

Personal Independence Payment – the points based criteria

This information sheet provides detailed information about the points based criteria for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Here we describe the criteria that applies for new claims, renewals and reassessments where the decision is made on or after 16th March 2017.

For more general information about PIP please see www.autism.org.uk/PIP.

When you claim PIP you are assessed against a points based criteria. For each of the components (Mobility and Daily Living) there are a list of activities, each activity has a list of statements which are known as descriptors. Each descriptor is worth a certain number of points and if that descriptor applies to you, you score that number of points. You can score points in each activity. How many points you score in total determines whether you are entitled to each component, and the number of points determines whether you will receive payment of a component at the standard or enhanced rate.

You need to score at least eight points to be eligible for the standard rate and at least 12 points to be awarded the enhanced rate of each component.

For all of the following descriptors you are only considered to be able to do the activity if you can do it safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period.

- “safely” means in a manner unlikely to cause harm to you or to another person, either during or after completion of the activity
- “repeatedly” means as often as the activity is required to be completed.
- “reasonable time period” means no more than twice as long as it would take a non-disabled person.

For example if you can cook a simple meal, but there would be a risk of you burning yourself, or leaving the gas on, or it would take you over twice as long as it should to complete the task, you are not considered to be able to cook a simple meal.

Below is the full list of the descriptors and points. The descriptors and the points are copied directly from the PIP regulations. Next to the points are our hints and tips which give more information and are intended to help you to interpret the descriptors. We have also included the definitions that the PIP regulations have given for some of the terms used.

The Daily Living component

Activity 1 Preparing food

This activity looks at your ability to cook a simple meal from fresh ingredients. Think about what help, reminding, encouraging or supervising you need to be able to cook safely and successfully.

Definitions

A 'simple meal' means a cooked one course meal for one using fresh ingredients – not a ready meal.

'Prepare' means making food ready for cooking or eating and 'cook' means to heat food above waist height. Remember to consider whether you can cook safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period.

'Unaided' means without using an aid or appliance and without supervision, prompting or physical help.

'Assistance' means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech.

'Prompting' means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person.

'Supervision' means the continuous presence of another person to keep you safe.

1) Preparing food	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can prepare and cook a simple meal unaided.	0	This descriptor could apply to you if you can cook a meal without any supervision, prompting or assistance and can do so safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period.
b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2	An aid or appliance means a device designed for use by disabled people which you use to help you do this activity because you have a disability.
c. Cannot cook a simple meal using a conventional cooker but is able to do so using a microwave.	2	A simple meal is a cooked one course meal made from scratch, not a ready meal. This could apply to you if you are not safe using a cooker but can use a microwave to cook a simple meal from fresh ingredients.
d. Needs prompting to be able to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	2	This descriptor could apply to you if you need someone to remind, encourage or explain things to you to enable you to cook safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period.
e. Needs supervision or assistance to either prepare or cook a simple meal.	4	This descriptor could apply to you if you either need someone to be with you to supervise you to make sure you are safe, or you need physical help to cook.
f. Cannot prepare and cook food.	8	This could apply to you if you cannot safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period cook a meal.

Activity 2 Taking nutrition

This activity looks at eating, it does not take into account shopping for the food, preparing it or cooking it and does not take into account the nutritious quality of the food. Think about whether you ever forget to eat or need reminding, encouraging or physical help to eat.

Definitions

'Take nutrition' means cutting food up, putting it in your mouth, chewing and swallowing it.

'Unaided' means without the use of an aid or appliance; or without supervision, prompting or assistance.

'Assistance' means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech.

'Prompting' means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person.

'Supervision' means the continuous presence of another person to keep you safe.

'Therapeutic source' means parenteral or enteral tube feeding, using a rate-limiting device such as a delivery system or feed pump.

