



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust

A photograph of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a colorful patterned sweater, sitting and looking out a window. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day. The text 'Access to Work Quick Guide' is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Access to Work Quick Guide

Access to Work Quick Guide

This guide gives an overview of the Access to Work service provided by the Department for Work and Pensions and the centralised pathway at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB) to implement their recommendations. Access to Work supports staff with a disability, neurodiversity, illness or health condition, including mental health who are:

- in paid employment or self-employed
- about to start employment (applications are accepted 12 weeks before starting a role)
- in need of help at a job interview with an employer
- about to start a Work Trial
- about to start a Department for Education supported internship or traineeship
- about to start a self-arranged work experience or young person's work experience
- serving an apprenticeship

Access to Work recognises that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. Barriers can be physical, or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming disabled people can't do certain activities within the workplace. This approach helps Access to Work recognise barriers that make life harder for disabled people. Removing these barriers creates equality and offers disabled people more independence, choice and control. In some cases, this may mean only slight adjustments to the working environment.

There are different elements of Access to Work including:

- Communication Support at Interview
- Travel to Work including Travel in Work
- Support Worker
- Adaptations to Premises and Equipment
- Special Aids and Equipment

To receive support through Access to Work, staff must:

- Be disabled, have an illness or a health condition that impacts on their ability to work

- Be 16 or over (there's no upper age limit for support as long as employment is likely to continue)
- Have the right to work in Great Britain
- Be living in Great Britain

Someone is disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial, negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. Staff whose disability, illness or health condition does not substantially affect their normal day to day activities, but has a considerable adverse effect on their ability to do their job can also apply.

All staff are encouraged to share their disability status on ESR. This is confidential and no one in your team, including your line manager will see this information unless you choose to share it with them. Knowing about your disability can help us to ensure UHB has the right support in place for everyone. For more information about sharing your disability contact the Inclusion Team by emailing inclusion@uhb.nhs.uk

Staff do not need a formal diagnosis to request support from Access to Work. Access to Work will not diagnose, but they will support any member of staff experiencing a difference or disadvantage at work because of a disability, long term health condition, mental health condition or neurodiversity, regardless of whether this has been formally diagnosed or not.

A staff member must contact Access to Work themselves. Line managers and other Teams can direct staff to Access to Work but cannot make the initial referral on behalf of a member of staff, though they can support a member of staff to make the referral themselves. Contact details can be found <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work> website.

We recommend that staff request the Inclusion Team be included and that staff request reports to also be sent to workplaceadjustments@uhb.nhs.uk this will ensure adjustments are implemented as quickly as possible.

Applications are closed if there has been no contact with the

applicant after three attempts, a letter goes unanswered for ten days, or an applicant wishes to end their application at any point. When direct information is requested from either a staff member or manager, this should be provided within 72 hours or an application may be closed.

Access to Work will need to assess how a member of staff's condition affects the way they can or will do their job, which may include arranging an independent holistic workplace assessment. This will be with a specialist for an objective analysis of how the member of staff's condition will affect their ability to do a job. This will either be carried out online or in person. Access to Work will not fund costs of diagnosis for conditions or disabilities.

