

Access to Work Guide for Learning and Supported Employment Providers

Version 2 – March 2021



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Introduction and Background

Welcome to the Supported Internship and Traineeship Guide. This guide has been designed to assist Learning and Supported Employment Providers with the Access to Work application process for supported interns and trainees.

The guide is a living document and will continue to develop during the Test and Learn/ pilot.

Should providers have any questions about the content they can make contact with the Access to Work Policy team by email:

Atwpolicy.supportedinternships@dwp.gov.uk.

Department for Education Supported Internship and Traineeship programmes

In August 2013, the Department for Education introduced its Supported Internship and Traineeship programmes, aimed at young people aged 16-24 (or 25 where the student has an Education, Health and Care plan).

Access to Work

The Access to Work scheme is demand-led, and offers a discretionary grant, which supports disabled people to enter and remain in work. The grant contributes to the disability-related extra costs of working faced by disabled people and those with a health condition that are beyond reasonable adjustment, but it does not replace an employer's duty under the Equality Act to make reasonable adjustments.

The grant funds tailored and personalised support, including workplace assessments, travel to/in work, support workers, specialist aids and equipment to enable disabled people and those with a health condition to move into or retain employment. The scheme can fund up to **£60,700** worth of flexible, personalised support per person per year.

From September 2013, Access to Work expanded its eligibility to support the Department for Education's Supported Internship and Traineeship programmes, and to support the transition of young, disabled people from education to employment.

Access to Work can provide funding for workplace support for young, disabled people aged 16-24 who are completing a government-funded Supported Internship or Traineeship programme. Supported Interns must have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. *In Wales and Scotland there are equivalents of this plan*¹.

You can find out more general information about Access to Work [here](#).

For more information on the background of Supported Internships and expected outcomes, please visit [here](#).

For more information on the background of Traineeships and expected outcomes, please visit [here](#).

¹ Please note: The devolved nations (Wales and Scotland) have their own support plans and the Access to Work team are working with Government colleagues in those nations to ensure that a consistent approach is taken.

Access to Work

Success Criteria

Providing Access to Work funding for young people with complex needs and/ or disabilities on a Supported Internship or Traineeship will aim to ensure that they access the support they need in preparation for paid employment.

Access to Work offers funding that covers workplace support to enable young, disabled people to:

- develop skills valued by employers;
- demonstrate their value in the workplace; and
- develop confidence in their own abilities and perform successfully at work.

Support available from Access to Work

Whilst in the workplace, Access to Work can provide funding for the following elements:

- Support Worker
- Job Coach
- Special Aids and Equipment
- Mental Health Support Service
- Extra Travel Costs (over and above reasonable adjustments)
- Travel Training

Access to Work will only fund costs related to the workplace element of a Supported Internship or Traineeship programme. It will not fund Maths, English or other education-related courses. For example, AtW will fund the extra costs of travel training for the young person to attend their placement, but will not fund travel costs to the educational establishment.

Access to Work Eligibility

Who can apply for Access to Work support?

This refers to eligibility for Access to Work support during the Supported Internship programme.

Young people aged 16 to 24 (or 25, if the internship is completed before the end of the academic year during which the young person turned 25), who:

- Have an **Education, Health and Care Plan** in England; OR
- Have a **Statement of Special Educational Needs** in Wales; OR
- Have a **Personalised Learning Support Plan** in Scotland.

The following must also be satisfied for Access to Work support while on a Supported Internship or Traineeship. The young person must:

- Be participating in a Supported Internship or Traineeship programme funded by a Local Authority or Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (only in England); OR
- Be participating in a government-funded Supported Internship or Traineeship programme in Wales or Scotland.

Where the primary eligibility for Access to Work has been satisfied, and the young person is on a Supported Internship or Traineeship programme meeting the above requirements, they will be eligible to apply for AtW support.

For more guidance on the eligibility criteria, applying for Access to Work and support available, please visit the [Access to Work guidance](#).

Access to Work Eligibility

Moving from one programme to another

Young people who have already completed a Supported Internship will not usually be able to apply for Access to Work support when participating in another training programme.

For example, an intern who has already received Access to Work support for the full 39-week Supported Internship programme will not usually be eligible for Access to Work support whilst completing another Supported Internship programme or a Traineeship.