2) Taking nutrition	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can take nutrition unaided.	0	This descriptor could apply to you if you can eat food safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period without any supervision, prompting or assistance.
b. Needs – (i) to use an aid or appliance to be able to take nutrition; or (ii) supervision to be able to take nutrition; or (iii) assistance to be able to cut up food.	2	This descriptor could apply to you if you need someone with you to supervise you or to physically help you to eat in a safe, acceptable way within a reasonable time period (if as well as supervision or assistance you also need 'prompting' see if (d) applies instead as this scores more points).
c. Needs a therapeutic source to be able to take nutrition.	2	A 'therapeutic source' is where you are fed via a tube.
d. Needs prompting to be able to take nutrition.	4	This descriptor could apply to you if you need someone to remind or encourage you to eat. For example if you needed prompting to remember to eat regularly or to keep focused on eating a meal.
e. Needs assistance to be able to manage a therapeutic source to take nutrition.	6	This applies to people who need physical help from another person to be fed via a tube.
f. Cannot convey food and drink to their mouth and needs another person to do so.	10	This could apply to you if you need someone to physically feed you.

Activity 3 Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition.

This activity is about taking medication and doing therapy. Think about what help, reminding or encouraging you need to take your medication or do therapy.

Definitions

'Manage medication means take medication, where failing to do so would cause a deterioration in your health.

'Medication' is defined as medication prescribed or recommended by a registered doctor, nurse or pharmacist.

'Manage therapy' means undertake therapy, where a failure to do so is likely to result in a deterioration of your health

'Therapy' means therapy undertaken at home which is prescribed or recommended by any of the following professionals: a doctor, nurse, pharmacist, arts therapist, biomedical scientist, chiropractor, podiatrist, clinical scientist, dietitian, hearing aid dispenser, occupational therapist, operating department practitioner, orthoptist, paramedic, physiotherapist, practitioner psychologist, prosthetist, orthotist, radiographer, social worker or speech and language therapist. 'Therapy' does not include taking any medication or monitoring a health condition.

'Unaided' means without the use of an aid or appliance and without supervision, prompting or assistance.

"assistance" means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech;

"monitor health condition" means to detect significant changes in your health condition which are likely to lead to a deterioration in health; and then take action as advised by a doctor, nurse or other registered health professional, without which your health is likely to deteriorate.

"prompting" means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

"supervision" means the continuous presence of another person for the purpose of ensuring your safety.

Remember to consider whether you can manage your medication or therapy safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period.

3) Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition.	Points	Hints and tips
<p>a. Either –</p> <p>(i) does not receive medication or therapy or need to monitor a health condition; or</p> <p>(ii) can manage medication or therapy or monitor a health condition unaided.</p>	0	<p>This descriptor could apply to you if you can safely and reliably take care of all your medication and therapy yourself without any help, or if you don't have any medication or therapy.</p>
<p>b. Needs any one or more of the following –</p> <p>(i) to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage medication;</p> <p>(ii) supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage medication;</p> <p>(iii) supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to monitor a health condition.</p>	1	<p>(i) This could apply to you if you need to use an aid such as a dosette box or alarm to manage your medication.</p> <p>(ii) This could apply to you if you need someone to remind, encourage or supervise you to help you to take medication.</p> <p>(iii) This could apply to you if you need help to monitor a health condition such as diabetes.</p>
<p>c. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes no more than 3.5 hours a week.</p>	2	<p>Descriptors (c) (d) (e) and (f) all relate to people who need either supervision or help such as prompting, encouraging or explaining to enable them to do their therapy safely, to an acceptable standard and in a reasonable time period. Which of these four descriptors you score depends on how many hours a week the help is needed for.</p>
<p>d. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 3.5 but no more than 7 hours a week.</p>	4	
<p>e. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 7 but no more than 14 hours a week.</p>	6	
<p>f. Needs supervision, prompting or assistance to be able to manage therapy that takes more than 14 hours a week.</p>	8	

Activity 4 Washing and bathing

This activity looks at your ability to wash yourself. Think about issues such as needing prompting or encouraging to have a wash, making sure the water is a safe temperature, needing supervision whilst washing, needing prompting to stay focused on washing or prompting to complete tasks or carry out the tasks involved in washing in the right order.

