

Glasgow City Council Internal Audit Section

Committee Summary

Financial Services – Universal Credit Migration

Item 3(d)

22nd October 2025

1 Introduction

- 1.1 As part of the agreed Internal Audit plan we have carried out a review of the arrangements in place for migrating Housing Benefit (HB) recipients to Universal Credit (UC).
 - 1.2 UC brings together a range of working age benefits into a simple streamlined single monthly payment for people who are looking for work or on a low income and replaces a range of legacy benefits, including HB. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) began the migration process in April 2023 and has set out an aim to have all applicable legacy benefit claimants migrated to UC by March 2026.
 - 1.3 The purpose of the audit was to gain assurance that there are adequate controls in place for the management of migration of HB recipients to UC and that these are operating effectively, ensuring that HB payments have stopped and Council Tax Reduction (CTR) is in payment where relevant. The scope of the audit included a review of key controls in the following areas:
 - Documented policies, procedures and guidelines.
 - Training and communication arrangements.
 - Process of receiving notification of UC claim from the DWP.
 - System processes used for calculating CTRs based on UC award.
 - Quality checking and controls.
- Management information.

2 Audit Opinion

- 2.1 Based on the audit work carried out, assurance can be taken that the control environment is satisfactory. Although the audit identified one recommendation which management should address.

3 Main Findings

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| <p>3.1 We are pleased to report that the main key controls are in place and generally operating effectively.</p> <p>3.2 We found that there are adequate documented policies, procedures and guidelines in place for the process of UC migration. These documents are available for the relevant team to access via EDRMS and are regularly updated, with all updates being signed off by an appropriate senior officer.</p> <p>3.3 New employees to the Revenue and Benefits team receive formal training by a dedicated officer. Once training is completed, new employees will then be mentored and supervised by experienced members of staff on the work that they carry out. We found that course training records are maintained to evidence the staff who have completed the training. Staff complete an evaluation form after completing training which is used to assess their understanding of the area of work and identify whether any further enhanced training is required.</p> <p>3.4 Notification of UC migration is received daily from the DWP as a file which will detail the personal information of the claimant and information on their migration to UC. Information from the file is then cross checked with GCC systems to ensure details of the case are accurate and can</p> | <p>be processed. In a sample of 30 UC migration cases, we found that all 30 had been processed correctly.</p> <p>3.5 We noted that CTR does not cease to be paid during the UC migration process, instead, it will continue to be paid at the previously applied rate when the recipient was in receipt of HB.</p> <p>3.6 We found that quality checking of UC migration cases is included within wider daily checks carried out by the quality team and that the basis for checks may increase when required, such as when new employees have started.</p> <p>3.7 We found that there are no specific additional management information reporting requirements within GCC for UC migration, however, reports can be produced if required.</p> |
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3.8 In cases where a claimant is living in supported or homeless accommodation, they should remain on HB for the housing cost element of their benefits and not have this aspect migrated to the housing cost element of UC. To ensure there is no duplication in the payment of benefits for housing costs, GCC should send a proforma document (UCMGP1) to the DWP to notify them of the housing situation of the claimant to ensure that the DWP does not pay the housing cost element of UC. In a sample of 15 cases where claimants remained on HB, we found that they were correctly processed. However, in 3 of the cases we could not find evidence that a UCMGP1 document had been sent to the DWP. Despite no evidence of the UCMGP1 being sent, we found there had been no duplication in payments of housing costs as the DWP had not paid the housing cost element of the UC entitlement in these cases.

3.9 An action plan is provided at section four outlining our observations, risks and recommendations. We have made one recommendation for improvement. The priority of the recommendation is:

Priority	Definition	Total
High	Key controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved. Urgent attention required.	0
Medium	Less critically important controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.	0
Low	Lower level controls absent, not being operated as designed or could be improved.	1
Service Improvement	Opportunities for business improvement and/or efficiencies have been identified.	0

3.10 The audit has been undertaken in accordance with the relevant Internal Audit standards.

3.11 We would like to thank officers involved in this audit for their cooperation and assistance.

3.12 It is recommended that the Head of Audit and Inspection submits a further report to Committee on the implementation of the action contained in the attached Action Plan.

4 Action Plan

No.	Observation and Risk	Recommendation	Priority	Management Response
Key Control: Claimants are awarded the correct benefit.				
1.	For cases in which a claimant is living in supported or homeless accommodation the housing cost element of their benefits should continue to be paid through HB rather than migrated to UC. In these cases, a UCMGP1 document should be sent via the DIPS system to the DWP to advise them that the claimant is living in supported or homeless accommodation and will continue to receive HB and should not be paid the housing cost element of their UC entitlement. In a sample of 15 of these cases, there were 3 cases in which there was no evidence of a UCMGP1 document being sent to the DWP. However, we confirmed that no duplicate payments had been made. Management advised that the documents may have been sent via another route, e.g. email. While there was no overpayment in the cases in the sample, without the appropriate UCMGP1 document being sent to the DWP there is an increased risk that claimants may receive duplicate payments for the housing cost element of their benefits.	Management should ensure that staff are aware that a UCMGP1 document must always be sent to the DWP in cases where HB payment should remain, and that this process should be done through DIPS. If there are occasions where staff send a UCMGP1 document through other means (e.g. email), management must ensure staff are aware of the requirement to attach the document to DIPS retrospectively.	Low	Response: Accepted Recommendation Officer Responsible for Implementation: Service Delivery Manager Timescales for Implementation: 31 October 2025