

Section 4

Completing online forms

25% of jobs are advertised solely online

ICM Research Ltd, January 2012

Completing online forms

Many organisations are now switching from paper to online forms as it saves them money and they are easier to process. Two examples of forms that have gone from paper to online are Camden Council's housing self-assessment form and the Jobseekers Allowance claim form. Most government forms will soon mainly be online, so it is worth knowing how to complete them without help.



If you do not have a computer or laptop with internet access at home you could use one at your local library or UK Online centre (see last section).

This guidance is based on London Borough of Camden's housing self-assessment and the Jobseekers Allowance claim form, which may update over time.

Preparation

Before you start on the form, **make sure you have all the information you will need.** For example, on their housing self-assessment form, Camden Council asks for

- a. the full names and dates of birth of you and your family
- b. your full addresses for the last five years, and
- c. your housing situation.

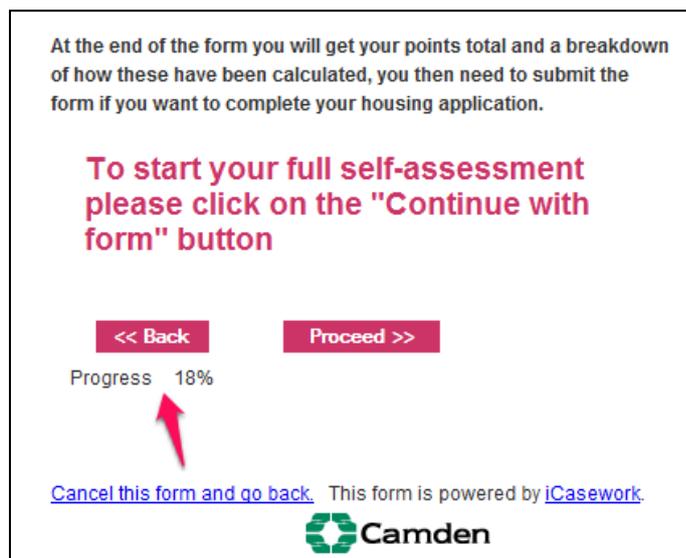
Be aware that once you start on the form, there may not be an option to stop and come back to it. So having all the information to hand will make it quicker and easier to complete. Most forms ask for an email address, so it is worth having an email account set up (see section 2).

Remember to check that the site's web address begins with **https** before entering your personal information

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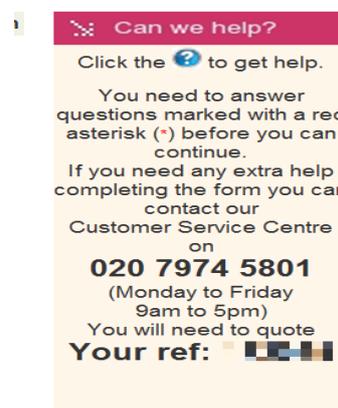
Moving pages

Just like paper forms, online forms can have more than one page. However, you will not be able to see what is on the next page until you have completed the one you are on. In this example 'Proceed' takes you to the next page. Some forms may also tell you how far you have gone in the process.



Reference numbers

Always make a note of any reference numbers you are given. If you need to contact the Customer Services team, this will be the quickest way for them to find your application.



Passwords

You may be asked to create a password or provide other details for your application, such as a memorable word. Try to make this something you are likely to remember as this will make the application process easier for you. Follow the instructions on choosing a password, which will differ from website to website. For example, on the JSA claim form you have to choose a minimum of eight characters which must be letters and/or numbers.

Create password:
Passwords are case sensitive and can include letters and numbers.

Minimum of 8 characters (Only use letters and numbers)

Confirm password:

Minimum of 8 characters (Only use letters and numbers)

You'll need around 30 to 60 minutes to complete your application.

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Required information

You may not need to complete all information on a form, but when you see an asterisk like this *, it means that an answer is required. You will not be able to move on to the next page until an answer is given.

