Employment and Support Allowance

About this factsheet

This factsheet is about Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), a benefit for people of working-age who are currently unable to work because of sickness or disability. There are two types of ESA:

- **contribution-based ESA** is paid if you have enough National Insurance Contributions (NICs)
- **income-related ESA** is a means-tested benefit to cover basic living expenses which can be paid on its own or on top of contribution-based ESA or other income.

This factsheet is a general guide to ESA including the medical tests. See Age UK’s Factsheet 81, *Calculating income-related Employment and Support Allowance*, for details of how income-related ESA is calculated.

The information in this factsheet is correct for the period April 2014 – April 2015. Most benefit rates and other figures are expected to increase in April 2015 but rules and figures sometimes change during the year.

The information in this factsheet applies in England and Wales. Different rules may apply in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Readers in these nations should contact their respective national offices for information specific to where they live – see Section 15 for details.

Section 15 also has details of how to order other Age UK factsheets and information materials and the telephone number for Age UK Advice.
If you need more detailed advice or representation, it is often best to find a local service. Sometimes this is suggested in the text. Age UK Advice can give you contact details for a local Age UK, or you could contact one of the independent organisations listed in Section 14.
1 Recent developments

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) is the main benefit for people of working-age who are unable to work due to sickness or disability. Some people continued to receive Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance and Income Support (on grounds of incapacity for work) after the introduction of ESA in October 2008 but a process of migration is underway to assess these claimants for ESA.

- From July 2013 there is a limit to the total amount of certain benefits that a claimant can receive. This limit is called the ‘benefit cap’. ESA is one of the benefits included when working out how much a claimant is entitled to receive. Although an award of ESA is not directly affected by the cap, any Housing Benefit that a claimant receives may be reduced if their total amount of benefits exceeds the cap and they are not exempt. For more information about the benefit cap see Age UK’s Factsheet 88, *Universal Credit*.

- The process for challenging a welfare benefit decision changed from 28 October 2013 a claimant must ask the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) for a revision before they can directly lodge an appeal with HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HM CTS) if they are not happy with a decision on their application for ESA.

- From October 2013, a claimant commitment for ESA has been rolled out to Jobcentres. This is a record of the claimant’s responsibilities, including the need to attend work-focused interviews and take part in work-related activity. A claimant’s ESA can be reduced by a sanction if they fail to take part in a work-focused interview or undertake a work-related activity. See Section 9 for more information about these sanctions.

2 Future changes

- The descriptors and criteria applied to determine capability for work and for work-related activity (the Work Capability Assessment) are under constant review and the activities, descriptors and points may be adjusted.
As a result of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 income-related ESA, along with some other existing benefits for people of working-age, will be abolished and replaced with one benefit called Universal Credit. Regulations to bring about this change for new claims came into force from 29 April 2013. The Government proposes to move existing income-related ESA claimants on to Universal Credit but may not start doing so until 2017. No-one whose circumstances remain the same should lose out financially when they move to Universal Credit.

3 What is Employment and Support Allowance?

ESA is a benefit for people who have ‘limited capability for work’ or ‘limited capability for work and work-related activity’ (are unable to work due to sickness or disability) and who are not entitled to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

There are two types of ESA:

- **contribution-based ESA**: This is paid if you have enough National Insurance Contributions (NICs). It is not means-tested but may be paid at a reduced rate if you have an occupational or personal pension (see Section 6.1). Contribution-based ESA can be paid indefinitely if you are placed in the support group, but it is paid for a maximum of one year if you are in the work-related activity group.

- **income-related ESA**: This is a means-tested benefit to cover basic living expenses that can be paid on its own or on top of contribution-based ESA or other income. Income-related ESA tops your income up to a level set by the Government and can be paid indefinitely.

4 Who can you claim for?

You claim contribution-based ESA on an individual basis and your relationship status is not relevant. If you have a partner, their circumstances do not affect your entitlement to contribution-based ESA and your contribution-based ESA will be the same amount as if you were single.
You claim income-related ESA for yourself and for your partner if you have one. Their circumstances, including their income and capital, are relevant to the claim and are taken into account. Your income-related ESA may include extra money for your partner, but not for any children. Income-related ESA can also include help with mortgage interest payments and some other housing costs if you own your home.

If you are in a couple and you are both not working, you may have to choose which benefit to claim and who should be the claimant. It may help to get independent advice in this situation. See Section 15 for details for Age UK Advice who can give you contact details for a local Age UK or contact one of the independent organisations listed in Section 14.

See Age UK’s Factsheet 81, *Calculating income-related Employment and Support Allowance*, for details of how income-related ESA is calculated.

