

Activity 8 – Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words

This activity considers the claimant’s ability to read and understand written or printed information in the person’s native language. To be considered able to read, claimants must be able to see the information – accessing information via Braille is not considered as reading for this activity.

If the claimant cannot read, this must be as a direct result of their health condition or impairment e.g. visual impairment, cognitive impairment, learning disability. Illiteracy or lack of familiarity with written English are not health conditions and should not be considered, except where they arise as a consequence of a sensory or cognitive impairment.

Notes:

The ability to remember and retain information is not within the scope of this activity.

If an individual cannot reliably complete an activity in the way described in a descriptor then they should be considered unable to complete it at that level and an alternative descriptor selected.

A	Can read and understand basic and complex written information either unaided or using spectacles or contact lenses.	
<p>Within the assessment criteria, the ability to perform an activity unaided means without either the use of aids or appliances; or help from another person.</p> <p>The distance between the eyes and written material is not relevant. Some people hold text closer to their eyes than others, but if it can be read without aids then this descriptor will apply.</p>		0
B	Needs to use an aid or appliance, other than spectacles or contact lenses, to be able to read or understand either basic or complex written information.	
<p>For example: may apply to claimants who require vision aids.</p> <p>Some people have prisms in their glasses prescription to correct their vision. In such cases the prism should not be considered an aid as it would be part of the normal spectacles prescription.</p> <p>If a larger prism has to be held in front of the person’s usual glasses, then the prism lenses should be considered an aid.</p>		2

<p>Basic information is signs, symbols or dates e.g. a green exit sign on a door.</p> <p>Complex information is more than one sentence of written or printed standard size text e.g. “Your home may be at risk if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage or any other debt secured on it. Subject to terms and conditions.”</p> <p>Consideration must be given to whether the claimant can read and understand information both indoors and outdoors. In doing so consideration should also be given to whether the claimant uses or could reasonably be expected to use aids or appliances, such as screen magnification to read text when indoors and a portable magnifying glass to do so when outdoors. If despite the use of aids the claimant cannot read basic or complex information both indoors <u>and</u> outdoors, another descriptor may apply.</p>		
C	Needs prompting to be able to read or understand complex written information.	2
<p>Prompting means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person. For example: may apply to claimants who require another person to explain complex written information due to a cognitive impairment.</p>		
D	Needs prompting to be able to read or understand basic written information.	4
<p>Prompting means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person. For example: may apply to claimants who require another person to remind them of the meaning of basic information due to a cognitive impairment</p>		
E	Cannot read or understand signs, symbols or words at all.	8
<p>For example: may apply to claimants who require another person to read everything for them due to a learning disability or severe visual impairment.</p>		