



**Admin
& More**



Frequently Asked Questions

Access to Work Scheme

What is the Access to Work Scheme?

Access to Work is a publicly funded employment support programme that aims to help more disabled people **start** or **stay** in work. It can provide practical and financial support if you have a disability or long term physical or mental health condition.

An Access to Work grant can pay for practical support to help you:

- Start working
- Stay in work
- Move into self-employment
- Start a business

The grant is not for business start-up costs.

How much you get depends on your circumstances. The money does not have to be paid back and will not affect your other benefits.

Your employer may also be responsible for some of the costs of your claim. Access to Work can also give practical advice and guidance to employers, to help them understand physical and mental ill health and how they can support employees.

Eligibility & Application Requirements

You must:

- Have a disability or long term health condition that means you need an aid, adaptation or financial or human support to do your job
- Have a mental health condition and need support in work (you need support to start a new job, reduce absence from work, stay in work)
- Be 16 or over
- Be normally residing and working in Great Britain – there is a different system in Northern Ireland. You cannot get Access to Work if you live in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

In Addition:

- Already be doing full or part-time **paid** work (whether permanent, casual or temporary working in an unsupported or supported environment).
- Be **about** to start work (you can apply if you have a job offer letter/job start date) or you have become self-employed
- Have an **interview** for a job (a letter confirming your interview date)
- Be about to begin a work trial or start work experience under the **Youth Contract** arranged through Job centre Plus. You may also get it if you're getting New Enterprise Allowance.
- If you are employed, you must have a contract of employment and be paid at least the National Minimum Wage.

What is New Enterprise Allowance?

You may be able to get mentoring and an allowance to help you start your own business **or** develop your existing business if you're already self-employed, through [New Enterprise Allowance](#).

You may be eligible if you're over 18 and either:

- You or your partner get Universal Credit, Job seeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance
- You get Income Support and you're a lone parent, sick or disabled

Once you've made a business plan that your mentor has approved, you:



May get a weekly allowance worth up to £1,274 over 26 weeks.



Can apply for a loan to help you with any start-up costs.

Access to Work Frequently Asked Questions

What will an Access to Work grant pay for?

You'll be offered support based on your needs, which may include a grant to help cover the costs of practical support in the workplace.

- Special equipment or software, adaptations or support worker services that will help you do things like answer the phone or attend meetings.
- Help getting to and from work such as taxi fares to work.
- A support worker or job coach to help you in your workplace.
- A support service if you have a mental health condition.
- Disability awareness training for your colleagues.
- The cost of moving equipment if you change location or job.

If you have a mental health condition, you will be offered assistance to develop a support plan. This may include steps to support you going in to, remaining in or returning to work & suggestions for reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

Examples of assistance to develop a support plan:

- Flexible working patterns to accommodate changes in mood and impact of medication.
- Providing a mentor to give you additional support.
- Giving you additional time to complete certain tasks.
- Providing you with additional training.
- Regular meetings between you and your manager to talk about any concerns you may have.
- A phased return to work, such as reduced hours or fewer working days.

Access to Work partners will also work with your employer to advise them how best they can support you in the workplace.

What Access to Work won't cover

- Changes that your employer has to make themselves (reasonable adjustments).
- Items that would normally be needed to do the job whether a person is disabled or not.
- Support that your employer used to provide but has stopped
- the costs of setting up a business/covering costs while the business is being formed including standard items of equipment, support for fact-finding and attending courses, seminars or similar events.

Do 'hidden' disabilities like ADHD count as a disability for the purpose of Access to Work?

- Yes! The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on [your] ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

I'm a student can I apply?

- If you need communication help for a job interview before graduation, you should be able to access this service, even though you're still studying.
- If you have a disability or specific learning difficulty and are studying in higher education, you may be eligible for Disabled Students' Allowances

I'm a face painter/entertainer and don't see myself as being a business as such. Can I still apply?

- A UTR and CV would be appropriate. This will help your adviser in determining whether the business is, or is likely to become, a viable business and therefore eligible for Access to Work support.

How much funding can I get?

Grants awarded or reviewing between now and 31 March 2021 are capped at £60,700 per year.

How do I access the funding?

- You or your employer will buy the items or services you need.
- Access to Work will pay the money back, up to the amount of the grant you've been offered and with any contributions (such as employer or NHS contributions) deducted.
- You have 9 months to claim for costs (increased from 6 months during Covid-19 pandemic).
- If you cannot get your employer or your support worker to sign your claim for costs, you can ask them to send you an email instead. The email should confirm that the costs you are claiming are correct. You will need to print the email and send it to Access to Work with your claim.

What are reasonable adjustments?

