

 **The Scottish Government**

Free school lunches under Universal Credit

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The Scottish Government Aims

1. Describe the impact that the UK Welfare Reform will have on passported benefits in Scotland, in particular on free school lunches.
2. Explain the action that the Scottish Government is taking to mitigate this impact.
3. Invite comments to help inform the further development of policy and legislation on this issue.



The Scottish Government

Welfare Reform – Context

- Consultation document “21st Century Welfare” - published July 2010
- White Paper “Universal Credit: welfare that works” - published November 2010
- The Welfare Reform Act 2012 - enacted from October 2013
- Welfare Reform (Further Provision) (Scotland) Act 2012



The Scottish Government

Universal Credit Aims

1. Streamline working age benefits.
2. Ensure that work pays.
3. Help ensure that claimants and their families become more independent.



The Scottish Government

Passported benefits

- **Definition** - benefits to which some groups of people are automatically entitled because they are in receipt of certain other benefits or tax credits.
- **Responsibility** - of these lies across the Scottish Government, the coalition Government at Westminster, private sector, the voluntary sector and local authorities.
- **Response** - Passported Benefit Policy Leads, Passported Benefits Policy Network (PBPN), Local Authority Data Sharing Programme.



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Eligibility to Free School Lunches in Scotland

- Children whose parents are receiving certain benefits including -
 - Income Support;
 - Income-based Job Seeker's Allowance;
 - Any income related element of Employment and Support Allowance;
 - Child Tax Credit but not Working Tax Credit, with an income is less than £15,860;
 - Both maximum child tax credit and maximum working tax credit with an income under £6420;
 - Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Young people over 16 who receive these benefits in their own right can also claim.
- 130,477 children and young people in school education (19.6%) are registered to receive free school lunches.

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The need to protect entitlement (part 1)

- Public commitment –

“take whatever steps necessary, in the timescales required, to ensure that we protect access to passported benefits when universal credit is introduced”.

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The need to protect entitlement (part 2)

- Links to current policy and legislation, including
 - Achieving our potential;: A framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland
 - Equally Well: The report of the Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities
 - The Early Years Framework
 - Curriculum for Excellence
 - Schools (Health Promotion and Nutrition) (Scotland) Act 2007



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What does the Scottish Government need to do?

- Develop policy for the free school lunch eligibility ahead of April 2013 for new claimants of Universal Credit. Key principles identified
 - entitlement should remain broadly the same;
 - that costs to local authority should be, as far as possible, neutral, and
 - children should continue to benefit directly.
- Consult
 - general consultation on Scottish passported benefits and the changes required as a result of the introduction of Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payments;
 - stakeholder engagement

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What does the Scottish Government need to do?

- Legislate
 - Introduce legislation in the Scottish Parliament early 2013.
- Enact and review
 - communication of policy to local authorities;
 - action required at local authority level to implement legislation;
 - review and take any further ‘measured approach’ necessary to ensure that policy is working in both the short and long term.

The Scottish Government

Aims

1. Describe the impact that the UK Welfare Reform will have on passported benefits in Scotland, in particular on free school lunches.
2. Explain the action that the Scottish Government is planning to take to mitigate this impact.
3. Invite your comments to help inform the further development of policy and legislation on this issue.



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Some useful documents & links

- *'21st Century Welfare'*, Department for Work and Pensions, Consultation and consultation responses, October 2010 - <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/consultations/2010/21st-century-welfare/>.
- *'Universal Credit: welfare that works'*, Department for Work and Pensions, 11 November 2010 - <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/welfare-reform/legislation-and-key-documents/universal-credit/>.
- The Welfare Reform Act 2012 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/5/contents/enacted>.
- Welfare Reform (Further Provision) (Scotland) Act 2012 - <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/48685.aspx>.
- *'Passporting to the future: the SSAC review of passported benefits'* Social Security Advisory Committee, March 2012, <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/ssac-rev-of-pass-bens.pdf>.



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Some useful documents & links

- Welfare reform draft regulations and policy briefing, Department for Work and Pensions - www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/.../legislation.../welfare-reform-draft-regulations/.
- *Scottish Passported Benefits: Consultation on changes required as a result of the introduction of Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment*, Scottish Government, 28 June 2012 - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/06/9166/downloads#res396137>.