



Access to Work statistics

Data for April 2007 to March 2017

● Annual

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Great Britain

Official
experimental

Access to Work is a programme that aims to help people who have a disability or long-term health condition start or stay in work. There are two main types of Access to Work provision: 'Assessments' and 'Elements'. Assessments involve exploring workplace-related barriers to employment and making recommendations on how these can be overcome. Elements are intended to supplement the reasonable adjustments that employers are required to make under the Equality Act 2010 and can include, for example:

- communication support for interviews
- special aids and equipment
- adaptations to premises and vehicles
- help with travel costs
- support workers
- a mental health support service

This is the first publication in a new series of official experimental statistics about the approval of Access to Work provision. These statistics are not comparable with the previously published [Access to Work official statistics](#) series which has now been withdrawn. For further details please see the [Access to Work statistical notice](#).

Main stories

All provision

Access to Work provision was approved for
25,020 people in 2016/17.

Assessments

Assessments were approved for
12,940 people in 2016/17.

Elements

Elements were approved for
23,630 people in 2016/17.

Contents

The Access to Work customer journey	3
Access to Work provision was approved for 25,020 people in 2016/17	4
The number of people who had Access to Work provision approved has been relatively stable in recent years	5
Most of the people who had Access to Work provision approved in 2016/17 are women	6
About these statistics	8
Where to find out more	8

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Comments? Feedback is welcome.

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What you need to know

What is Access to Work?

Access to Work is a programme that aims to help people who have a disability or long-term health condition start or stay in work. There are two main types of Access to Work provision: 'Assessments' and 'Elements'. Assessments involve exploring workplace-related barriers to employment and making recommendations on how these can be overcome. In some but not all cases the outcome of an Assessment may be to recommend the provision of one or more Elements. Elements are intended to supplement the reasonable adjustments that employers are required to make under the Equality Act 2010. The types of Element that can be provided are categorised as follows:

- 'Communication Support for Interviews'
- 'Special Aids and Equipment'
- 'Adaptations to Premises'
- 'Adaptations to Vehicles'
- 'Travel to Work' (help with the costs of travelling to work)
- 'Travel in Work' (help with the costs of work-related travel)
- 'Support Worker'
- 'Mental Health Support Service'
- 'Miscellaneous'

In some but not all cases an Assessment is required to find out whether a customer is eligible to receive an Element.

What do these statistics show?

These statistics are about a specific part of the Access to Work customer journey: the approval of Access to Work provision (the key stages of the Access to Work customer journey are summarised overleaf). The main statistic is the number of people who had Access to Work provision approved. This statistic is provided for each financial year between 2007/08 and 2016/17, and is broken down by the type of provision approved and the following customer characteristics: age; gender; and primary medical condition.

It should be noted that a given item of Access to Work provision can only be approved once and in one financial year, however it may be received over several financial years (see overleaf). It should also be noted that more than one item of provision of the same type or of different types can be approved for the same person in a given financial year or in different financial years. These statistics show the number of people who had any item of provision of each type approved in each financial year. For example, a person who had two Assessments and two Elements approved in 2016/17 would be counted once for "Any provision", once for "Any Assessment" and once for "Any Element" for 2016/17.

The Access to Work customer journey

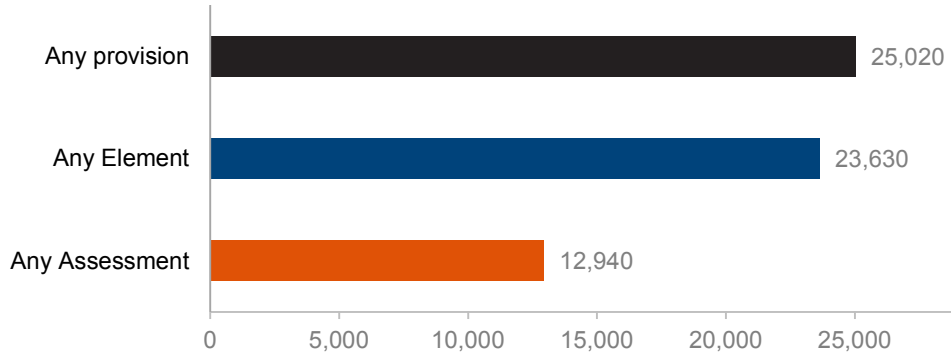
The main stages of a typical Access to Work customer journey are summarised below.