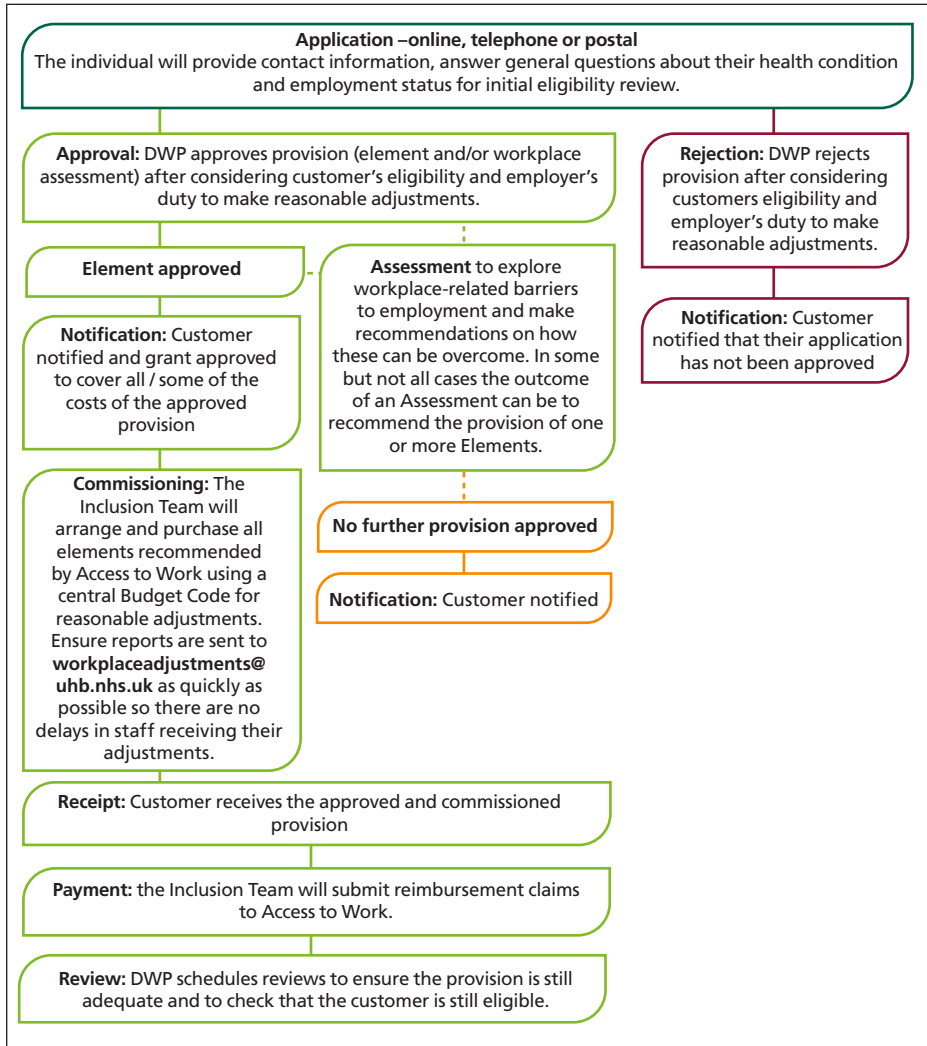
Access to Work will then write to all those named on the application including the employee, the manager, and the Inclusion Team (if the workplaceadjustments@uhb.nhs.uk email address was included on the application), with the suggested alterations, adaptations, or equipment to enable the member of staff to carry out their role.

Employers have a legal responsibility to make adequate provision for disabled people present on their premises including

- Building (Fourth Amendment) Regulations, 1985
- Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Amendment) Act, 1976
- Health and Safety Acts and other Regulations
- Equality Act 2010
- England and Wales – Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

Application

Figure1 - Access to Work Application Flow Chart



Applicants cannot appeal against a level of reward, but for each award, an applicant is allowed one reconsideration by a different assessor. Reviews take place, at a minimum, annually.

Purchasing

Once a member of staff has received a report from Access to Work this should be sent to workplaceadjustments@uhb.nhs.uk as soon as possible.

The Inclusion Team will discuss the suggested adjustments with the member of staff. Once agreed, the Inclusion Team will purchase the elements from a central budget. Physical items will be delivered to the Trust's Reasonable Adjustments Officer's area of work, software will be purchased and the member of staff will then need to raise a ticket with the IT service desk for installation, training will be purchased and the member of staff can arrange for this training to be completed at a convenient time.

Items with recurrent costs such as transport to and from work or support workers will need to be organised by the department directly.

Whilst the ordering and delivery process is underway the Inclusion Team will provide weekly updates to the member of staff and their line manager and can be contacted at any time to discuss progress.

Costs

The average cost of a reasonable adjustment suggested by Access to Work is under £70. Staff that apply to Access to Work within their first 6 weeks of working at the Trust will have all costs fully reimbursed by Access to Work and are more likely to have the adjustments that they require in place when they start in post. Applications made after 6 weeks will be reimbursed at roughly 80% of the cost. The Inclusion Team will organise and request any reimbursement.

Access to Work will also consider paying grants of up to 100% of the cost of certain types of provision, including:

- The Mental Health Support Service
- Support workers

- Additional travel to and in work
- Communication support at interviews.

Review

All staff can receive an annual review from Access to Work to assess if their needs have changed or if Access to Work can make any further recommendations for adjustments. We would recommend that all staff contact Access to Work to request this review every 12 months.

Further Information

For information about UHB's Disability or Long Term Health Condition Staff Network or Neurodiversity Staff Network, or to speak to a member of the Inclusion Team, please contact inclusion@uhb.nhs.uk

Full details about the Access to Work process can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-staff-guide>

NHS Employers

<https://www.nhsemployers.org/retention-and-staff-experience/diversity-and-inclusion/policy-and-guidance/disability/reasonable-adjustments-in-the-workplace>

