



Questions about functions that are intrinsic to the job

There are specific circumstances when you can ask questions about disability and health before a job offer is made. For example, you may need to know whether a job applicant can undertake a function that is intrinsic to the job.

An intrinsic function of a job is a function which, if it could not be performed, would mean that the job could not be carried out.

Example 1

Mary applies for a job as a care assistant at a residential care home. An **intrinsic function** of the job, without which the job cannot be done, is the ability to help lift and physically support residents. The employer can ask Mary questions relating to disability and health to find out if Mary is capable of lifting and physically supporting residents. This is because lifting and physically supporting residents are functions intrinsic to the job.

Other examples of intrinsic functions might include:

- **can demonstrate that they are literate and numerate** e.g. an employee in a small finance department, a classroom assistant or a nurse.
- **is able to interact well with other colleagues and understand and carry out instructions** e.g. an office junior.
- **has good organisational and keyboard skills and remains focused under pressure** e.g. a personal assistant.
- **can climb a ladder** e.g. a window cleaner or builder.
- **can see clearly:** e.g. an electrician, bus driver, pilot or security guard.
- **is able to work with chemicals without any adverse skin or breathing problems** e.g. a hairdresser, chemist or laboratory assistant, or factory worker.
- **can hear clearly** e.g. a person who works in a call centre or who teaches a musical instrument.