However, in exceptional circumstances, the young person may be able to transfer from one programme to another.

Exceptional circumstances may include young people having their programme disrupted and being unable to complete the placement element of the Internship or Traineeship, as in the case of those affected by COVID-19.

In such scenarios, Access to Work will conduct reviews on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the provider and Department for Education, or introduce measures to ensure that young people on these programmes are not disadvantaged.

Note: Young people who move from either a Supported Internship or Traineeship to an apprenticeship will remain eligible for Access to Work support.

Apprenticeships are paid employment. As such, apprentices will need to apply for Access to Work through the standard application channels. Visit [gov.uk/access-to-work/apply](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply) for more detail.

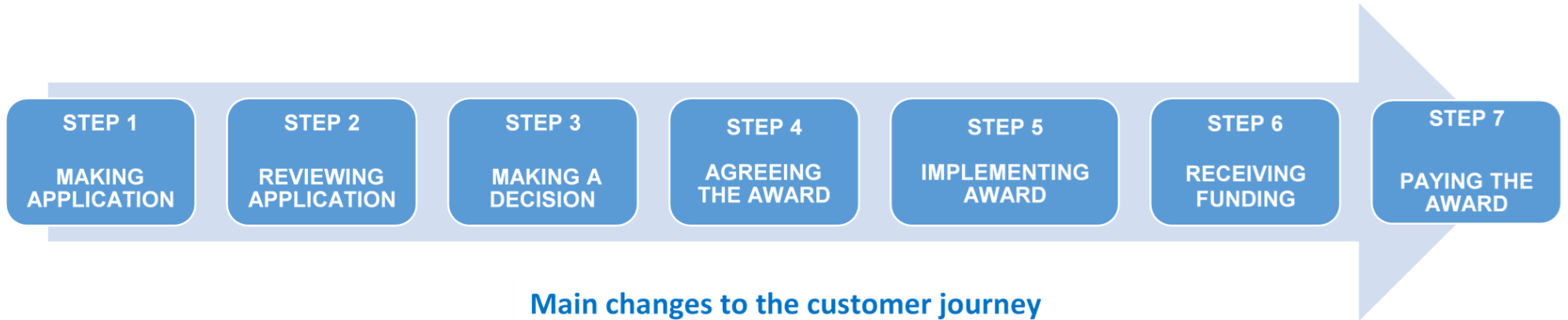
Access to Work Eligibility

Who is a Supported Internship provider?