1. Application	The customer applies for Access to Work provision.
2. Approval/Rejection	The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) approves or rejects the provision after considering the customer's eligibility and their employer's duty to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. The customer is notified of the decision and a grant may be approved to cover some or all of the costs of the approved provision.
3. Commissioning	The customer or their employer commissions the approved provision and submits invoices relating to approved grants to DWP.
4. Receipt	The customer receives the approved and commissioned provision.
5. Payment	DWP pays the invoices relating to approved grants. In some cases a DWP payment is not required, for example because provision can be provided at no cost or the employer covers the relevant costs.
6. Review	DWP schedules reviews to ensure the provision is still adequate and to check that the customer is still eligible.

Access to Work provision in 2016/17

Access to Work provision was approved for 25,020 people in 2016/17

The number of people who had any Access to Work provision of each type approved in 2016/17

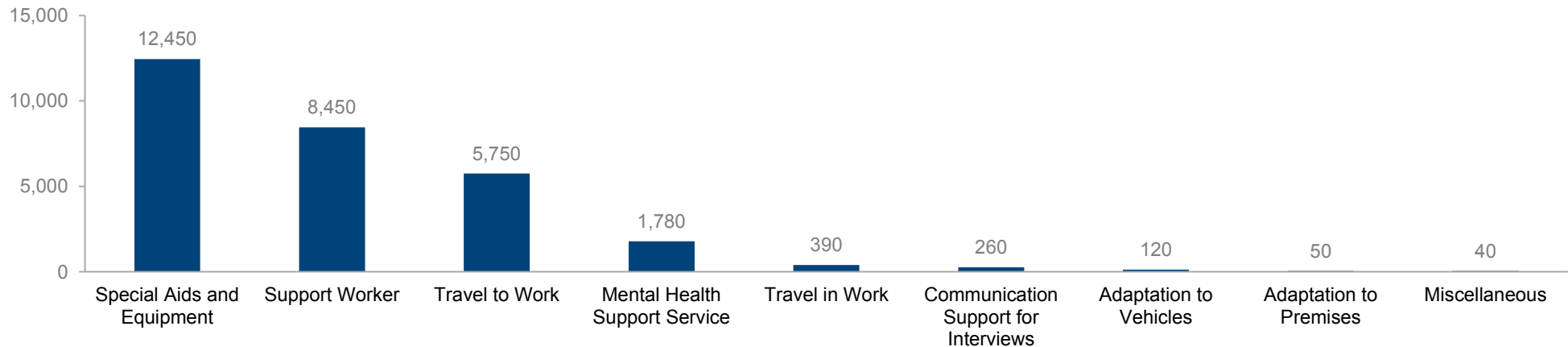


Elements were approved for 23,630 (94%) of the 25,020 people who had any Access to Work provision approved in 2016/17. The remaining 6% had one or more Assessments approved in 2016/17 without having any Elements approved in the same period. This may be because they had one or more Elements approved in a subsequent period or they did not require an Element or were not eligible for one.

See accompanying [tables](#) for full data.

