

WCA50 Form Checklist

Every section of the Capability for Work questionnaire, in the order the form asks it, for Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit

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- Checked in October 2026 at GOV.UK and legislation.gov.uk

Before you start

The WCA50 is the Capability for Work questionnaire. It replaced the ESA50 and UC50, so one form now covers Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit. Fill it in only if you have been asked to. If you were sent an ESA50 instead, GOV.UK says you can still fill that in and send it back. Northern Ireland has a different questionnaire.

THE DEADLINE

GOV.UK says you must send the form back within 28 days of the date you receive it. The form itself says to send it back by the date on the letter that came with it, so that is the date to work to. If it is not returned, the form warns that the DWP may decide you are capable for work: on ESA your payments stop, and on Universal Credit your payments may change.

date I received the form

date on my letter (my deadline)

date I posted it

IF YOU NEED MORE TIME

Ask before the date passes. Ring the number on the letter that came with the form. On Universal Credit you can also write in your online journal, or call the Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm). Say why you need longer and note the date, who you spoke to and what they said. If the form still goes in late, send it anyway and answer question 102, which asks why. The DWP has to send a reminder at least 3 weeks after the first request and wait at least 1 more week before it can treat you as capable for work, and that rule only applies when there was no good reason (Universal Credit) or good cause (ESA) for the delay.

FILLING IT IN

On paper, use black ink and capital letters. On a computer, download it from GOV.UK and open it in a PDF reader: GOV.UK says you cannot fill it in on a phone or tablet, and not to use a web browser or Preview on a Mac. A friend, relative, carer or support worker can help you, and you can call the number on the letter with questions. If the boxes are too small, use question 101 or a separate sheet with your National Insurance number on it.

What to gather first

Copies of things you already have. The form says not to pay for new information and not to send originals.

SEND COPIES OF

- ☐ **Your current prescription list**
Question 31 also asks for the dose, how often you take each one and its side effects.
- ☐ **Letters and reports from your GP and hospital doctors or consultants**
- ☐ **Care or treatment plans**
For example from a community psychiatric nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, social or support worker.
- ☐ **Test and scan results**
The results only, not the x-rays themselves.
- ☐ **A symptom diary, if your condition changes from day to day**
Or an epilepsy seizure diary, a certificate of visual impairment or a Hospital Passport, if you have one.
- ☐ **Contact details for your GP and for the people who know your conditions best**
Questions 19 to 25: professionals, carers, friends or relatives.

THE FORM SAYS LEAVE OUT

- ☐ **Fit notes**
Keep getting them and sending them as your benefit asks. On Universal Credit, GOV.UK says you must keep getting them until you are sent your assessment decision. They do not go in the WCA50 envelope.
- ☐ **Appointment letters**
- ☐ **Letters about other benefits**
- ☐ **Photographs, internet printouts and fact sheets about your medication**

Write your National Insurance number on every document and put them loose in the envelope: the form asks you not to attach them to it.

If you think you meet the Severe Conditions Criteria, the form asks you to send any medical evidence you already have that supports it.

Three rules for every answer

MOST OF THE TIME

GOV.UK's guide to the WCA (ESA214) says the healthcare professional looks at the effects of your condition for the majority of the time, not a snapshot of one day. If bad days are more common than good ones, describe the bad days and say how many a week. For the higher group the law says a descriptor applies if it applies for the majority of the time or on the majority of occasions (ESA Regulations 2008, regulation 34(2); Universal Credit Regulations 2013, regulation 40(4)).

RELIABILITY

The form tells you to answer Yes only if you can do the activity safely, to an acceptable standard, as often as you need to and in a reasonable length of time. If you can manage it only once, only with pain or risk or only very slowly, tick No or It varies and explain in the box underneath: how often, what happens, how long it takes, what help you need and what goes wrong without it, with one real, dated example.

SUBSTANTIAL RISK

The WCA50 has no tick-box for it, so it is easy to miss. If being found capable for work, or for work-related activity, would put your own or someone else's physical or mental health at substantial risk, the law may treat you as having limited capability even with a low score (ESA Regulations 2008, regulations 29 and 35; ESA Regulations 2013, regulations 25 and 31; Universal Credit Regulations 2013, Schedules 8 and 9, paragraph 4). Say so in the boxes where it applies and in question 101, with a real example, and send evidence you already have that describes the risk. For the lower group it does not apply if reasonable adjustments at work or prescribed medication could reduce the risk by a significant amount.

Section by section

One box per section, in the order of the form (version 03/26). In grey: the official activity names from the regulations.