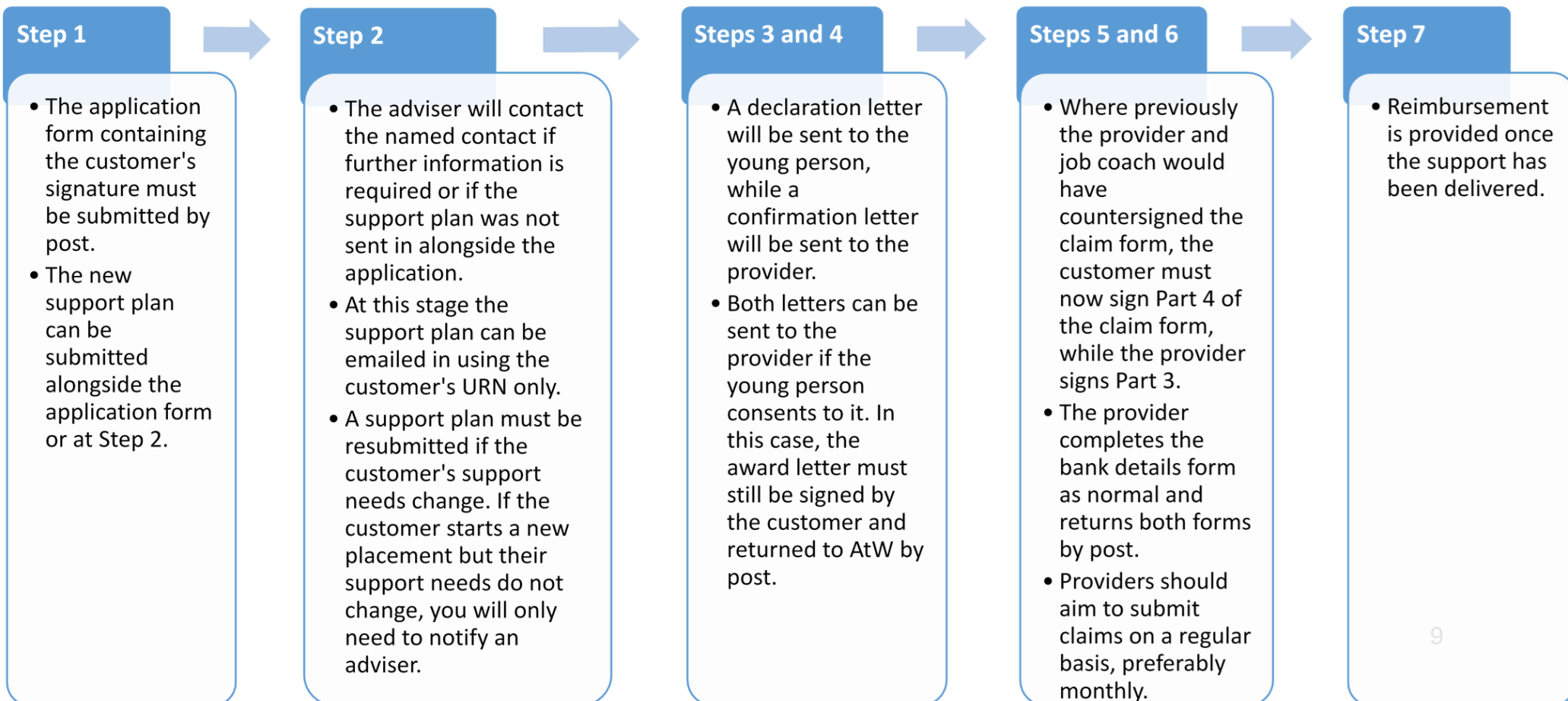
Supported Internship providers may be colleges, schools or specialist post-16 providers. They draw down ESFA/Local Authority funding (in England) or other Government funding (in Scotland and Wales) to deliver the curriculum component of Supported Internships. They may deliver in-house workplace job coaching support to learners or they may partner up with external organisations who have the relevant expertise to provide this support.

The external provider, generally a Supported Employment organisation, can support interns in making applications and claims for Access to Work support where the intern consents to them acting in this role on the Access to Work application form.

Applying for Access to Work Summary



Main changes to the customer journey



Applying for Access to Work

Application Process

Step 1: Completing the application ([Appendix 1](#))

The young person completes the Access to Work application form with support from the provider.

The young person must sign the application form twice to:

- agree that the information provided in the application is correct;
- provide consent for Access to Work to liaise with the provider/named contact on the application.

The provider completes the support plan ([Appendix 2](#)), and submits the forms via post to Access to Work.

The support plan can be completed at this stage and sent in alongside the application by post without the URN, or it can be sent in via email once the application has been received and given a URN. Support plans sent in by email **MUST** contain a URN.

Note: If the young person has a registered DWP or Local Authority appointee, the appointee will need to sign the application form and other associated Access to Work forms instead of the young person. More information can be found [here](#).

Step 2: Checking the application

The Access to Work adviser will check the application to ensure all the information is complete.

If further information is needed, the adviser will contact the provider/named person using the preferred method of contact, and on the day and time specified in the application form.

Note: If the support plan is sent to Access to Work via email, ensure that the Unique Reference Number (URN) associated with the young person's application is used. Do not include **any** identifiable or personal information, such as the young person's name or date of birth.

Applying for Access to Work

Step 3: Making a decision

The Access to Work adviser will review the application form and make a decision on eligibility.

If the young person meets the eligibility criteria, the adviser will issue a letter detailing the award and conditions of the grant to both the young person and the provider.

Step 4: Agreeing the Award

In order to accept the grant award, the young person (or their appointee) must sign and return the declaration to Access to Work.

Where both award letters have been sent to the provider, the provider will need to review these with the young person and ask the young person to sign the declaration. The signed declaration must then be returned to Access to Work by post.

