

Daily Living Activity 7: Communicating Verbally

Descriptors	Points
a. Can express and understand verbal information unaided.	0
b. Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to speak or hear.	2
c. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand complex verbal information.	4
d. Needs communication support to be able to express or understand basic verbal information.	8
e. Cannot express or understand verbal information at all even with communication support.	12

Legislative Definitions

“Basic verbal information” means information in the claimant’s native language conveyed verbally in a simple sentence.

“Communication support” means support from a person trained or experienced in communicating with people with specific communication needs, including interpreting verbal information into non-verbal form and vice versa.

“Complex verbal information” means information in the claimant’s native language conveyed verbally in either more than one sentence or one complicated sentence.

Select Case Law

- [SSWP v GJ \[2016\] UKUT 8](#) – The definition of complex for this activity comes from the legislative meaning (above) and not the dictionary.

In the context of Anxiety, this case also considers the relationship between Activity 7 *Communicating verbally* and 9 *Engaging with other people face to face*.

21. ...an anxious claimant who, for example, is not able to communicate with strangers or persons who are not well known to him or is not able to do so when in the company of a large number of people but is able to verbally express himself or herself and understand communication with a person with whom they are familiar and comfortable would, in all probability, score points under activity 9 but not under activity 7. That is because, in such a case, it is likely to be the engagement with others which is triggering the difficulty...However, if a claimant was so anxious that not only was he impaired with respect to engaging with others but was also impaired with respect to the function of communicating

verbally, perhaps a most unlikely eventuality, he might score under both activities.

- [SSWP v AS \(PIP\) \[2017\] UKUT 454](#) – Legislative definition of ‘Complex verbal information’ sets the standard a claimant has to reach as very low. If most of the time a claimant is able to understand and speak two short sentences or one long one without the support of an experienced person, they won’t score points. Agreement cited on this point in [JW-v-DfC \(PIP\) \[2019\] NICom 56](#) [para 26].
- [EG v SSWP \[2017\] UKUT 101 \(AAC\)](#) - Activity 7 is limited to assessing speech and hearing; it does not include the ability to communicate by means such as text.
- [SB v SSWP \[2018\] UKUT 122 \(AAC\)](#) – Based on a concession from the representative of the Secretary of State - Lip reading is not an acceptable form of verbal communication. See also [MM v SSWP \[2018\] UKUT 193](#).
- [P v SSWP \[2018\] UKUT 376](#) - What the Secretary of State has previously described as a ‘concession’ that lip-reading is not to be taken into account in assessing ability to communicate verbally is in fact a correct description of the law.
- [BM v DfC \[2019\] NICom 33; \[2020\] AACR 15](#) - expressly disagrees with the analysis in [EG v SSWP \[2017\] UKUT 101 \(AAC\)](#) and instead finds that that the use of a pen and paper was an aid to assist when the appellant could not communicate orally [para 35].
- [AB v SSWP \[2024\] UKUT 376 \(AAC\)](#) - A Bone Anchored Hearing Aid (BAHA) can count as an “aid or appliance” for PIP Activity 7 because its removable external processor assists hearing, even though part of the system is surgically implanted.