5 How do you qualify for Employment and Support Allowance?

To qualify for either type of ESA you must meet all the following conditions:

- have a limited capability for work and not be in work (although in certain circumstances it is possible to do some ‘permitted work’ on ESA)
- be aged 16 or over and under State Pension age
- not be entitled in your own right to Income Support, JSA or SSP
- not be in a couple entitled to ‘joint-claim’ JSA
- be in Great Britain.

5.1 Extra qualifying conditions for contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance

You usually need a certain number of NICs in recent years to get contribution-based ESA. Sometimes you can rely on contributions paid in earlier years, for example if you have recently been a low-paid disabled worker or a carer.
5.2 Extra qualifying conditions for income-related Employment and Support Allowance

You must meet all the following extra conditions to get income-related ESA:

- your income must be less than your applicable amount – which is determined by your personal circumstances – see Age UK’s Factsheet 81, *Calculating income-related Employment and Support Allowance*
- your capital must be no more than £16,000
- you must not be entitled to Pension Credit
- you must not be in full-time education (but there are some exceptions for disabled students)
- your partner must not be working for 24 hours or more a week
- your partner must not be receiving income-related ESA, income-based JSA, Income Support or Pension Credit in his/her own right
- you must be ‘habitually resident’, have the ‘right to reside’ in the UK and not be subject to immigration control.

6 How much is Employment and Support Allowance?

It is possible to receive:

- contribution-based ESA only
- income-related ESA only or
- contribution-based ESA topped up with income-related ESA.

You also receive National Insurance (NI) credits while you are on ESA. In some circumstances you may only receive NI credits – for example if you cannot get contribution-based ESA (because you do not have enough NICs to qualify or you are in the work-related activity group and you have already received it for the maximum one year), and your income (or your partner’s income) is high enough to disqualify you from income-related ESA.
6.1 **Contribution-based Employment and Support Allowance**

The full weekly rate of contribution-based ESA in the ‘assessment phase’ (which is usually the first 13 weeks of your claim) is:

- £57.35 if you are under 25
- £72.40 if you are 25 or over.

In the ‘main phase’, which follows the assessment phase, the basic weekly rate of contribution-based ESA is £72.40 regardless of your age. An additional component of £28.75 or £35.75 a week depending on the outcome of your Work Capability Assessment (WCA) is also paid. This means that main phase ESA is:

- £100.15 if you are in the work-related activity group
- £108.15 if you are in the support group.

Your contribution-based ESA may be reduced if you have gross income from an occupational or personal pension of more than £85 a week. For every £1 of pension over £85, you lose 50 pence of benefit. If you are a local councillor and your net allowances exceed £99.50 a week, this may also affect your contribution-based ESA. Other types of income and capital do not affect contribution-based ESA.

You may get a transitional addition to your contribution-based ESA if you have been transferred to ESA from another sickness benefit (see Section 12).

Contribution-based ESA is taxable.

From 30 April 2012, the Welfare Reform Act 2012 limits the time that you can claim contribution-based ESA to 365 days, unless you are in the support group. Time spent in the assessment phase counts towards the 365 days. If you are affected by this limit because you are in the work-related activity group you may wish to seek independent advice about your options which may include: asking to be considered for the support group, applying for income-related ESA, or applying for contribution-based ESA again at a later date if your medical condition continues and you can meet the qualifying criteria again.
6.2 Income-related Employment and Support Allowance

Income-related ESA is means-tested and the amount you receive is calculated by comparing your income with your applicable amount. Your applicable amount may be made up of a personal allowance, premiums, a component (in the main phase) and, if you are a home owner, housing costs (usually after a waiting period), and sometimes a transitional addition (see Section 12). Your income (including any contribution-based ESA) is added up and if it is less than your applicable amount, your income-related ESA is equal to the difference.

Age UK’s Factsheet 81, *Calculating income-related Employment and Support Allowance* covers the calculation of income-related ESA, including how your income and capital are assessed, and how your applicable amount is made up.

7 The Employment and Support Allowance assessment process

The first 13 weeks of your ESA claim is known as the assessment phase. During this phase you are paid a basic rate of ESA and you undergo an assessment process known as the Work Capability Assessment (WCA).

After 13 weeks, and depending on the outcome of the WCA, you move into the main phase of ESA. You are put into the support group or work-related activity group. You will be paid a higher rate of benefit and you may have to carry out work-related activity.

Some people, including those with a terminal illness, do not have to go through the assessment phase; they go straight to the main phase.

Sometimes the assessment process takes more than 13 weeks, in which case any increase in benefit after the assessment is completed should be backdated to the start of the 14th week.