Step 5: Implementing the award

A member of the Access to Work team will review the returned documents ensuring they are fully complete, and update the administration system. At this point the Access to Work team will issue a claim form for payment of the grant.

Step 6: Receiving funding

The provider must complete the claim form ([Appendix 3](#)) in full. Once complete, the provider must ensure the young person understands and agrees to the detail within the claim form before both the provider and young person sign the claim form. Where the young person has an appointee, the appointee must sign the claim form instead of the young person.

For providers: Once the claim form has been signed, the provider will need to complete the bank details form ([Appendix 4](#)) and enclose this with the signed claim form. An invoice must also be attached and all three documents must be returned via post.

Applying for Access to Work

The bank details form must be completed in full. If this form is not enclosed or has not been completed in full, alongside the signed claim form, payment may be delayed.

The bank details form only needs to be submitted once (unless there is a change in bank details). A claim form and invoice must be submitted for every claim.

For full details please see '[Section 14: Review of claims in payment](#)' of the Access to Work staff guide.

The provider must then send the signed claim form and invoice to Access to Work via post.

Step 7: Paying the Award

An Access to Work payments officer will review the claim form and invoice. They will administer the payment if no further information is required.

We expect payment claims to be made in a timely manner and at least on a monthly basis. In exceptional circumstances, claims can be made up to a maximum of 6 months after the costs have been incurred.

Support Plan

To ensure that Access to Work are accurately capturing support needs and funding the right level of support, providers must submit a new support plan whenever the young person's support needs change.

For example, an intern may be on the same placement with the same employer but may take on a different role where they are learning something new. The change in role could mean they require more support from their job coach. If this is the case, the provider must submit a new support plan.

However, if the young person starts a new placement or a new role, and their support needs have not changed, providers are not required to submit a new support plan.

For example, an intern may switch between employers but remain in a similar admin role which requires the same level of support from a job coach. In this example, the provider can simply notify AtW of the change, and will not need to submit a new support plan.

Applying for Access to Work

Providers can notify Access to Work of this change (ensuring they have included information about the new employer or the change in the young person's role) via email at atwosu.london@dwp.gov.uk or to their allocated adviser.

This will help to reduce the administrative burden previously associated with completing a new application form for each placement.

Tapering Support

In line with existing Access to Work guidance, the intensive period of support provided by a Job Coach or Support Worker should not normally last longer than 26 weeks.

Job coaching is always more intensive during the first weeks or months of work. Intensive means working actively with the young person for all or part of each working day. At the end of the 26-week period, job coaching support must begin to taper off as recorded in the support plan.

The young person may require intensive support for longer than 26 weeks. There is discretion to allow up to a further 13 weeks provided an extension will allow support to begin to taper off. For example, a problem or crisis in the young person's personal life may mean that they take longer to settle in work than expected.

For more detailed information on tapering, please refer to the guidance.

Claiming the Access to Work Payment

These are the steps you will need to take when completing the claim form to ensure payment can be made as seamlessly as possible. Once the signed declaration has been received by Access to Work, the Access to Work payments officer will issue a claim form for the value of the funding being claimed for on the claim form.

At **part 1** of the claim form, all boxes should be completed with the first box containing the Access to Work Unique Reference Number (URN). The URN can be found on the offer letter from Access to Work.

At **part 2** of the claim form, the period the claim is covering should be completed, and then broken down by working week with the number of hours of support that was delivered to the young person in that week. This will then need to be totalled at the bottom of part 2. (If you are completing this electronically this will be auto-calculated. Please check the total to ensure it is correct).

Part 3 of the claim form **must** be completed and signed by the provider. Any forms that are not signed by the provider will not be paid and will be returned.

Part 4 of the claim form **must** be signed by the young person (or their appointee). Any forms that are not signed by the young person (or their appointee) will not be paid and will be returned.

Part 5 of the claim form details where the claim form should be returned once fully completed. All claim forms should be posted into Access to Work.

All claim forms and bank details forms should be sent to:

**Access to Work
Payments Team
Operational Support Unit
Harrow Jobcentre Plus
Mail Handling Site A
Wolverhampton
WV98 1JE**

Appointee Signatures

What is an Appointee?

An appointee is a person who is appointed by the DWP Secretary of State or Local Authority to act on behalf of a benefit customer. An appointee is only appropriate where the customer is incapable of managing their own affairs.

