

# Factsheet 33

## ESA activities, descriptors and points - excerpt from the DA ESA Guide

### Limited capability for work assessment

#### Physical functions

Activities 1 to 11 cover physical functions. To be assessed as having a limited capability for work, you need to score 15 points or more. Add together the highest score from each activity that applies to you.

The scores from these activities can be added to those in the mental, cognitive and intellectual function activities (see activities 12 to 21).

Activity	Points
<b>1. Walking with a walking stick or other aid if such aid is normally used</b>	
A Cannot walk at all	15
B Cannot walk more than 50 metres on level ground without repeatedly stopping or severe discomfort	15
C Cannot walk up or down two steps even with the support of a handrail	15
D Cannot walk more than 100 metres on level ground without stopping or severe discomfort	9
E Cannot walk more than 200 metres on level ground without stopping or severe discomfort	6
F None of the above apply	0
<b>2. Standing and sitting</b>	
A Cannot stand for more than 10 minutes, unassisted by another person, even if free to move around, before needing to sit down	15
B Cannot sit in a chair with a high back and no arms for more than 10 minutes before needing to move from the chair because the degree of discomfort experienced makes it impossible to continue sitting	15
C Cannot rise to standing from sitting in an upright chair without physical assistance from another person	15
D Cannot move between one seated position and another seated position located next to one another without receiving physical assistance from another person	15
E Cannot stand for more than 30 minutes, even if free to move around, before needing to sit down	6
F Cannot sit in a chair with a high back and no arms for more than 30 minutes without needing to move from the chair because the degree of discomfort experienced makes it impossible to continue sitting	6
G None of the above apply	0
<b>3. Bending or kneeling</b>	
A Cannot bend to touch knees and straighten up again	15
B Cannot bend, kneel or squat, as if to pick up a light object, such as a piece of paper, situated 15cm from the floor on a low shelf, and to move it and straighten up again without the help of another person	9
C Cannot bend, kneel or squat, as if to pick up a light object off the floor and straighten up again without the help of another person	6
D None of the above apply	0
<b>4. Reaching</b>	
A Cannot raise either arm as if to put something in the top pocket of a coat or jacket	15
B Cannot put either arm behind back as if to put on a coat or jacket	15
C Cannot raise either arm to top of head as if to put on a hat	9
D Cannot raise either arm above head height as if to reach for something	6
E None of the above apply	0
<b>5. Picking up and moving or transferring by the use of the upper body and arms (excluding all other activities specified in Part 1 of this Schedule)</b>	
A Cannot pick up and move a 0.5 litre carton full of liquid with either hand	15
B Cannot pick up and move a one litre carton full of liquid with either hand	9
C Cannot pick up and move a light but bulky object such as an empty cardboard box, requiring the use of both hands together	6
D None of the above apply	0
<b>6. Manual dexterity</b>	
A Cannot turn a 'star-headed' sink tap with either hand	15
B Cannot pick up a £1 coin or equivalent with either hand	15
C Cannot turn the pages of a book with either hand	15
D Cannot physically use a pen or pencil	9
E Cannot physically use a conventional keyboard or mouse	9
F Cannot do up/undo small buttons, such as shirt or blouse buttons	9
G Cannot turn a 'star-headed' sink tap with one hand but can with the other	6
H Cannot pick up a £1 coin or equivalent with one hand but can with the other	6
I Cannot pour from an open 0.5 litre carton full of liquid	6
J None of the above apply	0
<b>7. Speech</b>	
A Cannot speak at all	15
B Speech cannot be understood by strangers	15
C Strangers have great difficulty understanding speech	9
D Strangers have some difficulty understanding speech	6
E None of the above apply	0
<b>8. Hearing with a hearing aid or other aid if normally worn</b>	
A Cannot hear at all	15
B Cannot hear well enough to be able to hear someone talking in a loud voice in a quiet room, sufficiently clearly to distinguish the words being spoken	15
C Cannot hear someone talking in a normal voice in a quiet room, sufficiently clearly to distinguish the words being spoken	9

- D Cannot hear someone talking in a loud voice in a busy street, sufficiently clearly to distinguish the words being spoken 6
- E None of the above apply 0