Special Aids and Equipment Elements were approved for more people than any other type of Element

The number of people who had any Element of each type approved in 2016/17

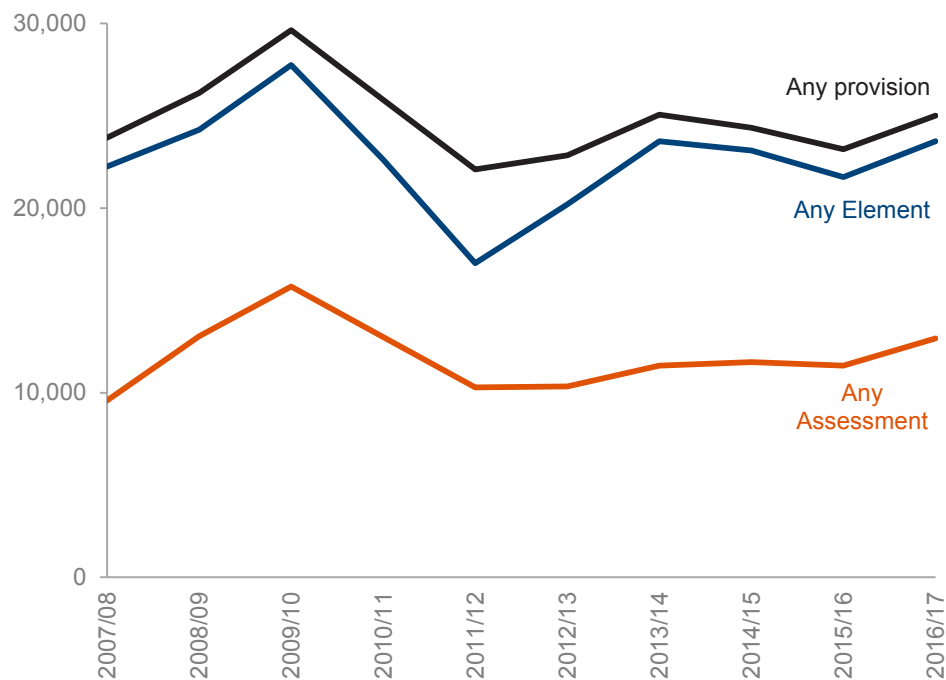


More than half (53%) of the 23,630 people who had any Element approved in 2016/17 had one or more Special Aids and Equipment Elements approved in the same period. The next most frequently approved Element types were Support Worker, Travel to Work and Mental Health Support Service. It should be noted that more than one Element of the same type or of different types can be approved for the same person in a given financial year.

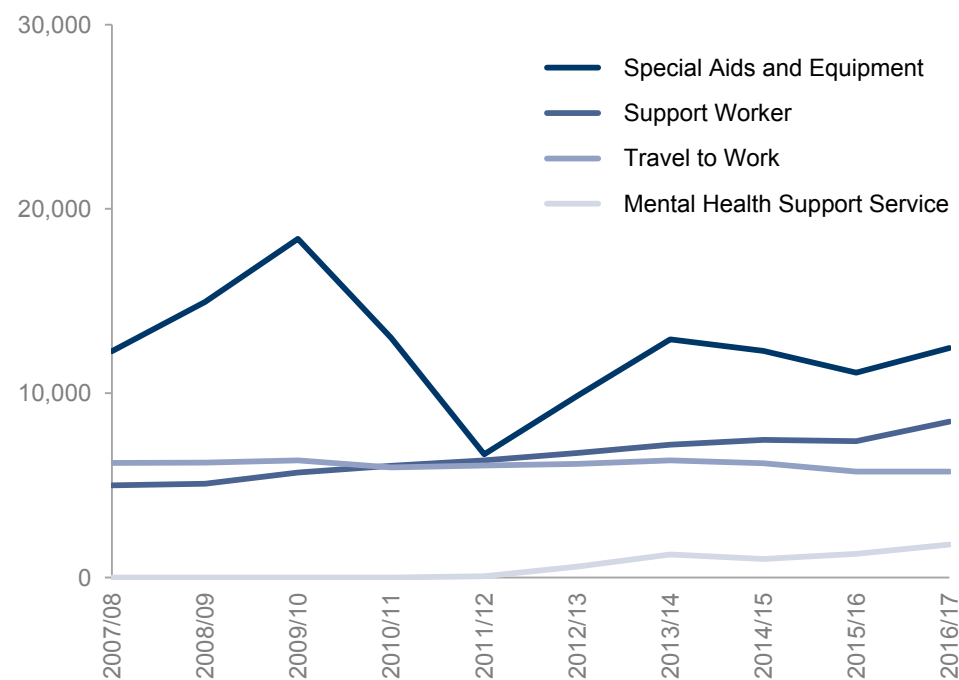
See accompanying [tables](#) for full data.