The assessment phase can be shorter than 13 weeks if your ESA claim is linked to another recent ESA claim.
7.1 Work Capability Assessment criteria

The WCA currently has two parts as follows:

- A ‘limited capability for work assessment’ determines whether you will be entitled to ESA. It assesses your ability to carry out specific everyday activities, based on a points system. You have to score at least 15 points to be assessed as having a limited capability for work and an entitlement to ESA.

- A ‘limited capability for work-related activity assessment’ determines whether you go into the work-related activity group or support group.

The WCA should take place in the first 13 weeks of your claim. Once you are receiving ESA, further WCAs may be carried out at intervals to decide whether you are still entitled to ESA, and which group you should be in. The DWP decides when you have to undergo further WCAs and you do not have any right of appeal about how often you are retested.

Limited capability for work assessment

The limited capability for work assessment is based on your ability to perform 10 physical functions and 7 mental, cognitive and intellectual functions. You are assessed wearing any prosthesis or using any aids or appliances that you normally or could reasonably be expected to wear or use.

The physical functions include things like moving around, reaching and handling things, communicating, bladder and bowel control and remaining conscious.

The mental, cognitive and intellectual functions include learning, awareness of hazards, initiating and completing personal action, coping with change, getting about, coping with social engagement and behaving appropriately with other people.

Each function is broken down into related tasks of varying degrees of difficulty, called descriptors, each worth a number of points from 0 to 15. For example, the ‘reaching’ physical function has four descriptors:

- A: Cannot raise either arm as if to put something in the top pocket of a coat or jacket (15 points)
- B: Cannot raise either arm to top of head as if to put on a hat (9 points)
● C: Cannot raise either arm above head height as if to reach for something (6 points)

● D: None of the above apply (0 points).

You can only score against one descriptor in each function and if more than one applies to you the one with the highest score counts. For example, if both B and C apply to you for ‘reaching’, then B counts and you score 9 points.

Your highest scores for each of the 17 functions are added together and if your total is 15 or more, you will be assessed as having limited capability for work and a continuing entitlement to ESA. If your total score is less than 15 points you will be declared fit for work and you will not receive ESA.

See Section 13.1 for a full list of activities and descriptors and points assigned to each function.

There are some circumstances when you should be treated as having a limited capability for work, without having to score 15 points. If, for example:

● you are terminally ill

● you are receiving treatment for cancer by way of chemotherapy or radiotherapy, are likely to receive such treatment within six months, or are recovering from such treatment

● you cannot work because you are a carrier of, or have been in contact with, an infectious disease

● you have severe problems eating and drinking

● you are receiving specified medical treatments including haemodialysis, plasmapheresis, and parenteral nutrition

● you are undergoing medical or other treatment in a hospital or similar institution, or recovering from that treatment

● you are pregnant or have recently given birth and you meet specific criteria

● you have an uncontrolled or uncontrollable life-threatening disease

● because of your illness, there would be a substantial risk to the mental or physical health of any person were you to be found fit to work but this will not apply if the risk could be significantly reduced by medication to manage your condition or reasonable adjustments being made in your workplace
• you are attending a residential programme of rehabilitation for the treatment of drug or alcohol addiction.

**Limited capability for work-related activity assessment**

Your capability for work-related activity is assessed to decide which group and which component should apply to you in the main phase of ESA.

This assessment is also based on a range of activities with different descriptors. If a descriptor applies to you for the majority of the time, it counts. You are assessed wearing any prosthesis or using any aids or appliances that you normally or could reasonably be expected to wear or use.

You will be assessed as having limited capability for work-related activity, awarded the support component and put in the support group if any one of the descriptors applies to you. In the support group you do not have to take part in work-focused interviews or associated activity.

If none of the descriptors applies, you will be awarded the work-related activity component and put in the work-related activity group. In this group you have to attend work-focused interviews and may have to do some work-related activity, otherwise your work-related activity component could be reduced or removed completely. If you are a lone parent with a child under the age of five or you are receiving Carer’s Allowance or a carer’s premium you do not have to do work-related activity but you do have to attend work-focused interviews. If you have reached the qualifying age for Pension Credit, you are responsible for a child under the age of one or you are only entitled to NI credits you will not be required to attend work-focused interviews.

You do not have to be assessed and automatically count as having limited capability for work-related activity if:

• you are terminally ill

• you are receiving treatment for cancer by way of chemotherapy or radiotherapy, likely to receive such treatment within six months or recovering from such treatment

• there would be a substantial risk to your or someone else’s mental or physical health if you were not counted as having limited capability for work-related activity
• you are pregnant and you need to refrain from work-related activity for the sake of your health or that of your baby.

See Section 13.2 for a full list of activities and descriptors and points assigned to each function.