**9. Vision including visual acuity and visual fields, in normal daylight or bright electric light, with glasses or other aid to vision if such aid is normally worn**

- A Cannot see at all 15
- B Cannot see well enough to read 16 point print at a distance of greater than 20cm 15
- C Has 50% or greater reduction of visual fields 15
- D Cannot see well enough to recognise a friend at a distance of a least 5 metres 9
- E Has 25% or more but less than 50% reduction of visual fields 6
- F Cannot see well enough to recognise a friend at a distance of at least 15 metres 6
- G None of the above apply 0

**10. Contenance**

**A Contenance other than enuresis (bed wetting) where the claimant does not have an artificial stoma or urinary collecting device**

- i Has no voluntary control over the evacuation of the bowel 15
- ii Has no voluntary control over the voiding of the bladder 15
- iii At least once a month loses control of bowels so that the claimant cannot control the full evacuation of the bowel 15
- iv At least once a week, loses control of bladder so that the claimant cannot control the full voiding of the bladder 15
- v Occasionally loses control of bowels so that the claimant cannot control the full evacuation of the bowel 9
- vi At least once a month loses control of bladder so that the claimant cannot control the full voiding of the bladder 6
- vii Risks losing control of bowels or bladder so that the claimant cannot control the full evacuation of the bowel or the full voiding of the bladder if not able to reach a toilet quickly 6
- viii None of the above apply 0

**B Contenance where the claimant uses a urinary collecting device, worn for the majority of the time including an indwelling urethral or suprapubic catheter**

- i Is unable to affix, remove or empty the catheter bag or other collecting device without receiving physical assistance from another person 15
- ii Is unable to affix, remove or empty the catheter bag or other collecting device without causing leakage of contents 15
- iii Has no voluntary control over the evacuation of the bowel 15
- iv At least once a month, loses control of bowels so that the claimant cannot control the full evacuation of the bowel 15
- v Occasionally loses control of bowels so that the claimant cannot control the full evacuation of the bowel 9
- vi Risks losing control of bowels so that the claimant cannot control the full evacuation of the bowel if not able to reach a toilet quickly 6
- vii None of the above apply 0

**C Contenance other than enuresis (bed wetting) where the claimant has an artificial stoma**

- i Is unable to affix, remove or empty the stoma appliance without receiving physical assistance from another person 15
- ii Is unable to affix remove or empty the stoma appliance without causing leakage of contents 15
- iii Where the claimant's artificial stoma relates solely to the evacuation of the bowel, has no voluntary control over voiding of the bladder 15
- iv Where the claimant's artificial stoma relates solely to the evacuation of the bowel, at least once a week, loses control of bladder so that the claimant cannot control the full voiding of the bladder 15
- v Where the claimant's artificial stoma relates solely to the evacuation of the bowel, at least once a month, loses control of bladder so that the claimant cannot control the full voiding of the bladder 9
- vi Where the claimant's artificial stoma relates solely to the evacuation of the bowel, risks losing control of the bladder so that the claimant cannot control the full voiding of the bladder if not able to reach a toilet quickly 6
- vii None of the above apply 0

**11. Remaining conscious 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 15
- B At least once a month, has an involuntary episode of lost or altered consciousness, resulting in significantly disrupted awareness or concentration 9
- C At least twice in the six months immediately preceding the assessment, has had an involuntary episode of lost or altered consciousness, resulting in significantly disrupted awareness or concentration 6
- D None of the above apply 0

*ESA Regs, Sch 2, part 1*

**Mental, cognitive and intellectual functions**

Activities 12 to 21 cover mental, cognitive and intellectual functions. To be assessed as having a limited capability for work, you need to score 15 points or more. Add together the highest score from each activity that applies to you.

The scores from these activities can be added to those in the physical function activities.

