

Raising The Game on Disability

Topic 06 – Access to Work

June 2013

Time

15 minutes

Objectives

At the end of this topic learners will be able to explain the main principles of Access to Work.

Learning Points

This topic will cover the following learning points:

- Access to Work.

Event Preparation

- projector and screen.
- laptop (for use when a projector and screen are not available).
- Pre-prepared flip chart: AtW The Main Principles.

Support Material

- Pre-prepared flip chart: AtW The Main Principles.

Validation

Successful completion of this event will be measured by question and answer.

Method of Delivery

This topic is facilitator led and has been designed to be run as a workshop.

It also includes:

- facilitator input; and
- group exercise.

ACCESS to WORK



Ask the group as a whole if they have heard of 'Access to Work' (AtW) and to call out what they know about it.



Display a pre-prepared flipchart showing the main principles of AtW.

AtW – The Main Principles



- Grant based programme
- Must be about to start work or in work
- Aim is to provide practical support with overcoming work related obstacles from disability
- Around since 1994 - six main elements:
 - Communication Support at Interview
 - Travel to Work
 - Support Worker
 - Adaptations to Premises and Equipment
 - Special Aids and Equipment
 - Miscellaneous including Travel in Work.



Facilitate a discussion by asking the group the following questions:

- What do you know about these principles?
- How good are you at using them?



It is important to remember that it is tailored support to the individual.

There are two main criteria – disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 – day to day refers to in work.

- Must be paid employment or self employment
- Must be 16 but no upper age limit
- Shouldn't be on benefits e.g. ESA.

Special Aids and Equipment – grants to adapt the equipment in the workplace e.g. for hearing impaired Text phone, minicom, loop aids not standard. For sight impaired – software, readers, enlarge text.

There is a mandatory element cost share for these elements based on when the person started with the employer this was a change in the scheme from April 2011 and the cost share is as follows:

- 1 - 9 employees: no cost share

- 10 - 49 employees: £300 + 20% of the residual
- 50 – 249 employees: £500 + 20% of the residual
- over 250 employees: £1000 + 20% of the residual

We are trying to work with the employer and look at their responsibility too. This person is part of their organisation and they need to take an interest at the same time as helping us to manage the budget – share the responsibility.

Travel to Work – to be honest, this is not just about putting people in taxis but exploring the options. For example; route training, driver support. With this element we take into account how much it would cost for them to travel usually e.g. bus fares and deduct it from the overall cost.

Support Work – interpreter support, counsellor, carer, personal reader for visually impaired or, in the beginning job coach to help with training (we would look at this tapering off after the initial period). We will pay 100% of the cost of the support worker element.

Communicator support at interview – no cost share

Once the application is made - We evaluate the individual's needs. Some disabled people might not need any help.

We agree what the additional support is notify employer and individual what the grant is and they then claim this back once the support is in place.

There are three operating centres – London, Cardiff and Glasgow.

The applicant contacts one of these. The application form is filled in over the phone and sent out to the individual for signing. When application form is received back and signed by the individual then this is sent to an Adviser who will liase with the individual and employer. Where technical information is required we can provide this through one of our contractors.

Changes since April 2010:

- Cost share – as previously mentioned
- Introduction of Work Choice.



Please refer learners to Annex 6 of the Work Choice Provider Guidance for information regarding Work Choice participants access to AtW:

www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/work-choiceannex6.pdf.



Since the programme has been running, accessibility software has progressed and where this is available off the shelf, we would expect the employer to purchase this themselves.

For example: Dragon screen reading software is now available off the shelf and the employer should consider the purchase of this as reasonable. It costs around £60.

Off the shelf software is considered tools for the job and if kit is purchased by the employer off the shelf then training for this is also considered tools for the job and the employer needs to consider paying for this.

Any software we provide AtW will consider the additional training that goes with that.

If something above the basic is required then AtW will look at this, taking into account what is covered by an employer's responsibilities regarding reasonable adjustments. We still provide the assessment and if this is through one of our contractors we will pay for this.

Anything that is agreed by way of a grant should be claimed back within six months.

Contact details are on the DirectGov Internet site, including a generic email address for each contact centre.



Refer the learners to the DWP Intranet for more information – make sure that learners understand that the principles of AtW apply to all those individuals who work for departments that cannot access the funds of AtW like Jobcentre Plus.

Highlight the fact that finance should not be given as a reason for not providing a reasonable adjustment, DWP nationally will meet any justified cost of reasonable adjustment if local or regional budgets are unable to meet the cost.



Ask the learners if they have any questions before closing the event.

END OF TOPIC 05 AND THE WORKSHOP