Activity 1

Q. Which of the questions in this image must you answer on this form?

Questions marked with a * are mandatory

Getting started

*** Your date of birth**
You must be aged 16 years or over to claim JSA.
Please check the date you have entered is correct as it cannot be changed later

Day Month Year

*** Your sex**

Male Female

*** Do you have a partner?**
Partner means a person you are married to, have a civil partnership with (including same-sex marriage), or live as a couple with and:

- is age 16 years or over, and
- is a member of the same household, and
- may temporarily not be living at the same address

Yes No

- a. Your date of birth
- b. Your sex
- c. All three questions

Address look-up

It is possible to find your full address from your postcode which means that you won't need to enter every line yourself. There may

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be an option to 'find', 'locate' or 'look up' an address as in the picture below



any address in the UK.

For addresses abroad or sleeping rough please leave these blank and click on the "Continue with form" button.

Look up an address ←

House number and street name

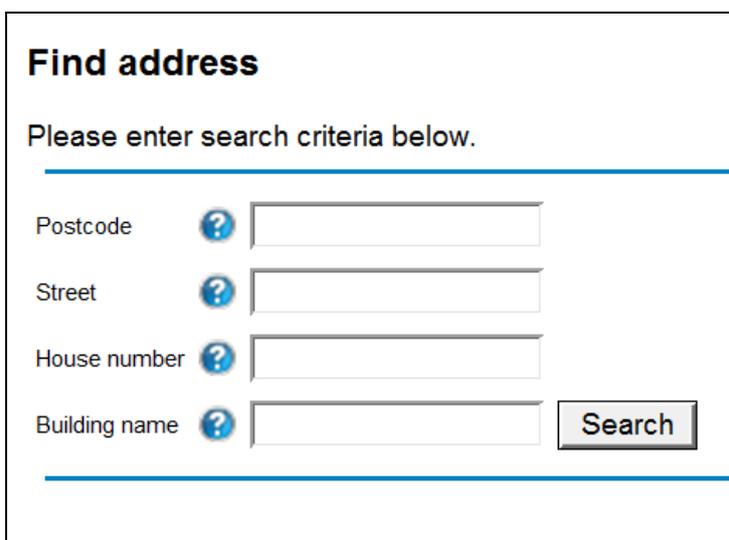
Town

County

Post code

Please choose* Yes No

On Camden.gov.uk's pages a pop up box will then appear which looks like this:



Find address

Please enter search criteria below.

Postcode

Street

House number

Building name

If you only enter your postcode in the first field you will be given a list of possible addresses to choose from. Simply scroll through the options and select your address from the list.

Formats

Check that you have entered information in the correct format. For example, you will either be asked to enter a date of birth like this: DD/MM/YY (e.g. 31/01/99) or like this: DD/MM/YYYY (e.g. 31/01/1999). Again, you will not be able to proceed to the next page if you do not enter the information in the requested format.

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Activity 2

Q. Which date of birth is entered in the correct format for this form?

*** Your date of birth**

Enter date as DD MM YYYY.

You must be aged 16 years or over to claim JSA.

Please check the date you have entered is correct as it cannot be changed later

Day Month Year

- a. Day 14 Month 12 Year 1970
- b. Day 14 Month 12 Year 70

Check for errors

Before moving to a new page or submitting the form, check that you haven't made any errors. Are names spelt correctly? Are your contact details correct? Is all the information you have provided true and accurate?