Activity	Points
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**12. Learning or comprehension in the completion of tasks**

- A Cannot learn or understand how to successfully complete a simple task, such as setting an alarm clock, at all 15
- B Needs to witness a demonstration, given more than once on the same occasion, of how to carry out a simple task before the claimant is able to learn or understand how to complete the task successfully, but would be unable to successfully complete the task the following day without receiving a further demonstration of how to complete it 15
- C Needs to witness a demonstration of how to carry out a simple task, before the claimant is able to learn or understand how to complete the task successfully, but would be unable to successfully complete the task the following day without receiving a verbal prompt from another person 9

D	Needs to witness a demonstration of how to carry out a moderately complex task, such as the steps involved in operating a washing machine to correctly clean clothes, before the claimant is able to learn or understand how to complete the task successfully, but would be unable to successfully complete the task the following day without receiving a verbal prompt from another person		
E	Needs verbal instructions as to how to carry out a simple task before the claimant is able to learn or understand how to complete the task successfully, but would be unable, within a period of less than one week, to successfully complete the task without receiving a verbal prompt from another person	6	
F	None of the above apply	0	
<b>13. Awareness of hazard</b>			
A	Reduced awareness of the risks of everyday hazards (such as boiling water or sharp objects) would lead to daily instances of or to near-avoidance of: i) injury to self or others; or ii) significant damage to property or possessions, to such an extent that overall day-to-day life cannot successfully be managed	15	
B	Reduced awareness of the risks of everyday hazards would lead for the majority of the time to instances of or to near-avoidance of i) injury to self or others; or ii) significant damage to property or possessions, to such an extent that overall day-to-day life cannot successfully be managed without supervision from another person	9	
C	Reduced awareness of the risks of everyday hazards has led or would lead to frequent instances of or to near-avoidance of: i) injury to self or others; or ii) significant damage to property or possessions, but not to such an extent that overall day-to-day life cannot be managed when such incidents occur	6	
D	None of the above apply	0	
<b>14. Memory and concentration</b>			
A	On a daily basis, forgets or loses concentration to such an extent that overall day-to-day life cannot be successfully managed without receiving verbal prompting, given by someone else in the claimant's presence	15	
B	For the majority of the time, forgets or loses concentration to such an extent that overall day-to-day life cannot be successfully managed without receiving verbal prompting, given by someone else in the claimant's presence	9	
C	Frequently forgets or loses concentration to such an extent that overall day-to-day life can only be successfully managed with pre-planning, such as making a daily written list of all tasks forming part of daily life that are to be completed	6	
D	None of the above apply	0	
<b>15. Execution of tasks</b>			
A	Is unable to successfully complete any everyday task	15	
B	Takes more than twice the length of time it would take a person without any form of mental disablement to successfully complete an everyday task with which the claimant is familiar	15	
C	Takes more than one-and-a-half times but no more than twice the length of time it would take a person without any form of mental disablement to successfully complete an everyday task with which the claimant is familiar	9	
D	Takes one-and-a-half times the length of time it would take a person without any form of mental disablement to successfully complete an everyday task with which the claimant is familiar	6	
E	None of the above apply	0	
<b>16. Initiating and sustaining personal action</b>			
A	Cannot, due to cognitive impairment or a severe disorder of mood or behaviour, initiate or sustain any personal action (which means planning, organisation, problem solving, prioritising or switching tasks)	15	
B	Cannot, due to cognitive impairment or a severe disorder of mood or behaviour, initiate or sustain personal action without requiring daily verbal prompting given by another person in the claimant's presence	15	
C	Cannot, due to cognitive impairment or a severe disorder of mood or behaviour, initiate or sustain personal action without requiring verbal prompting given by another person in the claimant's presence for the majority of the time	9	
D	Cannot, due to cognitive impairment or a severe disorder of mood or behaviour, initiate or sustain personal action without requiring frequent verbal prompting given by another person in the claimant's presence	6	
E	None of the above apply	0	
<b>17. Coping with change</b>			
A	Cannot cope with very minor, expected changes in routine, to the extent that overall day-to-day life cannot be managed	15	
B	Cannot cope with expected changes in routine (such as a pre-arranged permanent 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, unforeseen changes in routine (such as an unexpected change of the timing of an appointment on the day it is due to occur), to the extent that overall, day-to-day life is made significantly more difficult	6	
D	None of the above apply	0	
<b>18. Getting about</b>			
A	Cannot get to any specified place with which the claimant is, or would be, familiar	15	
B	Is unable to get to a specified place with which the claimant is familiar, without being accompanied by another person on each occasion	15	
C	For the majority of the time is unable to get to a specified place with which the claimant is familiar without being accompanied by another person	9	
D	Is frequently unable to get to a specified place with which the claimant is familiar without being accompanied by another person	6	
E	None of the above apply	0	
<b>19. Coping with social situations</b>			
A	Normal activities, for example, visiting new places or engaging in social contact, are precluded because of overwhelming fear or anxiety	15	
B	Normal activities, for example, visiting new places or engaging in social contact, are precluded for the majority of the time due to overwhelming fear or anxiety	9	
C	Normal activities, for example, visiting new places or engaging in social contact, are frequently precluded, due to overwhelming fear or anxiety	6	
D	None of the above apply	0	