Changes in Access to Work provision over time

The number of people who had any Access to Work provision of each type approved, 2007/08-2016/17



The number of people who had any Element of each type approved (most frequently approved Element types only), 2007/08-2016/17



The charts above show that the overall trend in the number of people who had any Access to Work provision approved is driven by the trend in the number of people who had Special Aids and Equipment Elements approved. This is because Special Aids and Equipment were approved for more people than any other type of Element (see above). The number of people who had this type of Element approved increased between 2007/08 and 2009/10, but fell sharply between 2009/10 and 2011/12. This fall may have been related to a change in guidance for Access to Work advisors which clarified the distinction between provision that can be approved by Access to Work and the reasonable adjustments that employers are required to make under the Equality Act 2010. After 2011/12 the trend in the number of people who had a Special Aids and Equipment Element approved remained relatively flat.

With regards to the other most frequently approved Element types, the number of people who had a Support Worker Element approved increased gradually between 2007/08 and 2016/17, whilst the trend in the number of people who had a Travel to Work Element approved was relatively flat. The number of people who had a Mental Health Support Service Element approved has been gradually increasing since the introduction of this service in December 2011.

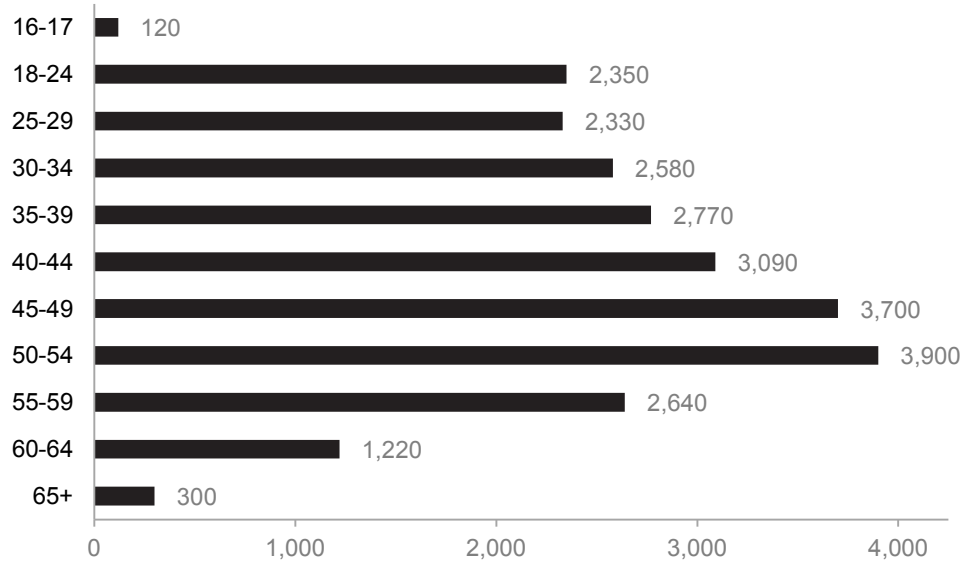
It should be noted that no limit is placed on the number of people who can have Access to Work provision approved in a given period. Trends may therefore reflect customer demand but the extent to which this is the case is unknown.

See accompanying [tables](#) for full data.