7.2 How the Work Capability Assessment is carried out

A Decision Maker at the DWP will decide whether you have limited capability for work and work-related activity. When you make your initial claim, the Decision Maker should check to see whether it contains sufficient evidence to make the decisions. If not, they will send you an ESA50 form to complete and return within four weeks. A DWP-approved healthcare professional will then look at the completed ESA50 form and all the other evidence and if there is still insufficient evidence they may ask your GP or other professional involved in your treatment for further evidence or they may ask you to attend a face-to-face assessment. The results of these further enquiries go back to a Decision Maker for a decision on whether you should receive ESA, whether you should be allocated to the work-related activity group or the support group and when you should have a further WCA.

The ESA50 form

It is important to complete the ESA50 form fully as the information on it will be used to decide whether you will get any ESA. The ESA50 form would also play an important role in any appeal about your ESA entitlement.

As well as basic personal details, the ESA50 form asks for information about:

• whether you would be able to attend a face-to-face assessment
• your illness or disability, and any medication or treatment you are having
• details of your GP and any other health/care professionals you see and includes a tick-box assessment based on the descriptors and activities described in Sections 7.1 and 13.
The assessment of physical functions asks if you can perform an activity and usually gives you three options for reply: yes, no and it varies. Read the information on the form carefully and think about whether performing the activity would present any risk or cause you pain, dizziness, breathlessness or tiredness. Also consider whether you could perform it regularly or occasionally. If a task causes you too much pain or discomfort, or if you cannot repeat a task with reasonable regularity you should be treated as if you cannot do it. Use the space for extra information to describe any difficulties you would have doing the activity, or repeating it.

The assessment of mental, cognitive and intellectual functions is similar, asking broad questions about how your illness or disability affects your day-to-day life. Again you are given a number of tick-box options for reply and space to give extra information about your own particular circumstances.

It is a good idea to make a copy of your completed ESA50 form before you send it back.

**The face-to-face assessment**

You should be given at least seven days’ notice of any face-to-face medical assessment which will be carried out by a healthcare professional working on behalf of the DWP.

The healthcare professional will ask you questions designed to find out whether you have any difficulties with the physical and mental, cognitive and intellectual functions described above. They will base their assessment on their observation of you during the assessment and they may carry out a physical examination as well.

Make sure that you answer all the questions fully and do not assume that the person carrying out the assessment has any understanding of how your illness or disability might affect your ability to perform the functions. You may wish to take a friend, relative or carer with you to the assessment.
8 How do you claim Employment and Support Allowance?

You can claim ESA in England, Scotland and Wales by phoning the Jobcentre Plus contact centre 0800 055 6688 (free call). There is also a Welsh language line on 0800 012 1888. Use textphone 0800 023 4888 (free call) if you find it hard to speak or hear clearly.

You can also claim by completing a claim form (ESA1) and sending it to your local Jobcentre Plus office. You can get the form from your local Jobcentre Plus office, the telephone contact centre, or by downloading it from the Gov.uk website (see Section 14 ‘Useful organisations’).

If you are unable to act for yourself, an appointee can make the claim (and receive payment) on your behalf.

You must provide any information or evidence required which may include your National Insurance number, proof of identity, medical certificates from your doctor, proof that your SSP has ended (if you are employed) and proof of your housing costs (for income-related ESA only).

Unless you are recognised as exempt from the WCA straight away, shortly after you claim you will be sent an ESA50 form that you must complete and return within four weeks. The ESA50 form is used to determine the number of points you will score (see Section 7) and so it is important to complete it fully. You will normally have to attend a face-to-face medical assessment as well.

If you are not put in the support group, you will also have to attend work-focused interviews and you may have to do work-related activity.

Your ESA claim can be backdated for up to three months and you should request any backdating on the claim form. In most cases, you can also claim up to three months in advance.
9 Decisions and payment

If you disagree with a decision on your ESA claim, you have the right to ask for a revision of the decision and/or to appeal against it. This applies to most decisions including your capability to work, the amount of ESA you are awarded, and whether you should be in the support group. If you contest one part of a decision, you enable the decision maker or appeal tribunal to look at any part of the decision if they feel it is necessary to do so. If you are appealing a decision that you are fit for work, you can be paid some ESA until your appeal is heard. If your appeal eventually fails, you do not have to repay any ESA paid whilst waiting for the appeal to be heard. From 28 October 2013 you must ask the DWP for a revision first. This is called a mandatory reconsideration. If you are still unhappy with the decision you will then be able to apply directly to HMCTS (known as direct lodgement) for an appeal. See Age UK’s Factsheet 74, *Challenging welfare benefit decisions*, for information about the appeals process.