**20. Propriety of behaviour with other people**

- |   |  |    |
|---|--|----|
| A | Has unpredictable outbursts of aggressive, disinhibited or bizarre behaviour, being either:<br>i) sufficient to cause disruption to others on a daily basis; <i>or</i><br>ii) of such severity that, although occurring less frequently than on a daily basis, no reasonable person would be expected to tolerate them | 15 |
| B | Has a completely disproportionate reaction to minor events or to criticism to the extent that the claimant has an extreme violent outburst leading to threatening behaviour or actual physical violence  | 15 |
| C | Has unpredictable outbursts of aggressive, disinhibited or bizarre behaviour, sufficient in severity and frequency to cause disruption for the majority of the time  | 9  |
| D | Has a strongly disproportionate reaction to minor events or to criticism, to the extent that the claimant cannot manage overall day-to-day life when such events or criticism occur  | 9  |
| E | Has unpredictable outbursts of aggressive, disinhibited or bizarre behaviour, sufficient to cause frequent disruption  | 6  |
| F | Frequently demonstrates a moderately disproportionate reaction to minor events or to criticism but not to such an extent that the claimant cannot manage overall day-to-day life when such events or criticism occur   | 6  |
| G | None of the above apply  | 0  |

**21. Dealing with other people**

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|---|---|----|
| A | Is unaware of the impact of own behaviour to the extent that:<br>i) has difficulty relating to others even for brief periods, such as a few hours; <i>or</i><br>ii) causes distress to others on a daily basis          | 15 |
| B | The claimant misinterprets verbal or non-verbal communication to the extent of causing himself or herself significant distress on a daily basis   | 15 |
| C | Is unaware of the impact of own behaviour to the extent that:<br>i) has difficulty relating to others for longer periods, such as a day or two; <i>or</i><br>ii) causes distress to others for the majority of the time | 9  |
| D | The claimant misinterprets verbal or non-verbal communication to the extent of causing himself or herself significant distress for the majority of the time   | 9  |
| E | Is unaware of impact of own behaviour to the extent that:<br>i) has difficulty relating to others for prolonged periods, such as a week; <i>or</i><br>ii) frequently causes distress to others                          | 6  |
| F | The claimant misinterprets verbal or non-verbal communication to the extent of causing himself or herself significant distress on a frequent basis  | 6  |
| G | None of the above apply   | 0  |

*ESA Regs, Sch 2, part 2*

# Appendix 3

## Assessment of whether a person has a limited capability for work-related activity

If one or more of the following descriptors applies to you, you will be assessed as having a limited capability for work-related activity and will be placed in the support group of claimants.

### 1. Walking or moving on level ground

Cannot:

- A walk (with a walking stick or other aid if such aid is normally used);
- B move (with the aid of crutches if crutches are normally used); *or*
- C manually propel the claimant's wheelchair; more than 30 metres without repeatedly stopping, experiencing breathlessness or severe discomfort.

### 2. Rising from sitting and transferring from one seated position to another

Cannot complete both of the following:

- A rise to standing from sitting in an upright chair without receiving physical assistance from someone else; *and*
- B move between one seated position and another seated position located next to one another without receiving physical assistance from someone else.

### 3. 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)

Cannot pick up and move 0.5 litre carton full of liquid with either hand.