The characteristics of Access to Work customers

Most people who had Access to Work provision approved were aged 40 and over

The number of people who had any Access to Work provision approved by age group, 2016/17

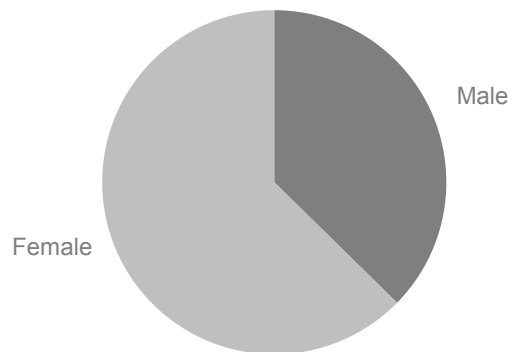


Almost 60% of the people who had any Access to Work provision approved in 2016/17 were aged 40 or over.

See accompanying [tables](#) for full data.

More women had Access to Work provision approved than men

The number of people who had any Access to Work provision approved by gender, 2016/17

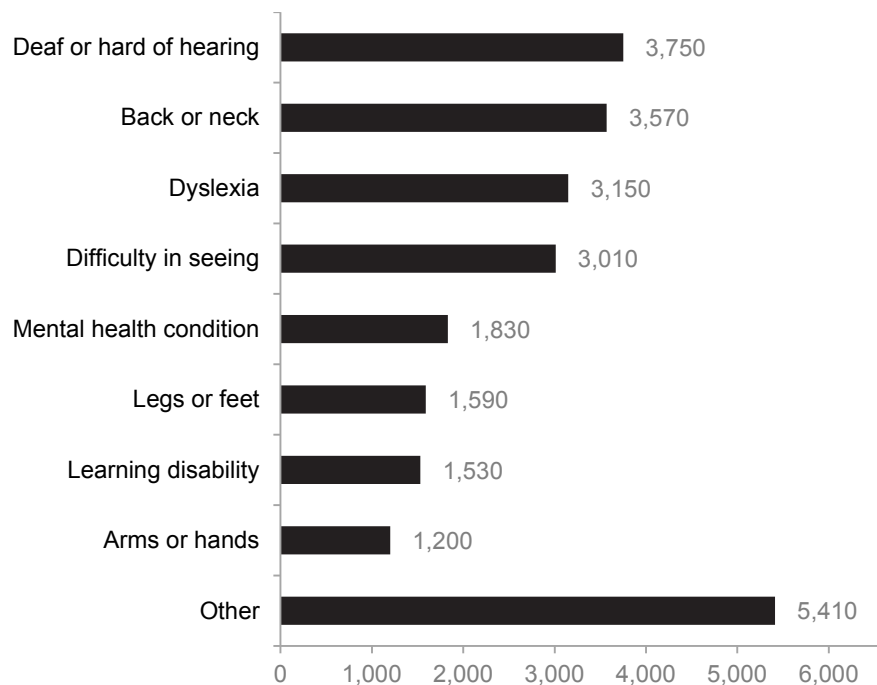


Over 60% of the people who had any Access to Work provision approved in 2016/17 were women.

