



# Workplace **Assessments**

for employers and employees explained

# The impact of hearing loss at work

**It takes on average 10 years before somebody living with hearing loss seeks help. Many people try to hide it in the workplace.**

Working without proper support for hearing loss can lead to:

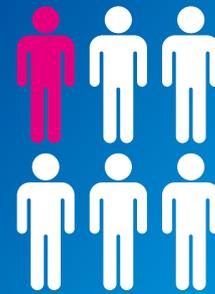
- isolation
- work-related stress
- lower productivity levels.

However, with the right support in place, employees with hearing loss can reach their full potential.

Small changes can have a big impact. There are many useful products and services designed to reduce barriers and enable staff to perform at their best.

Funding is available to help your company cover the cost of becoming a deaf-friendly workplace.

**11 million** people in the UK have some form of hearing loss. That's one in six people.



## What is a Workplace Assessment?

**Workplace Assessments provide employers and employees with guidance on how to manage deafness, tinnitus and hearing loss in the workplace.**

### Are you an employee...

living with deafness, tinnitus or hearing loss? A Workplace Assessment provides information, support and equipment to help you to reach your full potential at work. It is not an assessment of ability, but of how you can be assisted in the workplace.

### For employers...

A Workplace Assessment outlines simple changes businesses can make to remove barriers for staff with hearing loss. It also explains how to get funding for making reasonable adjustments in the workplace.



**57%** of business leaders surveyed\* cited a lack of support when employing people with hearing loss.

**Workplace assessments aim to change this.**

\*Source Working for Change. Published report

# What is the assessment process on the day?

## Day of assessment

There is no special preparation required. Just head to work as normal. The assessor will come to you and the whole thing will last one to two hours.

## One to one

The manager will leave the employee and assessor alone to continue the assessment. Nothing else required of them on the day.

## Initial recommendations

The assessor will give some initial ideas for areas in which alterations would be useful and give a preview of some equipment.

## Assessor leaves

After the assessment is complete, the assessor will leave you to carry on with your day and will send you your report within 10 working days.



## Assessment booked

Our team will answer any questions you have between booking and the day of your assessment. Just give us a ring - **0333 240 5658**.

## Team conversation

The assessor will start by having a chat with both manager and employee to find out how best to support the process of improving accessibility.

## Holistic view

The assessor will use this time to get an idea of the employee's job role and where they would benefit from support.

## Look around work environment

The assessor takes a final look around the work environment to ensure nothing has been missed.



## Would you benefit from **support in the workplace?**

**Is deafness, tinnitus or hearing loss affecting you at work? Are you finding it harder to follow what colleagues or customers are saying? Do you sometimes feel stressed and isolated?**

### **Accessible and inclusive**

Many people keep quiet about their hearing loss because they worry it may be seen negatively, but this should not be the case.

Most employers want to create more accessibility and inclusivity at work. It helps them to meet their legal obligations (see page 10) and helps employees feel valued and able to perform at their best.

### **Cost-effective initiative**

The cost to your employer is very low compared to the positive gains they will make from becoming more accessible. The government's Access to Work

initiative means many businesses can claim back up to 100% of the cost of providing equipment and support.

### **Open and honest**

Many assessors have hearing loss themselves or work with colleagues who are deaf, so they understand the issues you may be facing. You will be able to talk to them in confidence and be completely open and honest.

### **Funding available**

The assessors will report back to you and your employer with tailored recommendations. The report can also be used to apply for Access to Work funding. (See page 11 for more information).

### **Work more effectively**

A Workplace Assessment will help you and your employer reach the best outcome – one that helps you work more easily and effectively.

# James's story



“In terms of the process, from start to finish, Action on Hearing Loss have been really professional and have been on the ball as much as I would expect – it’s really impressive.

The assessor was also brilliant and really knew her stuff. It’s really useful in these types of assessments when you’re a deaf person meeting a hearing person if they have experience of working with deaf people – it’s clear there is a culture of understanding the needs of deaf people and how to communicate with them.

Before I had the support and the equipment recommended by them, it was 90% concentrating on following the conversation and 10% actually thinking about what was being discussed and how to contribute. Now I can focus on actually making a difference, and doing the job I know I can do, instead of just doing my best to keep up.”