It is a legal appointment under regulation 33 of the Social Security Claims and Payments Regulations.

The appointee becomes fully responsible for acting on the customer's behalf in all the customer's dealings with the Department. This includes:

- completing and signing any claim forms;
- reporting changes in the customer's circumstances; and
- reporting any changes in their own circumstances that the Department may require, e.g. a change of name or address or change of account.

Access to Work and Appointees

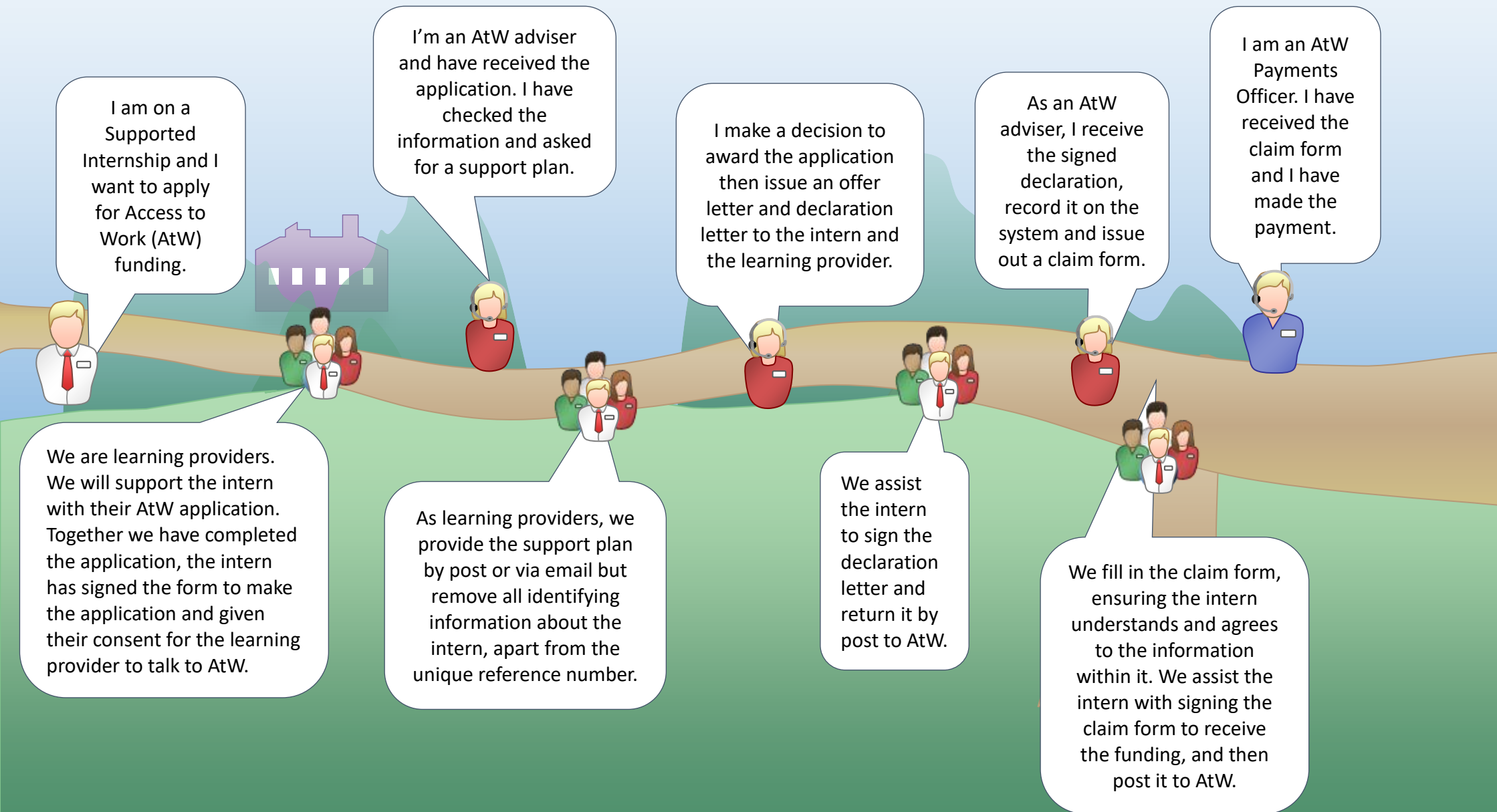
Although Access to Work is a non-statutory grant scheme, once an appointment to act is given, the customer is deemed incapable of managing their affairs. As such, the appointee becomes responsible for applying and claiming for the grant funding.