- Changing the recruitment process so a candidate can be considered for a job.
- Doing things another way, such as allowing someone with social anxiety disorder to have their own desk.
- Making physical changes to the workplace, like installing a ramp for a wheelchair user or an audio-visual fire alarm for a deaf person.
- Letting a disabled person work somewhere else, such as on the ground floor for a wheelchair user.
- Changing their equipment, for instance providing a special keyboard if they have arthritis.
- Allowing employees who become disabled to make a phased return to work, including flexible hours or part-time working, offering employees training opportunities and recreation.

I am employed. Do I need to speak to my employer before applying for Access to Work?

- Your employer **must** make certain changes (known as 'reasonable adjustments') to make sure you're not substantially disadvantaged when doing your job. These could include changing your working hours or providing equipment to help you do your job.
- You should talk to your employer about reasonable adjustments (<https://www.gov.uk/reasonableadjustments-for-disabled-workers>) before you apply for Access to Work.
- If the help you need at work is not covered by your employer making reasonable adjustments, you may be able to get help from Access to Work.

Does my employer need to contribute to the approved costs?

Access to Work will pay **100%** of the costs if you are unemployed and starting a new job/have been employed in the job for less than 6 weeks or you are self-employed/setting up your own business through New Enterprise Allowance.

If you have been in your job for six weeks or more when you first apply for help, Access to Work will pay a proportion of the costs: (As the employer, you will contribute 100% of costs up to the threshold level and 20% of the costs between the threshold and £10,000)

- Employers with less than 50 staff: Access to Work can pay 80% of the approved costs.
- Employers with 50 to 249 staff: The employer will have to pay the first £500 and Access to Work can then pay 80% of the approved costs up to £10,000.
- Large employers with 250 or more staff: The employer will have to pay the first £1,000 and Access to Work can then pay 80% of the approved costs up to £10,000.

Access to Work would normally cover all additional costs over **£10,000**, subject to cap.

I am self-employed. Can I still apply for Access to Work?

Yes If:

- Operating a business either on your own or in partnership, or working for an employer on a self-employed basis.
- Operating a franchised business on a self-employed basis
- Possessing a Unique Tax Reference (UTR) number

You can apply for Access to Work support if you are over retirement age (and do not have to pay National Insurance) but you will need to have access to the accounts for an established business or a business plan which meets the standard acceptable to a bank or other financial institution, e.g. for new businesses.

I am a company director. Can I still apply for Access to Work?

- If you need communication help for a job interview before graduation, you should be able to access this service, even though you're still studying.

I am employed by ministerial government departments, including the Department for Work and Pensions or one of its agencies. Can I still apply?

You might not get a grant if you already get certain benefits:

Universal Credit, Jobseeker's Allowance or Income Support:

- You can still get help from Access to Work if you work more than one hour a week.

Employment and Support Allowance:

- You can only get help from Access to Work if you're doing 'permitted work'. Work is classes as 'permitted' if all of the following apply:
 - You earn up to £140.00 a week
 - You work less than 16 hours a week
 - It's been agreed with your work coach

The Application Process

How do I apply

There are many ways to apply for the Access to Work scheme. Doing the application online is the quickest and easiest way, however you can also apply by phone or via writing:

<https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply>

Telephone: 0800 121 7479 (Mon-Fri 8am-7.30pm)

Access to Work
Operational Support Unit
Harrow Jobcentre Plus
Mail Handling Site A
Wolverhampton, WV98 1JE

You will need to provide:

- Your national insurance number
- Your workplace address and postcode
- The name of a workplace contact who can authorise your Access to Work payments
- Your workplace contact's email address and phone number
- Your unique tax reference number (if you're self-employed)
- The name of your New Enterprise Allowance mentor

You will also need to explain:

- How your condition affects you at work or getting to work
- What help you're already getting / what else you need

It will help your application if you've spoken to your employer about reasonable adjustments (<https://www.gov.uk/reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-workers>) before you apply for Access to Work.

Admin & More Access to Work Assistance

To apply to the scheme, you need to fill in a lot of paperwork, which can be overwhelming. Admin & More have launched a **series of packages** to assist you throughout the [application](#) process.

We want to make your life [easier](#) so you can **access** the help you need.

We can complete the application on your behalf so you can be reassured that the application has been done correctly. Alternatively, we offer guidance for specific sections of the application. These services include sourcing a set of quotes and submitting payment claims on your behalf. Our team are available to answer any questions you have along the way. Admin & More have worked with clients on the Access to Work scheme for four years, so we are experienced in submitting claims and gathering the information necessary to make the application. Visit our website to find out more about our service.