**James Clark, Business Officer, Education and Skills Funding Agency**

## Self-employed?

**Are you an entrepreneur with hearing loss? Imagine how much more you could achieve by reducing communication barriers, allowing you to spend more time building your business.**

### Communication support

There are many tools that can help you communicate more easily, from accessibility products to hiring a virtual PA to make calls for you.

### Funding

The government’s Access to Work scheme (see page 11) provides funding grants to cover up to 100% of the cost of support for people who are self-employed.

### Book your assessment

Find the most appropriate solutions for your situation with a Workplace Assessment. The recommendations made in the assessor’s report can be used to help secure funding.



**funding grants available for people who are self-employed.**

# Are you an employer?

**Talented, motivated staff are your biggest asset. If one of your team has hearing loss, you may have noticed it affecting their confidence and productivity. What may be less obvious is the amount of stress they are experiencing.**

## Enhanced confidence and performance

A Workplace Assessment will improve the working environment for staff with hearing loss, enhancing their confidence and performance.

Our assessor will meet with you and your employee to discuss any barriers in the workplace. Often, they can suggest reasonable adjustments that will improve things right away.

## Gains outweigh small investment cost

The assessment report can be used to apply for the government's Access to Work funding. This will help you cover the cost of purchasing equipment or services, ensuring that increased productivity and employee satisfaction far outweigh the small investment cost.

As well as fulfilling your legal obligations towards inclusivity and supporting employees who are deaf, it simply makes business sense.

A Workplace Assessment is the first step towards making sure you get the best from your team.



“Why would we, as an employer, want to lose

someone with excellent skills just because they develop hearing loss?”

**Debbie Caple,**  
**HR Manager, Wessex Water.** Taken from  
*Working for Change*



## Do you work in HR?

Is your company fulfilling its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 regarding inclusivity and accessibility in the workplace?

You may have heard about Workplace Assessments but are unsure what is involved.

### **Support your employees with hearing loss**

A Workplace Assessment will provide practical advice on what equipment, support and reasonable adjustments can be made to support your employees who are deaf or have tinnitus or hearing loss.

### **100% funding available**

If your company has recently recruited someone with hearing loss, you should arrange a Workplace Assessment as soon as possible. If the application process is started within the first six weeks of their employment, 100% of the cost of equipment and support will be covered.

### **Talk to our Access Solutions team to find out more about Workplace Assessments.**

Call **0333 240 5658** or email **[access.solutions@hearingloss.org.uk](mailto:access.solutions@hearingloss.org.uk)**

# About us

**Action on Hearing Loss is the UK's largest charity helping people confronting deafness, tinnitus and hearing loss to live the lives they choose - at home, at work and when they're out and about.**

Formerly the Royal National Institute for Deaf People, we've been supporting people with hearing loss for more than 100 years, and changed the lives of millions.

We want:

- people to acknowledge their hearing loss and take action
- more support for people with hearing loss
- no one to be isolated through their hearing loss
- people to protect themselves against hearing loss and tinnitus
- to cure hearing loss and tinnitus.

Primarily, we seek to empower people who are deaf, or have hearing loss or tinnitus to reduce stigma and end discrimination. From campaigns such as Working for Change (see Action on Hearing Loss website) to selling deaf awareness training to businesses, empowerment is our core aim.



## Your chance to change lives

### £35 COULD PAY FOR TWO HOURS OF RESEARCH

by a PhD student into treatments and potential cures that could bring the joy of sound back to thousands of people.



### £50 COULD HELP PAY FOR A HEAR TO MEET BEFRIENDING SESSION

where people with hearing loss can meet others in the same situation.



### £100 COULD PAY FOR A DAY'S RESEARCH

into treatments and potential cures, bringing the joys of sound back to thousands of people (we run the world's largest, donor-funded research programme dedicated to finding treatments and cures for hearing loss and tinnitus).



### £500 COULD BE USED TO PAY FOR COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

to help children who use cochlear implants to hear the world around them better.



Why choose

# Action on Hearing Loss?



## Support

We offer dedicated support every step of the way, from your first contact with us until you feel 100% confident at work.



## Specialists

We are experts in deafness, tinnitus and hearing loss. Every member of the team has specialist knowledge, experience and training.



## Empathy

Our staff are either deaf or have tinnitus or hearing loss themselves, or work with colleagues who do. This gives them a unique understanding of the issues you might be facing.