Definitions

“unaided” means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

“assistance” means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech;

“bathe” includes get into or out of an unadapted bath or shower;

“prompting” means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

“supervision” means the continuous presence of another person to keep you safe

4) Washing and bathing	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can wash and bathe unaided.	0	This descriptor could apply to you if you can safely and reliably wash or bathe without any supervision, prompting or assistance. And can do so safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period
b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to wash or bathe.	2	An aid or appliance means a device designed for use by disabled people which you use to help you do this activity because you have a disability.
c. Needs supervision or prompting to be able to wash or bathe.	2	This descriptor could apply to you if you need someone with you to make sure you are safe when you are washing or bathing, or if you need someone to prompt, encourage, remind or explain things to you.
d. Needs assistance to be able to wash either their hair or body below the waist.	2	This descriptor could apply to you if you need physical help from another person to wash your hair or wash yourself below the waist.
e. Needs assistance to be able to get in or out of a bath or shower.	3	This descriptor could apply if you need physical help to get in or out of the bath or shower.
f. Needs assistance to be able to wash their body between the shoulders and waist.	4	This descriptor could apply if you need physical help to wash your body.
g. Cannot wash and bathe at all and needs another person to wash their entire body.	8	This descriptor applies if you are not able to wash yourself at all.

Activity 5 Managing toilet needs or incontinence

This activity looks at whether you need any help, supervision, prompting, reminding or explaining to use the toilet safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period. Going to the toilet includes cleaning yourself properly afterwards.

Definitions

'Toilet needs' means getting on and off the toilet, urinating and emptying the bowel, and then cleaning yourself afterwards.

'Managing incontinence' means dealing with involuntary urination or emptying of the bowel and cleaning yourself afterwards.

"unaided" means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

"assistance" means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech;

"manage incontinence" means manage involuntary evacuation of the bowel or bladder,

including use a collecting device or self-catheterisation, and clean oneself afterwards;

"prompting" means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

"supervision" means the continuous presence of another person for the purpose of ensuring C's safety;

"toilet needs" means –

- (a) getting on and off an unadapted toilet;
- (b) evacuating the bladder and bowel; and
- (c) cleaning oneself afterwards; and

5) Managing toilet needs or incontinence	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can manage toilet needs or incontinence unaided.	0	This would apply to you if you can manage your toilet needs safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period without any supervision, prompting or assistance.
b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to manage toilet needs or incontinence.	2	This could apply if you need to use an aid or appliance such as a pad or a commode to manage toileting or incontinence problems
c. Needs supervision or prompting to be able to manage toilet needs.	2	This could apply if you need reminding or prompting to go to the toilet
d. Needs assistance to be able to manage toilet needs.	4	Assistance means physical help. This could apply if someone needs to physically help you to clean yourself after going to the toilet.
e. Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of either bladder or bowel.	6	Assistance means physical help. This could apply if you need someone to physically help you to clean yourself after you have been incontinent.
f. Needs assistance to be able to manage incontinence of both bladder and bowel.	8	This would apply if you are incontinent of both bladder and bowel and need physical help from another person to manage this.

Activity 6 Dressing and undressing

This activity looks at your ability to dress and undress and what help or prompting you need to do that safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period. Dressing includes putting on socks and shoes, and includes selecting appropriate clothing.

Definitions

“unaided” means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

“assistance” means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech;

“prompting” means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

“supervision” means the continuous presence of another person for the purpose of ensuring C’s safety;

6) Dressing and undressing	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can dress and undress unaided.	0	This would apply to you if you can dress and undress safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period without any supervision, prompting or assistance.
b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to dress or undress.	2	An aid or appliance means a device designed for use by disabled people which you use to help you do this activity because you have a disability.
c. Needs either - (i) prompting to be able to dress, undress or determine appropriate circumstances for remaining clothed; or (ii) prompting or assistance to be able to select appropriate clothing.	2	This could apply if you need someone to remind, prompt or explain when to get dressed or changed, what to wear, or how to get dressed.
d. Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their lower body.	2	This could apply if you need physical help to dress your lower body.
e. Needs assistance to be able to dress or undress their upper body.	4	This could apply if you need physical help to dress your upper body
f. Cannot dress or undress at all.	8	This applies if you cannot dress at all, even with help.

Activity 7 Communicating verbally

This activity is about ability to speak and ability to understand a couple of sentences spoken to you. Note that 'basic' and 'complex' verbal information are given specific definitions, which are not what most people would understand as 'complex' or 'basic'.