To ensure we are not undermining the Department's appointee decision, and are complying with the Department's Data Protection principles, where there is an appointee, the appointee must sign all Access to Work forms instead of the young person, including the application, award letter and claim forms. Forms submitted without the appointee's signature will be returned, which can cause delays.

More information on the Department's policy on appointees can be found [here](#).

Example customer journey

*If the young person has an appointee, the appointee must act on their behalf.



Appendices: Samples of Associated Documents

Appendix 1 – The Application Form

About you: Please ensure all boxes are fully completed.

Title	
Surname or family name	
First name(s)	
Home Address	
Post code	
Date of Birth	
National Insurance number	
Disability and / or long term health condition	
Preferred method of contact in case we need to contact you (phone number, email or postal address)	

About the College: Please ensure all boxes are fully completed.

Programme applied for: (please put X in box)	Supported Internship	
	Traineeship	
Location of Programme (please put X in box)	England	
	Scotland	
	Wales	
College Name		

Programme Co-ordinator's Name	
Programme Co-ordinator's preferred method of contact in case we need to contact them (phone number, email or postal address)	

Please note, we must speak to someone to progress this application.

If you would like us to discuss your application with someone, please indicate who and provide their details below. If you give us your consent, all future communication will go to the person named below.

	Tick	Name of organisation (college, supported employment provider, employer or other)	Contact name & job title	Address	Preferred communication method (i.e. phone number, email or postal address)
Learning Provider					
Supported Employment Provider					
Other					

Please indicate availability of the above contact to discuss this application

Weekdays	Time

Please ensure consent is signed. We cannot progress the application without it.

Application agreement – if you have an appointee, please ensure they sign instead.

<p>This is my application for Access to Work support, and all the information provided is accurate and correct.</p> <p>(Please note, if you have an appointee, they must sign <u>instead of you</u>. If appointee signing, they must be appointee held by Department for Work and Pensions).**</p>	Signature of Student or Appointee **	
	Please print name of person signing	
	Date	

Consent agreement – if you have an appointee, please ensure they sign instead.

<p>I give consent for the person named on page 1 to act on my behalf regarding my Access to Work application.</p> <p>(We will be sharing information contained in this application form and information related to your grant. This is to enable the named person to support you with your application. You can withdraw consent at any point and we will put in place alternative arrangements).</p>	Signature of Student or Appointee **	
	Please print name of person signing	
	Date	

Once the form is fully complete and you have signed the declaration above, you should post this application form to Access to Work at the following address:

Access to Work
 Operational Support Unit
 Harrow Jobcentre Plus
 Mail Handling Site A
 Wolverhampton
 WV98 1JE

Your information is being used to process your Access to Work application. If you'd like to find out more, visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/personal-information-charter>.

Appendix 2 - The Support Plan

Please email the completed form to ATWOSU.LONDON@DWP.GOV.UK. Ensure that you do not put any personal or identifiable information. Any changes to the young person's support needs will require completion of a new support plan.

About you: Please ensure all boxes are fully completed.		
Proposed start date of placement:		
Proposed end date of placement:		
Access to Work URN :	<i>{You will only need to write this if submitting by email}</i>	
<p>Please provide a brief assessment of the support needed, disability and/or long-term health condition and how it affects you in the workplace.</p> <p>E.g. the difficulties faced at work and the support required to overcome the difficulties.</p>		
Please select which of the following you have: (please put X in box).	Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)	
	Personalised Learning and Support Plan (PSLP)	
	Statement of Special Educational Needs (SSEN)	

About the support you require:

Please provide a breakdown of support **for the placement**. Remember: you do not need to submit another support plan if the young person's support needs do not change. *(Please note, hours of job coach support should taper).*