You do not normally get paid for the first three days of your claim. ESA is usually paid fortnightly in arrears, direct into your bank account. If you are unable to open or manage an account, payment can be made by a Simple Payment card, which can be used to withdraw money from PayPoint outlets.

If your income-related ESA includes any housing costs in respect of a mortgage or home loan, payment of this part is usually made direct to the lender.

Contribution-based ESA is taxable; income-related ESA is not taxable.

Sanctions

There are some situations in which you can be disqualified from ESA for a period, or paid a reduced rate of ESA. This might happen if, for example, you refuse medical treatment that could help you recover. Seek independent advice if this happens to you as it is possible to challenge some decisions to impose a sanction, for example if you have failed to comply with a work-related requirement.
Under the ESA rules you may be required to take part in work-focused interviews and/or work-related activity while you are entitled to this benefit. If you (or your partner) fail to take part without ‘good cause’ the amount of benefit you receive will be reduced by a sanction. The amount of the reduction and how long it lasts for depends on the rules under which you are required to take part. ‘Good cause’ is not defined in the ESA rules but a Decision Maker should consider factors such as attending a doctor’s appointment, transport difficulties or a relapse if you have a fluctuating health problem.

If your ESA is being paid at a reduced (or nil) rate because you have been sanctioned for failing to take part in a work-focused interview or failing to undertake work-related activity, you may qualify for a hardship payment of income-related ESA if you meet the means-test conditions. Hardship payments do not have to be paid back.

10 Changes of circumstances

You must report changes in your circumstances that may affect your benefit. You can do this by writing or by telephone to the Jobcentre Plus office dealing with your claim – their address and phone number will be on letters they have sent you.

Examples of the types of changes you should report include:

● if you do any work, including voluntary work

● if you change your address

● if you have been in hospital for 52 weeks and part of your benefit is paid for someone else

● if you go abroad

● if your medical condition changes to the extent that you might need to move from the work-related activity group to the support group.
11 Other benefits for people receiving Employment and Support Allowance

If you receive income-related ESA you may be automatically entitled (‘passported’) to other benefits including the maximum amount of Housing Benefit that you are entitled to for your circumstances and Council Tax Reduction, help from the Social Fund or a local authority’s/devolved administration’s welfare scheme, help with health costs and free school meals. You may also qualify for other benefits.

If you receive contribution-based ESA, you will not get any other benefits automatically but you may wish to check out your entitlements.

Action: To check your benefit entitlements use Age UK’s online benefits calculator at www.ageuk.org.uk/benefitscheck or ask a local Age UK or independent advice agency for a benefits check.

12 Migration from other benefits to Employment and Support Allowance

Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) and Income Support on grounds of incapacity for work are being phased out. If you are currently receiving one of these benefits you will be reassessed for ESA. If you are over State Pension age and still receiving SDA, you will not be reassessed.

You will usually have to complete an ESA50 form and attend a face-to-face medical assessment as part of the reassessment process. Following the reassessment, you will be migrated on to ESA if you are found to have limited capability for work or limited capability for work and work-related activity. If you are found fit for work after the reassessment, your existing benefit will stop and you will not be entitled to ESA. Seek independent advice about your appeal rights or entitlement to other benefits in this situation.

If you are migrated from Incapacity Benefit, SDA or Income Support (incapacity for work) to ESA:

● you are subject to all the usual ESA rules and conditions
● you do not have to meet the NICs requirements to receive contribution-based ESA

● you are entitled to a top-up payment (a ‘transitional addition’) if your ESA would be less than your Incapacity Benefit/SDA/Income Support (incapacity for work)

● you are treated as having satisfied the assessment phase and the support component or work-related activity component is included immediately

● any pension you have that was ignored before transfer will continue to be ignored in your ESA (this applies if you are migrated from Incapacity Benefit only)

● if you are migrated from Incapacity Benefit to contribution-based ESA, and you are in the work-related activity group, your contribution-based ESA will stop 12 months after the date of migration

● if you are migrated from Incapacity Benefit to contribution-based ESA, and you are in the support group, your contribution-based ESA will not be time-limited.

13 Extracts from the Employment and Support Allowance Regulations (2008) (as amended)

13.1 Schedule 2: Limited capability for work assessment

1. 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.

(a) Cannot either:
(i) mobilise more than 50 metres on level ground without stopping in order to avoid significant discomfort or exhaustion; or
(ii) repeatedly mobilise 50 metres within a reasonable timescale because of significant discomfort 15
or exhaustion.

(b) Cannot mount or descend two steps unaided by another person even with the support of a handrail.

(c) Cannot either:
(i) mobilise more than 100 metres on level ground without stopping in order to avoid significant discomfort or exhaustion; or
(ii) repeatedly mobilise 100 metres within a reasonable timescale because of significant discomfort or exhaustion.

