

Activity 9 – Engaging with other people face to face

This activity considers a claimant's ability to engage with other people, which means to interact face-to-face in a contextually and socially appropriate manner, understand body language and establish relationships.

Activities 7 and 9 are not mutually exclusive. If claimants require support to engage with others under activity 9, as well as communication support under activity 7, then their needs must be considered under both activities.

Notes:

An inability to engage face-to-face must be due to the impact of impairment and not simply a matter of preference by the claimant.

Social support means support from another person trained or experienced in assisting people to engage in social situations, or someone directly experienced in supporting the claimant themselves (for example a family member), who can compensate for limited ability to understand and respond to body language, other social cues and assist social integration. Most claimants with sensory impairments will be able to fully engage with others independently, however they may score on both activities 7 and 9 if, for example anxiety arising from their impairment means they reasonably require social support to engage with people generally.

Behaviour which would result in a substantial risk of harm to the claimant or another person must be as a result of an underlying health condition and the claimant's inability to control their behaviour.

When considering whether claimants can engage with others, consideration should be given to whether they can engage with people generally, not just those people they know well.

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 engage with other people unaided.	
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.		0
B	Needs prompting to be able to engage with other people.	
Prompting means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person. This could take the form of a person acting in a reassuring capacity e.g. calming		2

<p>someone who is anxious about interacting with others.</p> <p>9b prompting applies to people who need someone present for part of the time to help them socially engage, for example somebody with depression who might need intermittent encouragement.</p>		
C	Needs social support to be able to engage with other people.	
<p>Social support is something over and above prompting such as active intervention and not mere reassurance by presence.</p> <p>Descriptor 9c is all about needing social support to engage in order to reduce anxiety (note the legislation does not refer to overwhelming psychological distress and so the bar is much lower), or to assist with social integration, or to minimise harm to the claimant or others.</p> <p>Social support means support from another person trained or experienced in assisting people to engage in social situations or someone directly experienced in supporting the claimant themselves (for example a family member), who can compensate for limited ability to understand and respond to body language, other social cues and assist social integration.</p> <p>Applies to people who can only engage with others with active and skilled support on the majority of days, or who are left vulnerable due to their level of risk-awareness as a result of their condition.</p> <p>Vulnerability to the actions of others is considered in this activity. For example, someone with cognitive or learning impairment may be less risk aware and vulnerable to manipulation or abuse.</p>		4
D	Cannot engage with other people due to such engagement causing either – i. overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant; or ii. the claimant to exhibit behaviour which would result in a substantial risk of harm to the claimant or another person.	
<p>Overwhelming psychological distress means distress related to a mental health condition or intellectual or cognitive impairment which results in a severe anxiety state in which the symptoms are so severe that the person is unable to function. This may be as a direct result of a mental health condition, or as a result of another disability such as cognitive or developmental impairment.</p>		8