Definitions

"basic verbal information" means a simple sentence, examples of a simple sentence are: "Can I help you?"; "I would like tea please"; "I came home today"; "The time is 3 o'clock."

"complex verbal information" means more than one sentence or one complicated sentence. For example. "I would like tea please, just a splash of milk and no sugar, as I always have sweeteners with me for when I go out".

"communication support" means support from a person either trained or experienced in communicating with people with specific communication needs.

"unaided" means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

"prompting" means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

7) Communicating verbally.	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can express and understand verbal information unaided.	0	This would apply to you if you can talk and understand someone talking to you.
b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear.	2	An aid or appliance means a device designed for use by disabled people which you use to help you do this activity because you have a disability.
c. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information.	4	Communication support includes help from someone who is either trained or experienced in supporting autistic people to communicate. See definition and example of 'complex verbal information' above. This descriptor could apply to you if you need help from someone who knows about autism or knows you to enable you to talk to and understand someone talking to you. For example This could apply to you if you often struggle to understand or make yourself understood without help.
d. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information.	8	This looks at the same issues as descriptor (c) above, except that this looks at basic verbal information, see above for definition and examples of basic verbal information.
e. Cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support.	12	This would apply to you if you cannot successfully talk or understand other people talking at all.

Activity 8 Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words

This activity looks at your ability to read and understand written information.

Definitions

“basic written information” means signs, symbols and dates written or printed standard size text. For example an ‘exit’ sign on a door or the standard male and female symbols for toilets.

“complex written information” means more than one sentence of written or printed standard size text. For example “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.”

“unaided” means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

“prompting” means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

8) Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can read and understand basic and complex written information either unaided or using spectacles or contact lenses.	0	This descriptor applies to you if you can read and understand what you are reading safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period without any help, prompting or supervision.
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.	2	An aid or appliance means a device designed for use by disabled people which you use to help you do this activity because you have a disability. For example if you use coloured overlays to enable you to read.
c. Needs prompting to be able to read or understand complex written information.	2	This could apply if you need help such as encouraging, explaining or prompting to enable you to read and understand information longer than a sentence (see definition and example above).
d. Needs prompting to be able to read or understand basic written information.	4	This could apply if you need someone help such as encouraging, explaining or prompting to enable you to read and understand Any signs, symbols or dates (see definition and examples above)
e. Cannot read or understand signs, symbols or words at all.	8	This applies if, even with help you cannot read and understand any written information.

Activity 9 Engaging with other people face to face

This activity looks at your ability to engage socially with other people face to face.

Definitions

“engage socially” means safely and successfully interacting with others in a contextually and socially appropriate manner, understand body language and establishing relationships;

“unaided” means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

“prompting” means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

“psychological distress” means distress related to an enduring mental health condition or an intellectual or cognitive impairment;

“social support” means support from a person trained or experienced in assisting people to engage in social situations;

9) Engaging with other people face to face.	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can engage with other people unaided.	0	This would apply to you if you can interact socially in a safe way, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period without any supervision, prompting or assistance.
b. Needs prompting to be able to engage with other people.	2	This could apply if you need someone to help you by encouraging, reminding or explaining to enable you to socialise with other people in an acceptable way, and as often as you are expected to socialise. For example if you are not interested in socialising, or avoid it because you find it stressful and need someone to encourage you to be in social situations, this could apply to you.
c. Needs social support to be able to engage with other people.	4	If you need support from someone trained or experienced in helping autistic people to enable you to socialise this could apply to you. For example if you need someone who knows you like a family member to be with you when you socialise this could apply to you.
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.	8	This would apply to you if you cannot socialise at all, because of the stress it would cause you, or because it would cause you to behave in a dangerous way.

Activity 10 Making budgeting decisions

This activity looks at your ability to understand money and to make decisions about money safely and to a reasonable standard.

Definitions

“simple budgeting decisions” means decisions involving calculating the cost of goods; and calculating change required after a purchase.