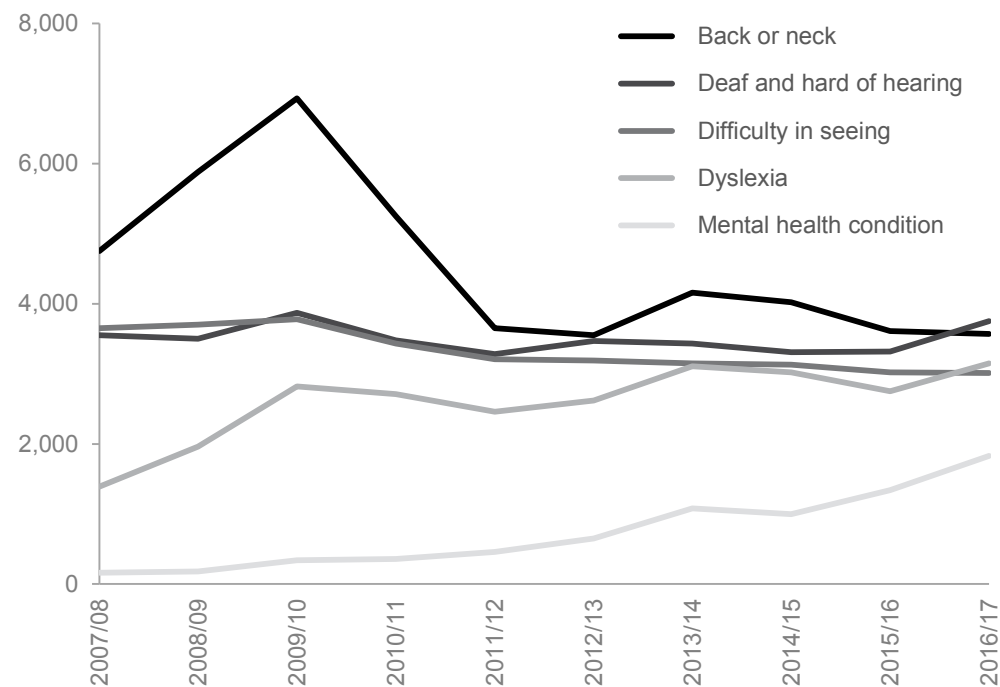
See accompanying [tables](#) for full data.

More than half of the people who had Access to Work provision approved had one of four medical conditions

The number of people who had any Access to Work provision approved by recorded primary medical condition, 2016/17



The number of people who had any Access to Work provision approved by primary medical condition (most prevalent conditions only), 2007/08-2016/17



The most frequently recorded primary medical conditions in 2016/17 besides “Other”¹ were “Deaf or hard of hearing”, “Back or neck”, “Dyslexia” and “Difficulty in seeing”. More than half of the people who had any Access to Work provision approved in this period were recorded as having one of these conditions.

The trend in the number of people who had a recorded primary medical condition of “Back or neck” is similar to the trend in the number of people who had a Special Aids and Equipment Element approved (see above). Both fell sharply between 2009/10 and 2011/12 and this may have been related to a change in guidance for Access to Work advisors (see above). After 2011/12 both trends were relatively flat.

The number of people who had a recorded primary medical condition of “Dyslexia” or “Mental health condition” increased gradually between 2007/08 and 2016/17. During the same period the trends in the number of people who had a recorded primary medical condition of “Deaf or hard of hearing” or “Difficulty in seeing” were relatively flat.

See accompanying [tables](#) for full data.

¹ The “Other” primary medical condition category referred to above is comprised of the following categories: “Stomach, liver, kidney or digestion”; “Heart, blood, blood pressure or circulation”; “Chest or breathing”; “Skin conditions and severe disfigurement”; “Difficulty in speaking”; “Learning disability”; “Progressive illness”; “Epilepsy”; “Diabetes”; “Cerebral Palsy”; “Spina Bifida”; and “Other”. Breakdowns of this category are available in the accompanying data [tables](#).

About these statistics

These statistics have been developed using guidelines set out by the UK Statistics Authority and are new official statistics undergoing development. They have therefore been designated as [experimental statistics](#). We plan to publish these statistics on an annual basis and will explore the feasibility of expanding their scope to cover other parts of the Access to Work customer journey such as Access to Work payments. Users are invited to comment on the development and relevance of these statistics at this stage and can send feedback to: access.toworkstatistics@dwp.gsi.gov.uk.

These statistics were obtained from the Department for Work and Pensions' Disability Service Client (DiSC) administrative system. DiSC is a live system and figures may be revised in future publications as records are amended or added to the system. More information about DiSC and revisions to these statistics can be found in the accompanying [Background information and methodology note](#).

Figures in this publication are rounded to the nearest 10. Percentages are calculated using figures prior to rounding and are rounded to the nearest integer. Totals may not sum due to rounding or missing data.

Where to find out more

More information about these statistics can be found in the accompanying [Background information and methodology note](#) and [Data tables](#).

More information about Access to Work and how to apply can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>.

Guidance on Access to Work for employers can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-guide-for-employers>.