## Speed

We are committed to providing help as quickly as possible. We can have an assessor with you in as little as 10 days.



## Personalised

All assessments are carried out face-to-face and we offer bespoke and detailed recommendations in an easy-to-read report.



## Flexibility

We have assessors located throughout the UK, so wherever you are, we can help.



## Product specialists

Our product specialists can advise on the most suitable products for your workplace needs.



Every penny you spend with us goes back to Action on Hearing Loss to support the vital work which we do in areas such as bio-medical research, care and support and campaigning

# Frequently asked questions

## How much does a Workplace Assessment cost?

The cost for companies and organisations is £895, with discounts available, depending on circumstances and requirements. For self-employed people, we charge £595.

## How can Action on Hearing Loss address my specific needs?

We offer expert advice and specialist information for people living with deafness, tinnitus and hearing loss and their employers. Please contact our Access Solutions team to discuss your needs and book an assessment: Tel: **0333 240 5658** Email: **access.solutions@hearingloss.org.uk**.

## How quickly will my assessment take place and when will I receive the report?

We aim to complete the full assessment within two weeks of your initial contact. Assessments are normally carried out in the employee's main place of work and usually last between one and two hours. The follow-up report outlining our recommendations will be with you within 10 working days, so you can access the support you need as soon as possible.

## What kind of equipment will be recommended?

The type of equipment we recommend will depend on individual needs and therefore varies from assessment to assessment. Products that we commonly suggest are amplified telephones and conversation listeners.

## What are my rights as an employee?

The Equality Act 2010 (or Disability Discrimination Act 1995 in Northern Ireland) requires employers and service providers to make reasonable adjustments if employees are put at a substantial disadvantage, in comparison with people who aren't disabled, by:

- provision, criterion or practice (the way things are done)
- a physical feature (such as intercom system to gain access to a building), or
- the absence of an auxiliary aid or service (any kind of extra help).

If the adjustments are not made, this could amount to discrimination.

## Which areas do Action on Hearing Loss assessments cover?

We have assessors across the UK and can provide assessments at any location.



What is

# Access to Work?

**Access to Work is an employment support programme that helps people with disabilities or long-term health conditions start work or remain in employment. It can help to fund products or services bought from Action on Hearing Loss or other suppliers.**

The programme is publicly funded and provides grants to cover part or all of the cost of the support the person requires. The amount covered depends on the size of the organisation – you can find more information about this in the Access to Work factsheet for employers (available on gov.uk website). Grants are also available to people who are self-employed.

Examples of what Access to Work may cover include:

- adaptations to existing equipment to make it easier to use
- specialist equipment
- practical help at work such as a support worker, job coach, notetaker or lipspeaker.

The reports we provide as follow-ups to our Workplace Assessments can be used to help back up a claim for Access to Work funding. Our Access Solutions Team can answer any queries you may have.



Between April 2015 and March 2016, Access to work helped

## 36,470 individuals

with deafness or hearing loss being the most common reason for funding to be awarded.



Put in application for Access to Work funding, either by post or online.



Access to Work advisor will review your application, including Action on Hearing Loss recommendations.



Access to Work advisor sends written confirmation to employee and employer, detailing the amount of funding that Access to Work will provide.



Access to Work reimburses the employer for the cost of any recommendations that have been approved and purchased.

During this process you will be asked for any relevant evidence you hold. This is where you will attach Action on Hearing Loss's report.

Action on Hearing Loss sell a wide range of products. To view them, please visit [actiononhearingloss.org.uk/shop](http://actiononhearingloss.org.uk/shop)

**Action on Hearing Loss** (formerly RNID) is the largest UK charity helping people confronting deafness, tinnitus and hearing loss. We give support and care, develop technology and treatments, and campaign for equality. We enable people to take control of their lives and remove the barriers in their way. We rely on donations to continue our vital work.

For up-to-date information about hearing loss and tinnitus, how to hear better, and our breakthrough medical research, visit our website: **[actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://actiononhearingloss.org.uk)**

For free, confidential information about anything related to hearing loss or tinnitus, you can call us on **0808 808 0123**, email us at **[information@hearingloss.org.uk](mailto:information@hearingloss.org.uk)** or send a text message to **07800 000360**.

To find out about our events, news and services, and to share experiences and information with others, like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter:



Action on Hearing Loss



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