### 4. Reaching

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

### 5. Manual dexterity

Cannot:

- A turn a 'star-headed' sink tap with either hand; *or*
- B pick up a £1 coin or equivalent with either hand.

### 6. Continence

#### A Continence other than enuresis (bed wetting) where the claimant does not have an artificial stoma or urinary collecting device:

- a Has no voluntary control over the evacuation of the bowel;
- b Has no voluntary control over the voiding of the bladder;
- c At least once a week, loses control of bowels so that the claimant cannot control the full evacuation of the bowel;
- d At least once a week, loses control of bladder so that the claimant cannot control the full voiding of the bladder;
- e At least once a week, fails to control full evacuation of the bowel, owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour; *or*
- f At least once a week, fails to control full-voiding of the bladder, owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour.

#### B Continence where the claimant uses a urinary collecting device, worn for the majority of the time including an indwelling urethral or suprapubic catheter:

- a Is unable to affix, remove or empty the catheter bag or other collecting device without receiving physical assistance from another person;
- b Is unable to affix, remove or empty the catheter bag or other collecting device without causing leakage of contents;
- c Has no voluntary control over the evacuation of the bowel;
- d At least once a week loses control of bowels so that the claimant cannot control the full evacuation of the bowel; *or*
- e At least once a week, fails to control full evacuation of the bowel, owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour.

#### C Continence other than enuresis (bed wetting) where the claimant has an artificial stoma appliance:

- a Is unable to affix, remove or empty stoma appliance without receiving physical assistance from another person;
- b Is unable to affix, remove or empty stoma without causing leakage of contents;
- c Where the claimant's artificial stoma relates solely to the evacuation of the bowel, has no voluntary control over voiding of bladder;
- d Where the claimant's artificial stoma relates solely to the evacuation of the bowel, at least once a week, loses control of the bladder so that the claimant cannot control the full voiding of the bladder; *or*
- e Where the claimant's artificial stoma relates solely to the evacuation of the bowel, at least once a week, fails to control the full voiding of the bladder, owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour.

### 7. Maintaining personal hygiene

- A Cannot clean own torso (excluding own back) without receiving physical assistance from someone else;
- B Cannot clean own torso (excluding own back) without repeatedly stopping, experiencing breathlessness or severe discomfort;
- C Cannot clean own torso (excluding own back) without 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 clean own torso (excluding own back) without receiving:
  - i) physical assistance from someone else; *or*
  - ii) regular prompting given by someone else in the claimant's presence.

### 8. Eating and drinking

#### A Conveying food or drink to the mouth:

- 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 someone else; *or*
  - ii) regular prompting given by someone else in the claimant's presence.

**B 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.

**9. Learning or comprehension in the completion of tasks**

- A Cannot learn or understand how to successfully complete a simple task, such as the preparation of a hot drink, at all;
- B Needs to witness a demonstration, given more than once on the same occasion of how to carry out a simple task before the claimant is able to learn or understand how to complete the task successfully, but would be unable to successfully complete the task the following day without receiving a further demonstration of how to complete it; *or*
- C Fails to do any of the matters referred to in (A) or (B) owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour.

**10. Personal action**

- A Cannot initiate or sustain any personal action (which means planning, organisation, problem solving, prioritising or switching tasks);
- B Cannot initiate or sustain personal action without requiring daily verbal prompting given by someone else in the claimant's presence; *or*
- C Fails to initiate or sustain basic personal action without requiring daily verbal prompting given by some else in the claimant's presence, owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour.

**11. Communication**

- A None of the following forms of communication can be achieved by the claimant:
  - i) speaking (to a standard that may be understood by strangers);
  - ii) writing (to a standard that may be understood by strangers);
  - iii) typing (to a standard that may be understood by strangers);
  - iv) sign language to a standard equivalent to Level 3 British Sign Language;
- B None of the forms of communication referred to in (A) are achieved by the claimant, owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour;
- C Misinterprets verbal or non-verbal communication to the extent of causing distress to himself or herself on a daily basis; *or*
- D Effectively cannot make himself or herself understood to others because of the claimant's disassociation from reality owing to a severe disorder of mood or behaviour.