(d) Cannot either:
(i) mobilise more than 200 metres on level ground without stopping in order to avoid significant discomfort or exhaustion; or
(ii) repeatedly mobilise 200 metres within a reasonable timescale because of significant discomfort or exhaustion.

(e) None of the above apply.

2. Standing and sitting.

(a) Cannot move between one seated position and another seated position located next to one another without receiving physical assistance from another person.

(b) Cannot, for the majority of the
time, remain at a work station, either:
(i) standing unassisted by another person (even if free to move around); or
(ii) sitting (even in an adjustable chair); or
(iii) a combination of (i) and (ii), for more than 30 minutes, before needing to move away in order to avoid significant discomfort or exhaustion.

(c) Cannot, for the majority of the time, remain at a work station, either:
(i) standing unassisted by another person (even if free to move around); or
(ii) sitting (even in an adjustable chair); or
(iii) a combination of (i) and (ii), for more than an hour before needing to move away in order to avoid significant discomfort or exhaustion.

(d) None of the above apply

3. Reaching.

(a) Cannot raise either arm as if to put something in the top pocket of a coat or jacket. 15

(b) Cannot raise either arm to top of head as if to put on a hat. 9

(c) Cannot raise either arm above head height as if to reach for something. 6
4. Picking up and moving or transferring by the use of the upper body and arms.

(a) Cannot pick up and move a 0.5 litre carton full of liquid.  15
(b) Cannot pick up and move a one litre carton full of liquid.  9
(c) Cannot transfer a light but bulky object such as an empty cardboard box.  6
(d) None of the above apply.  0


(a) Cannot either:
   (i) press a button, such as a telephone keypad; or
   (ii) turn the pages of a book with either hand.  15
(b) Cannot pick up a £1 coin or equivalent with either hand.  15
(c) Cannot use a pen or pencil to make a meaningful mark.  9
(d) Cannot single-handedly use a suitable keyboard or mouse.  9
(e) None of the above apply.  0

6. Making self understood through speaking, writing, typing, or other means which are normally, or could reasonably be, used, unaided by another person.

(a) Cannot convey a simple message, such as the presence of a hazard.  15
(b) Has significant difficulty  15

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7. 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.

(a) Cannot understand a simple message due to sensory impairment, such as the location of a fire escape.

(b) Has significant difficulty understanding a simple message from a stranger due to sensory impairment.

(c) Has some difficulty understanding a simple message from a stranger due to sensory impairment.

(d) None of the above apply.

8. Navigation and maintaining safety, using a guide dog or other aid if either or both are normally, or could reasonably be, used.

(a) Unable to navigate around familiar surroundings, without being accompanied by another person, due to sensory impairment.

(b) Cannot safely complete a potentially hazardous task such as crossing the road, without...
9. 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.

(a) At least once a month experiences:
   (i) loss of control leading to extensive evacuation of the bowel and/or voiding of the bladder; or
   (ii) substantial leakage of the contents of a collecting device sufficient to require cleaning and a change in clothing.

(b) The majority of the time is at risk of loss of control leading to extensive evacuation of the bowel and/or voiding of the bladder, sufficient to require cleaning and a change in clothing, if not able to reach a toilet quickly.

(c) None of the above apply.

10. Consciousness during waking moments.

(a) At least once a week, has an involuntary episode of lost or altered consciousness resulting in significantly disrupted awareness or concentration.

(b) The majority of the time is at risk of loss of control leading to extensive evacuation of the bowel and/or voiding of the bladder, sufficient to require cleaning and a change in clothing, if not able to reach a toilet quickly.

(c) None of the above apply.
Part 2: Mental, cognitive and intellectual function assessment

11. Learning tasks.
   (a) Cannot learn how to complete a simple task, such as setting an alarm clock. 15
   (b) Cannot learn anything beyond a simple task, such as setting an alarm clock. 9
   (c) Cannot learn anything beyond a moderately complex task, such as the steps involved in operating a washing machine to clean clothes. 6
   (d) None of the above apply. 0

12. Awareness of everyday hazards (such as boiling water or sharp objects).
   (a) Reduced awareness of everyday hazards leads to a significant risk of:
       (i) injury to self or others; or
       (ii) damage to property or possessions, such that they require supervision for the majority of the time to maintain safety. 15
   (b) Reduced awareness of everyday hazards leads to a significant risk of:
       (i) injury to self or others; or
       (ii) damage to property or possessions such that they frequently require supervision to maintain safety. 9
13. Initiating and completing personal action (which means planning, organisation, problem solving, prioritising or switching tasks).