Days of the week	Task(s)	Type of support required	Start / end time	Hours of support	Hourly rate of support
Monday		e.g. Job coach	10am-2pm	4	£25
Tuesday					£
Wednesday					£
Thursday					£
Friday					£
Saturday					£
Sunday					£
Weekly cost of hours for job coach support: Where weekly costs are expected to change due to tapering please use another row. Please provide details of in which weeks the expected change in tapering will take place e.g. Weeks 4-6.	Week(s)				£
	Week(s)				£
	Week(s)				£
	Week(s)				£
Total hours AND cost of support needed for the whole placement					£
Intern's job title					
Name and preferred contact details of support provider		<i>{We may need to contact the person delivering the support if we have further questions}</i>			

<p>Other support required from Access to Work. Please list all other elements of support needed, such as Travel to Work, Specialist Aids and Equipment and so on.</p>	<p><i>{If not applicable, write N/A}</i></p>
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About the placement:

Name of organisation	Name of employer	Telephone number	Work address

Appendix 3 – The Claim Form



DP222JP - claim
form.pdf

Appendix 4 – The Bank Details Form



DP228JP - bank
details form.pdf

Note: If you are unable to open Appendices 3 and 4, please request them from an adviser.

Annex 1: Frequently Asked Questions

Please suggest other questions you feel would be useful to have answered.

Why are Access to Work (AtW) making these changes now?

- To protect the intern / trainee personal data.
- Ensure the process complies with Cabinet Office grant management procedures. If we fail to comply we cannot fund supported internships or traineeships.
- We need to operate a process that complies with Cabinet Office grant management procedures as failing to conform would be subject to disciplinary action.

What if an application has already been submitted on behalf of the young person?

All young people in the 2020/21 cohort applying for AtW will be required to complete, sign and submit the new application form and submit the application form to AtW by post (unless their disability necessitates the use of email as a reasonable adjustment). If an old style application was submitted initially, the award will be backdated to the original date of submission once the new style application has been received.

Why does the young person have to provide their signature?

To comply with grant management procedures set by Cabinet Office and to support departmental fraud processes, applications must include the signature of the applicant.

Can the education / training provider act on behalf of the young person?

Yes, the new application form contains a section which the intern can sign to give permission for the education provider or training body to act as a representative for the intern.

However, when completing the application form, the provider or training body should only act in the capacity of support. This means

that the provider can give assistance with understanding the content and filling out the form, but consent must be provided by the young person (or their appointee) and they must also provide their signature.

What if the young person is unable to complete the application by themselves?

The education provider or training body can assist the young person when completing the application form. The young person must provide consent on the application form for AtW to contact and liaise with the named third party representative. AtW will then get in touch with the named contact on the application form if further information is required.

What if the young person has an appointee?

The appointee must be the young person's legal appointee and must be held by the Department for Work and Pensions. The appointee will be able to act in the capacity of the young person.

For example, they will be able to provide consent for the Department to process the customer's information and act as the young person's signatory.

Why must applications be submitted by post?

- Departmental security procedures require all applications to be posted into the department where there is no secure channel for transferring information available.
- Submitting applications by post is standard practice within Access to Work.
- This reduces the potential for personal information being leaked or intercepted.

Has AtW considered that these changes will lengthen the customer journey?

- By requiring the young person to complete and sign the application form, this process will bring the AtW Supported Internship and Traineeship processes in line with other parts of AtW. Recognising that the young person may need more support to fill out the

application than the standard AtW customer, we will continue to allow Supported Internship and Traineeship applications to be submitted up to 6 months in advance of the programme start date.

Is there a limit on the amount that can be claimed?

- Although there is no limit on the hourly rate, all quotations of support must be provided to ensure that they demonstrate the level of support and comparable costs across suppliers in order to determine value for money.
- From April 2020, the total amount that can be awarded to all AtW customers is £60,700 per annum.

There tends to be inconsistent decision-making. How will AtW address this during the Test and Learn?

- To provide transparency for young disabled people and remove inconsistencies, AtW has developed a more robust staff guide for Supported Internships and Traineeships that will support advisers in making more consistent decision-making. The revised user guidance will provide a clearer overview of Supported Internship and Traineeship eligibility, how to apply and the support young, disabled people can receive.

Annex 2: Administration of Provider Guide

Document control

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