I148** Art. 46 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(c)(ii)  
**I149** Art. 46 in operation at 27.9.2017 in so far as not already in operation by S.R. 2017/190, art. 4(1)(2)(f)

### Regulations

#### Pilot schemes

- 47.**—(1) Any power to make—
- (a) regulations under this Part,
  - (b) regulations under the Administration Act relating to universal credit, or
  - (c) regulations under the Social Security (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 relating to universal credit,

may be exercised so as to make provision for piloting purposes.

(2) In paragraph (1), “piloting purposes”, in relation to any provision, means the purposes of testing—

- (a) the extent to which the provision is likely to make universal credit simpler to understand or to administer,
- (b) the extent to which the provision is likely to promote—
  - (i) people remaining in work, or
  - (ii) people obtaining or being able to obtain work (or more work or better-paid work), or
- (c) the extent to which, and how, the provision is likely to affect the conduct of claimants or other people in any other way.

(3) Regulations made by virtue of this Article are in the remainder of this Article referred to as a “pilot scheme”.

- (4) A pilot scheme may be limited in its application to—
- (a) one or more areas;
  - (b) one or more classes of person;
  - (c) persons selected—
    - (i) by reference to prescribed criteria, or
    - (ii) on a sampling basis.
- (5) A pilot scheme may not have effect for a period exceeding 3 years, but—
- (a) the Department may by order provide that the pilot scheme is to continue to have effect after the time when it would otherwise expire for a period not exceeding 12 months (and may make more than one such order);

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*Status: Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.*  
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- (b) a pilot scheme may be replaced by a further pilot scheme making the same or similar provision.
- (6) A pilot scheme may include consequential or transitional provision in relation to its expiry.

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**Commencement Information**

**I150** Art. 47 in operation at 2.5.2016 for specified purposes by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(c)(ii)

**Regulations**

**48.**—(1) Where any power under this Part to make regulations is expressed to be exercisable for alternative purposes, it may be exercised in relation to the same case for all or any of those purposes.

- (2) Any power under this Part to make regulations includes power—
  - (a) to make such incidental, supplementary, consequential or transitional provision or savings as appear to the Department to be expedient;
  - (b) to provide for a person to exercise a discretion in dealing with any matter.
- (3) Each power conferred by this Part is without prejudice to the others.
- (4) Where regulations under this Part provide for an amount, the amount may be zero.
- (5) Where regulations under this Part provide for an amount for the purposes of an award (or a reduction from an award), the amount may be different in relation to different descriptions of person, and in particular may depend on—
  - (a) whether the person is a single person or a member of a couple;
  - (b) the age of the person.
- (6) Regulations under Article 16(4) or 17(3) which provide for the determination or calculation of an amount may make different provision for different areas.

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**Commencement Information**

**I151** Art. 48 in operation at 2.5.2016 by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(c)(iii)

**Assembly control**

**49.**—(1) Subject to the following provisions of this Article, any regulations made under this Part are subject to negative resolution.

- (2) Regulations made by virtue of Article 47 (pilot schemes), alone or with other regulations—
  - (a) must be laid before the Assembly after being made; and
  - (b) take effect on such date as may be specified in the regulations, but (without prejudice to the validity of anything done thereunder or to the making of new regulations) cease to have effect upon the expiration of a period of 6 months from that date unless at some time before the expiration of that period the regulations are approved by a resolution of the Assembly.
- (3) This paragraph applies to any regulations under this Part which—
  - (a) but for paragraph (4), would be subject to negative resolution, and
  - (b) are contained in a statutory rule which includes any regulations subject to the confirmatory procedure.
- (4) Any regulations to which paragraph (3) applies shall not be subject to negative resolution, but shall be subject to the confirmatory procedure.

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**Status:** Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.  
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(5) In this Article “the confirmatory procedure” means the procedure described in paragraph (2).

.....  
**Commencement Information**

**I152** Art. 49 in operation at 2.5.2016 by S.R. 2016/215, art. 2(2)(c)(iii)

**Status:**

Point in time view as at 16/05/2018. This version of this part contains provisions that are prospective.

**Changes to legislation:**

The Welfare Reform (Northern Ireland) Order 2015, PART 2 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 22 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.