(a) Cannot, due to impaired mental function, reliably initiate or complete at least two sequential personal actions. 15

(b) Cannot, due to impaired mental function, reliably initiate or complete at least two personal actions for the majority of the time. 9

(c) Frequently cannot, due to impaired mental function, reliably initiate or complete at least two personal actions. 6

(d) None of the above apply. 0

14. Coping with change.

(a) Cannot cope with any change to the extent that day to day life cannot be managed. 15

(b) Cannot cope with minor planned change (such as a pre-arranged change to the routine time scheduled for a lunch break), to the extent that overall day to day life is made significantly more difficult. 9

(c) Cannot cope with minor unplanned change (such as the timing of an

(d) None of the above apply. 0
appointment on the day it is due to occur), to the extent that overall, day to day life is made significantly more difficult.

(d) None of the above apply. 0

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. Getting about.</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Cannot get to any place outside the claimant’s home with which the claimant is familiar.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Is unable to get to a specified place with which the claimant is familiar, without being accompanied by another person.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Is unable to get to a specified place with which the claimant is unfamiliar without being accompanied by another person.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) None of the above apply.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16. Coping with social engagement due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Engagement in social contact is always precluded due to difficulty relating to others or significant distress experienced by the individual.</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Engagement in social contact with someone unfamiliar to the claimant is always precluded due to difficulty relating to others or significant distress experienced by the individual.</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Engagement in social contact with someone unfamiliar to the claimant is not possible for the majority of the time due to difficulty relating to others or significant distress experienced by the individual.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Appropriateness of behaviour

(a) Has, on a daily basis, uncontrollable episodes of aggressive or disinhibited behaviour that would be unreasonable in any workplace.  

(b) Frequently has uncontrollable episodes of aggressive or disinhibited behaviour that would be unreasonable in any workplace.  

(c) Occasionally has uncontrollable episodes of aggressive or disinhibited behaviour that would be unreasonable in any workplace.  

(d) None of the above apply.

13.2 **Schedule 3: Limited capability for work-related activity assessment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Descriptors</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| 1. 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. | Cannot either:  
  (a) mobilise more than 50 metres on level ground without stopping in order to avoid significant discomfort or exhaustion; or  
  (b) repeatedly mobilise 50 metres within a reasonable timescale because of significant discomfort or exhaustion. |
| 2. Transferring from one seated position to another.                     | Cannot move between one seated position and another seated position located next to |
3. Reaching.

4. Picking up and moving or transferring by the use of the upper body and arms (excluding standing, sitting, bending or kneeling and all other activities specified in this Schedule).


6. Making self understood through speaking, writing, typing, or other means which are normally, or could reasonably be, used, unaided by another person.

7. 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.

   one another without receiving physical assistance from another person.

   Cannot raise either arm as if to put something in the top pocket of a coat or jacket.

   Cannot pick up and move a 0.5 litre carton full of liquid.

   Cannot either:
   (a) press a button, such as a telephone keypad; or
   (b) turn the pages of a book with either hand.

   Cannot convey a simple message, such as the presence of a hazard.

   Cannot understand a simple message due to sensory impairment, such as the location of a fire escape.
8. Absence or loss of control whilst conscious leading to extensive evacuation of the bowel and/or voiding of the 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.

At least once a week experiences:
(a) loss of control leading to extensive evacuation of the bowel and/or voiding of the bladder; or
(b) substantial leakage of the contents of a collecting device sufficient to require the individual to clean themselves and change clothing.


Cannot learn how to complete a simple task, such as setting an alarm clock, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder.

Reduced awareness of everyday hazards, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder, leads to a significant risk of:
(a) injury to self or others; or
(b) damage to property or possessions, such that they require supervision for the majority of the time to maintain safety.

10. Awareness of hazard.

Cannot, due to impaired mental function, reliably initiate or complete at least two sequential personal actions.

11. Initiating and completing personal action (which means planning, organisation, problem solving, prioritising or switching tasks).

Cannot cope with any change, due to cognitive impairment or
13. Coping with social engagement, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder.

Engagement in social contact is always precluded due to difficulty relating to others or significant distress experienced by the individual.

14. Appropriateness of behaviour with other people, due to cognitive impairment or mental disorder.

Has, on a daily basis, uncontrollable episodes of aggressive or disinhibited behaviour that would be unreasonable in any workplace.

(a) Cannot convey food or drink to the claimant’s own mouth without receiving physical assistance from someone else;
(b) Cannot convey food or drink to the claimant’s own mouth without repeatedly stopping, experiencing breathlessness or severe discomfort;
(c) Cannot convey food or drink to the claimant’s own mouth without receiving regular prompting given by someone else in the claimant’s physical presence; or
(d) Owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour, fails to convey food or drink to the claimant’s own mouth without receiving:
   (i) physical assistance from
16. Chewing or swallowing food or drink.