“complex budgeting decisions” means decisions involving calculating household and personal budgets, managing and paying bills and planning future purchases;

“unaided” means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

“prompting” means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

“assistance” means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech;

10) Making budgeting decisions	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can manage complex budgeting decisions unaided.	0	This would apply to you if you can make decisions such as paying bills, and budgeting safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period without any supervision, prompting or assistance.
b. Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make complex budgeting decisions.	2	This could apply if you need reminding, encouraging, explaining or physical help to enable you to safely and successfully make decisions such as paying bills and budgeting. For example if you need someone to explain things to you and encourage you to plan your weekly or monthly household budget.
c. Needs prompting or assistance to be able to make simple budgeting decisions.	4	This could apply if you need reminding, encouraging, explaining or physical help to enable you to safely and successfully make simple decisions such as working out how much your shopping will cost or how much change you should be given.
d. Cannot make any budgeting decisions at all.	6	This could apply if you cannot reliably and successfully make simple decisions like how much change you should be given after buying something.

The Mobility component

1. Planning and following journeys

This activity looks at your ability to plan and follow a journey safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period

Definitions

“unaided” means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

“assistance dog” means a dog trained to guide or assist a person with a sensory impairment;

“orientation aid” means a specialist aid designed to assist disabled people to follow a route safely;

“prompting” means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person;

“psychological distress” means distress related to an enduring mental health condition or an intellectual or cognitive impairment.

1) Planning and following journeys.	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can plan and follow the route of a journey unaided.	0	This would apply to you if you can plan and follow a journey safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period without any supervision, prompting or assistance.
b. Needs prompting to be able to undertake any journey to avoid overwhelming psychological distress	4	This could apply if you need someone to prompt, remind or explain things to you to enable you to make a journey safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time.
c. For reasons other than psychological distress, cannot plan the route of a journey.	8	This would apply to you if you cannot safely, and successfully plan a journey without help.
d. For reasons other than psychological distress, cannot follow the route of an unfamiliar journey without another person, assistance dog or orientation aid.	10	This can only apply to you if your difficulties with following a journey are not due to 'psychological distress'. For example this could apply if you are unable to understand how to make an unfamiliar journey, or if you are so distracted or preoccupied that you often get lost.
e. Cannot undertake any journey because it would cause overwhelming psychological distress to the claimant.	10	This applies if you cannot make any journeys because of the distress it would cause.
f. For reasons other than psychological distress, cannot follow the route of a familiar journey without another person, an assistance dog or an orientation aid.	12	This can only apply to you if your difficulties with following a journey are not due to 'psychological distress' For example this could apply if you are unable to learn how to make familiar journey, or if you are so distracted or preoccupied that you often get lost on familiar journeys.

2. Moving around

This activity looks at your ability to physically move around safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period.

Definitions

“unaided” means without the use of an aid or appliance and without any supervision, prompting or assistance.

“aided” means with the use of an aid or appliance or supervision, prompting or assistance

“aid or appliance”-

(a) means a device to improve, provide or replace a physical or mental function;

(b) includes a prosthesis; and

(c) does not include an aid or appliance ordinarily used by a person without a physical or mental condition which limits that person’s ability to carry out daily living or mobility activities;

“assistance” means physical intervention by another person and does not include speech;

“stand” means stand upright with at least one biological foot on the ground;

2) Moving around	Points	Hints and tips
a. Can stand and then move more than 200 metres, either aided or unaided.	0	This descriptor applies to you if you can safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period stand up and walk 200 metres, with or without help from another person.
b. Can stand and then move more than 50 metres but no more than 200 metres, either aided or unaided	4	These five descriptors are for people who are physically limited in how far they can walk.
c. Can stand and then move unaided more than 20 metres but no more than 50 metres.	8	(b) Is for people limited to 50-200 metres with or without help or an aid or appliance (c) is for people limited to 20-50 metres without help or an aid or appliance (d) is for people limited to 20-50 metres when using an aid or appliance
d. Can stand and then move using an aid or appliance more than 20 metres but no more than 50 metres.	10	(e) is for people who are limited to between 1 and 20 metres with or without help or an aid or appliance.
e. Can stand and then move more than 1 metre but no more than 20 metres, either aided or unaided.	12	(f) is for people who cannot either stand or move a metre with or without help or an aid or appliance.
f. Cannot, either aided or unaided, – (i) stand; or (ii) move more than 1 metre.	12	

This information was last updated March 2017