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If you would like to receive this information in another language or in another format such as large print, Braille or on audio tape, please contact Customer Services on 01793 463725 for further information.

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Verification of documents

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Verification guidance

The Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit scheme is a national scheme based on regulations set by the Government. We need to know a lot of information about you and your household before we can calculate how much benefit you are entitled to. We use guidance issued by the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) as the standard for the evidence needed.

The guidance sets the **Minimum** standards of evidence that we must receive before a claim for Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit can be paid. The aim is to reduce the amount of fraud and error getting into the benefits system.

When you make a claim for Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit, you must complete the claim form by answering all of the relevant questions. We will need to see proof of both your and your partner's National Insurance Number, of your and your partner's identity, proof of savings and capital, proof of earnings, proof of your household, proof of any other income and where applicable proof of your rent and tenancy.

Proof of identity and National Insurance Number

We need to see for yourself and your partner (if you have one) evidence to prove your

identity and National Insurance Number or sufficient information or evidence to allow a National Insurance Number to be allocated to you. The evidence supplied must be original documents and we cannot accept the same document as both proof of identity and National Insurance Number.

Some examples of acceptable evidence that show your National Insurance Number are listed below: -

- Benefit entitlement letter
- Payslips from current employer
- Latest P45 or P60
- National Insurance Number card
- Letter or document from Inland Revenue or DWP

Some examples of acceptable evidence that can be used to prove your identity are listed below:-

- Passport
- Driving licence (photo-card)
- Home Office acknowledgement letter (SAL1 or SAL2)
- Birth or marriage certificate
- Bank Statement
- Recent utility bill

Neither of these lists is exhaustive. For further advice on proof of your identity or National Insurance Number, please ask a member of staff. If you have already provided proof of your National Insurance Number to us before, we may not need to see it again but we will ask for evidence of your identity every time you contact us.

Proof of Earnings

We need proof of earnings for all adults in the household who are working i.e.

- Last five consecutive weekly or last two consecutive monthly payslips.
- Handwritten pay slips are not acceptable. If you only have handwritten payslips, we will ask you to complete a Swindon Borough Council certificate of earnings form.
- A Swindon Borough Council certificate of earnings form completed by your employer showing the last 5 weeks or 2 months earnings
- Self-Employed accounts for the last financial year
- A letter from your employer stating what your estimated earnings are if you have only just started a new job.

Proof of benefits and other income

We need to see proof of all income received by all adults in the household i.e.

- A complete benefit or tax credit award letter
- DWP benefit entitlement letters
- Private pension payment slips
- Proof of maintenance i.e. A letter from the CSA or from the person paying you maintenance
- Proof of any other income received

Proof of savings and capital

For you and your partner we need to see proof of all capital or any other money held in bank or building society accounts i.e.

- Last two months full bank statements - a slip from the cash-point is not acceptable
- Up to date Building Society or Post Office books showing at least the last two months transactions
- Share Certificates
- Premium Bonds

Proof of your household

If you have other people in the household for example children or non-dependants we need to see proof.

For children this could be one of the following: -

- Your current child benefit award letter or
- A recent bank statement showing payment of child benefit together with the child's birth certificate or
- A recent bank statement showing payment of child benefit together with your Tax Credit award letter.

For non-dependants we need to see proof of all of their gross income ie. before any deductions. Evidence of a non-dependants income should include: -

- Last five consecutive weekly or last two consecutive monthly or last three consecutive fortnightly payslips.

- Handwritten pay slips are not acceptable. If you only have their handwritten payslips, we will ask you to complete a Swindon Borough Council certificate of earnings form.
- A Swindon Borough Council certificate of earnings form completed by their employer showing the last 5 weeks or 2 months earnings
- Self-Employed accounts for the last financial year
- A letter from their employer stating what their estimated earnings are if they have only just started a new job.

Proof of monies paid out

We only need these for yourself or your partner (if you have one) i.e.

- Agreements with registered childminders or nurseries or a letter from a registered child minder
- Letters about student loans
- Private pension contributions (if not shown on your payslips)

Proof of rent and residence

We only need to see proof of your rent if you rent your home from a private landlord or Housing Association i.e.

- A letter from your landlord
- A tenancy agreement
- A rent liability confirmation form

We may also ask to see proof of residency if the other evidence you have provided does not reflect this.

What to do if you don't have all the evidence we need

If you can't provide all the evidence we need when you make your claim, send the claim form back immediately with as much information as you can. Don't delay your claim by holding onto the form until you have all the supporting documents as you may lose benefit. Return the form with whatever evidence you have and include a note explaining you will be forwarding the remaining information within a month.

Useful numbers

Age Concern (Swindon)	01793 692166
Citizens Advice Bureau	0845 0505155
Community Legal	
Service Direct	08453 454345
The Harbour Project	01793 490876
Jobcentre Plus	0845 6060234
Millen Advice Point	01793 480606
Parks Advice Point	01793 487934
The Pension Service	0845 6060265
Stratton Advice Point	01793 823472
Swindon Racial	
Equality Council	01793 528545
West Swindon	
Advice Point	01793 871303
Wiltshire Law Centre	01793 486926

Fraud Hotline

“Do you know someone who is falsely claiming benefit” Don't let them get away with it. Ring the Fraud Hotline on

01793 464690