Submitting your form

Make sure you submit your form at the end of the process. If there isn't an option to 'submit' then you haven't reached the end. **Do not close the internet browser until you have seen confirmation that your form has been submitted or you have saved it.**

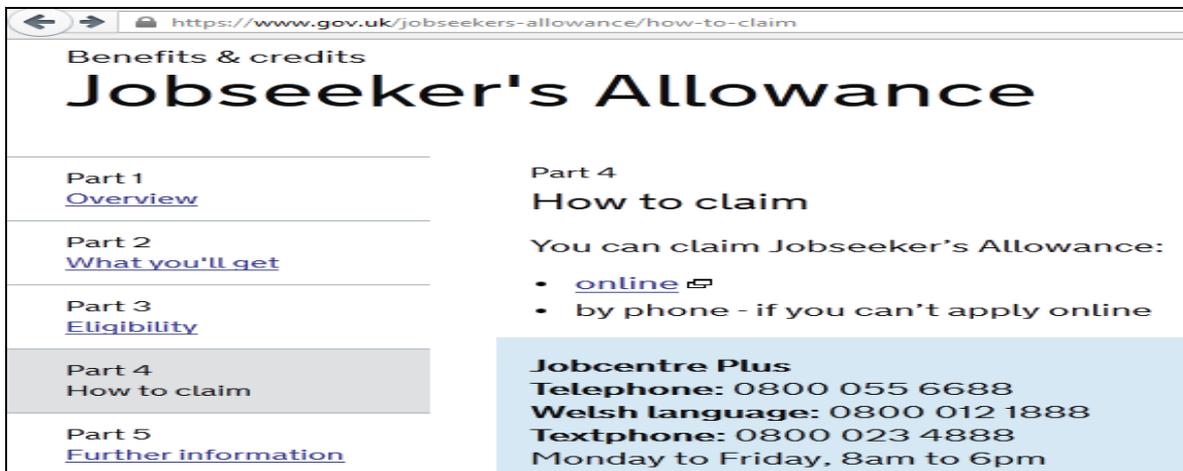
Normally there will be a message on the screen and, if you have supplied an email address, you will receive an automatic message. It is a good idea to check your email inbox after submitting the form.

Further assistance

If you do require any help at all with completing the online form, there should be a Freephone or local rate phone number you can

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call. Both Camden Council and Job Centre Plus have helplines. The details can be found on their web pages. You may even be able to get help in person at local libraries and/or job centres.



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://www.gov.uk/jobseekers-allowance/how-to-claim>. The page title is "Benefits & credits Jobseeker's Allowance". On the left, there is a navigation menu with five parts: Part 1 Overview, Part 2 What you'll get, Part 3 Eligibility, Part 4 How to claim (highlighted), and Part 5 Further information. On the right, under "Part 4 How to claim", it states "You can claim Jobseeker's Allowance:" followed by two bullet points: "online" with an external link icon and "by phone - if you can't apply online". Below this, a light blue box contains contact information for Jobcentre Plus: Telephone: 0800 055 6688, Welsh language: 0800 012 1888, Textphone: 0800 023 4888, and Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm.

Try it yourself

You may not need to complete a housing self-assessment form or claim Jobseeker's Allowance. Here are some suggestions of services with online forms you could practice on.

1. Sign up to My Camden news

Choose to receive news by email related to your interest every week
<http://tinyurl.com/mycamden>

2. Join Camden Libraries

As well as being able to access books, DVDs and CDs, Camden Libraries also offer free computer and internet access. If you have not already joined, go to www.camden.gov.uk/leisure. Select libraries and then 'join libraries'. Or select 'Library Membership' from the 'Apply' menu option on the home page: www.camden.gov.uk

3. Register on the "We are Camden" website

We are Camden is the online place to get involved in decisions that

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Camden Council makes, sign up to local campaigns or share your ideas. Go to 'Register' on the top right hand corner of the page.

www.wearecamden.org

4. Create a "Learn my way" account

Learn My Way features online courses where you can go from learning the basics of computers and the internet to being a confident internet user.

www.learnmyway.com/user/register#step1

5. Register on Oyster Online

This will allow you to top up or renew your Oyster travel card online and view the last eight weeks of your journey history. Registering your card will also protect it against loss or theft and you can receive email alerts of planned travel disruptions. <https://oyster.tfl.gov.uk/oyster>

Skills Check

I feel confident completing an online form with my basic information

I know how to create an online account

I know how to submit an online form

I am able to find contact information for further help