(a) Cannot chew or swallow food or drink;
(b) Cannot chew or swallow food or drink without repeatedly stopping, experiencing breathlessness or severe discomfort;
(c) Cannot chew or swallow food or drink without repeatedly receiving regular prompting given by someone else in the claimant’s presence; or
(d) Owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour, fails to:
   (i) chew or swallow food or drink; or
   (ii) chew or swallow food or drink without regular prompting given by someone else in the claimant’s presence.
Useful organisations

Carer’s Allowance Unit
Provides information about Carer’s Allowance and how to make a claim.
Tel: 0845 608 4321
Textphone: 0845 604 5312
Email: cau.customer-services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Website: www.gov.uk/carers-allowance-unit

Carers UK
A national charity working on behalf of carers. It offers a wide range of information on carers’ rights and sources of help and contact details for local carers’ support groups.
20 Great Dover Street, London, SE1 4LX
Tel: 0808 808 7777 (free call)
Email: advice@carersuk.org
Website: www.carersuk.org

Carers Wales can be contacted at:
Tel: 029 20 811370
E-mail: info@carerswales.org
Website: www.carerswales.org

Citizens Advice
A national network of free, independent advice centres. Depending on available resources they may offer a benefit check and help filling in forms.
Tel: 020 7833 2181 (for your local Citizens Advice Bureau’s contact details only – not telephone advice)
Tel: 0844 477 2020 (national telephone advice service in Wales – also available in some parts of England on 0844 411 1444)
Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk
Community Legal Advice
A national advice line for England and Wales; paid for by legal aid. This service is available to people on a low income or benefits.
Website: http://find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk/

Disability Benefits Helpline
Provides information about Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance and Personal Independence Payment and how to make a claim.
Disability Benefits Centre, Warbreck House, Warbreck Hill, Blackpool, Lancashire, FY2 0YE
Tel: 0845 712 3456
Tel: 0845 850 3322 (Personal Independence Payment only)
Textphone: 0845 722 4433
Textphone: 0845 601 6677 (Personal Independence Payment only)
Website: www.gov.uk/disability-benefits-helpline

Disability Rights UK
A national charity promoting meaningful independent living for disabled people, promoting disabled people’s leadership and control, breaking the link between disability and poverty, and campaigning for disability equality and human rights.
2 City Forum, 250 City Road, London, EC1V 8AF
Tel: 020 7250 3222
Email: enquiries@disabilityrightsuk.org
Website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Gov.uk
The official Government website providing information for citizens.
Website: www.gov.uk


**Pension Service**

Part of the DWP, dealing with all aspects of State Pensions, including forecasts/statements, how to claim your pension and Pension Credit.

Tel: 0845 60 60 265
Textphone: 0800 731 7339
Website: www.gov.uk/browse/working/state-pension

15 **Further information from Age UK**

**Age UK Information Materials**

Age UK publishes a large number of free Information Guides and Factsheets on a range of subjects including money and benefits, health, social care, consumer issues, end of life, legal, employment and equality issues.

Whether you need information for yourself, a relative or a client our information guides will help you find the answers you are looking for and useful organisations who may be able to help. You can order as many copies of guides as you need and organisations can place bulk orders.

Our factsheets provide detailed information if you are an adviser or you have a specific problem.

**Age UK Advice**

Visit the Age UK website, www.ageuk.org.uk, or call Age UK Advice free on 0800 169 65 65 if you would like:

● further information about our full range of information products
● to order copies of any of our information materials
● to request information in large print and audio
● expert advice if you cannot find the information you need in this factsheet
● contact details for your nearest local Age UK
Age UK

Age UK is the new force combining Age Concern and Help the Aged. We provide advice and information for people in later life through our, publications, online or by calling Age UK Advice.

Age UK Advice: 0800 169 65 65
Website: www.ageuk.org.uk

In Wales, contact:
Age Cymru: 0800 022 3444
Website: www.agecymru.org.uk

In Scotland, contact:
Age Scotland: 0845 125 9732
Website: www.agescotland.org.uk

In Northern Ireland, contact:
Age NI: 0808 808 7575
Website: www.ageni.org.uk

Support our work

Age UK is the largest provider of services to older people in the UK after the NHS. We make a difference to the lives of thousands of older people through local resources such as our befriending schemes, day centres and lunch clubs; by distributing free information materials; and taking calls at Age UK Advice on 0800 169 65 65.

If you would like to support our work by making a donation please call Supporter Services on 0800 169 87 87 (8.30 am–5.30 pm) or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/donate

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