ABOUT YOU, YOUR HEALTH AND YOUR TREATMENT

- ☐ **Q1 to 12** About you: name, NI number, address, date of birth, phone, email, pregnancy, hospital stays and prison release
- ☐ **Q13 to 18** Filling it in for someone else: your own details and why you are doing it
- ☐ **Q19 to 21** Your GP or doctor's surgery
- ☐ **Q22 to 25** The professionals, carers, friends or relatives who know most about your conditions
More than one? Use question 101 or a separate sheet with your NI number on it.
- ☐ **Q26** Consent: whether your doctor or other professionals can give the DWP more information
- ☐ **Q27 to 29** Cancer treatment
If it applies, pages 23 and 24 are filled in and signed by a healthcare professional (a GP may charge a fee).
- ☐ **Q30** Your conditions: how each one affects you, the aids you use and roughly when it started
- ☐ **Q31** Your medication: name, dose, how often and side effects
- ☐ **Q32 to 34** Hospital, clinic or special treatment, now or coming up
- ☐ **Q35 to 37** Eating and drinking
Getting food or drink to your mouth, chewing and swallowing. These relate to the higher group (LCWRA or the Support Group), not to the 15 points.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES 1 TO 10

Schedule 2, Part 1 of the ESA Regulations 2008 (Schedule 6, Part 1 of the Universal Credit Regulations 2013 lists the same activities).

- ☐ **Q38 to 42** Moving around and using steps
Activity 1 in law: Mobilising unaided by another person with or without a walking stick, manual wheelchair or other aid if such aid is normally, or could reasonably be, worn or used.
- ☐ **Q43 to 46** Standing and sitting
Activity 2 in law: Standing and sitting.
- ☐ **Q47 to 50** Reaching
Activity 3 in law: Reaching.
- ☐ **Q51 to 55** Picking up and moving things
Activity 4 in law: Picking up and moving or transferring by the use of the upper body and arms.
- ☐ **Q56 to 58** Manual dexterity (using your hands)
Activity 5 in law: Manual dexterity.
- ☐ **Q59 to 61** Communicating: speaking, writing and typing
Activity 6 in law: Making self understood through speaking, writing, typing, or other means which are normally, or could reasonably be, used, unaided by another person.
- ☐ **Q62 to 65** Communicating: hearing and reading
Activity 7 in law: Understanding communication by: (i) verbal means (such as hearing or lip reading) alone, (ii) non-verbal means (such as reading 16 point print or Braille) alone, or (iii) a combination of (i) and (ii), using any aid that is normally, or could reasonably be, used, unaided by another person.
- ☐ **Q66 to 69** Getting around safely (your sight)
Activity 8 in law: Navigation and maintaining safety, using a guide dog or other aid if either or both are normally, or could reasonably be, used.
- ☐ **Q70 to 72** Controlling your bowels and bladder and using a collecting device
Activity 9 in law: Absence or loss of control whilst conscious leading to extensive evacuation of the bowel and/or bladder, other than enuresis (bed-wetting), despite the wearing or use of any aids or adaptations which are normally, or could reasonably be, worn or used.
- ☐ **Q73 to 75** Staying conscious when awake
Activity 10 in law: Consciousness during waking moments.

Section by section (continued)

MENTAL, COGNITIVE AND INTELLECTUAL ACTIVITIES 11 TO 17

Schedule 2, Part 2 of the ESA Regulations 2008 (Schedule 6, Part 2 of the Universal Credit Regulations 2013).

- ☐ **Q76 to 79 Learning how to do tasks**
Activity 11 in law: Learning tasks.
- ☐ **Q80 to 82 Awareness of hazards or danger**
Activity 12 in law: Awareness of everyday hazards (such as boiling water or sharp objects).
- ☐ **Q83 to 85 Starting and finishing tasks**
Activity 13 in law: Initiating and completing personal action (which means planning, organisation, problem solving, prioritising or switching tasks).
- ☐ **Q86 to 89 Coping with changes**
Activity 14 in law: Coping with change.
- ☐ **Q90 to 93 Going out**
Activity 15 in law: Getting about.
- ☐ **Q94 to 97 Coping with social situations**
Activity 16 in law: Coping with social engagement due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder.
- ☐ **Q98 to 100 Behaving appropriately**
Activity 17 in law: Appropriateness of behaviour with other people, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder.

THE LAST PAGES

- ☐ **Q101 Other information: anything that did not fit, dates you cannot attend in the next 3 months and any reasonable adjustments you need (for example a step-free centre or an interpreter)**
A carer, friend or relative can add what they see here too.
- ☐ **Q102 Returning it late? Say why**
- ☐ **Page 21 Declaration signed and dated, by you if you can, even if someone else filled it in**

Before you post it

- ☐ Every question that applies to you answered, and the About you section filled in full
- ☐ Your name and National Insurance number on every extra sheet and every document
- ☐ Copies only, put in loose, never attached to the form
- ☐ A copy of the whole completed form kept for yourself
- ☐ Posted in the envelope that came with it (no stamp needed), never to a Jobcentre Plus office
- ☐ Proof of postage from the Post Office counter, kept with your copy with the date noted on page 1

Stuck on the wording? See one activity of your own written as a full WCA50 answer, free, no card:
www.esaexpert.co.uk/?start=free

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