

# **Accessible Vehicles and Equipment - Scheme Rules**

**November 2022**

# **Apply to provide accessible vehicles for disabled people**

We're looking for new providers to join the Accessible Vehicles and Equipment Scheme.

Accredited providers contribute a valuable service to our community. They can help disabled people:

- get access to affordable, worry-free transport
- be more independent
- gain confidence

## **Background to the scheme**

The Scotland Act 2016 devolved new powers over social security to the Scottish Parliament. As a consequence, the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 now creates the legal framework for Scottish social security benefits. Social Security Scotland is an Executive Agency responsible for administering social security payments on behalf of the Scottish Ministers.

The scheme gives disabled people access to affordable vehicles and mobility equipment including:

- cars
- scooters
- powered wheelchairs
- adapted vehicles
- electric bikes

## **How the scheme works**

To join the scheme, clients will lease a vehicle from an accredited provider. Clients must be receiving either:

- the higher rate mobility component of Child Disability Payment
- the enhanced rate mobility component of Adult Disability Payment.

Social Security Scotland will make payments on the client's behalf for the lease to the accredited provider. We'll pay either all or part of a client's qualifying benefit.

We'll also be responsible for both:

- checking if clients are eligible for the scheme
- notifying providers of any changes of client circumstances

## How accreditation works

Accreditation is our process for ensuring applicants meet the minimum selection criteria. We use an accreditation model to ensure that:

- reputable suppliers join the scheme
- the scheme meets disabled people's needs

The Scottish Government will maintain and publish on its website a register of all currently valid accreditations. The register will include:

- the name and business address of accredited providers
- the period of accreditation
- the category or categories the accreditation is valid for

## Costs payable by accredited providers

Accredited providers will pay a price per client based on the full costs of Social Security Scotland delivering the scheme.

The price per client is the price per client participating in the scheme. To figure out the price per client, you would divide the total cost to Social Security Scotland by the number of client. Then divide by the number of providers.

For example, imagine the full cost to Social Security Scotland is £630,000. If there are two accredited providers with 30,000 clients each, they would both pay £315,000 per year. The estimated price per client would be £10.50. This cost will rise annually.

The accredited provider will pay Social Security Scotland every 6 months in arrears.

## Tax exemptions

Accredited providers should take their own advice on matters related to tax under the scheme.

Our understanding of the position on the following taxes is set out below.

### Value Added Tax

Payments of a client's qualifying benefit made by Social Security Scotland to a provider are zero-rated for the purposes of Value Added Tax.

Payments for electric bikes will only be zero-rated for VAT if they have been designed solely for use by disabled people. Payments for standard electric bikes will not be zero-rated.

### Vehicle Excise Duty

Vehicle excise duty only applies to cars and wheelchair accessible vehicles. Where the client's vehicle is registered under their name and is their only vehicle, the vehicle will be exempt from Vehicle Excise Duty.

### **Insurance Premium Tax**

The client's vehicle will be exempt from insurance premium tax where the vehicle is used by them or for their benefit.

# Changes to accreditation

## Terminations

Accreditation of a provider will terminate if either:

- they provide written confirmation to the Scottish Government of their wish to terminate
- if the Scottish Government withdraws their accreditation. See the section on withdrawals.

After termination of their accreditation, accredited providers must continue to provide the same service to existing clients until the earliest of the following events:

- expiry of a client's lease
- the transfer of the client's lease to another accredited provider as decided by the accreditation committee or review committee

## Withdrawals

An accredited provider's accreditation may be withdrawn by the Scottish Government if they breach any of the contracted conditions.

The Scottish Government will:

- notify the applicant in writing with details of their intention to withdraw accreditation
- Send any relevant material will be sent to show the reasons for withdrawal

The accredited provider may:

- send written representation in response to the notification of withdrawal
- request a face-to-face or virtual meeting to provide representation

## Written representation

Written representation should be sent no later than 6 weeks from the date of the notification of withdrawal.

## Face to face or virtual representation

To request face-to-face or virtual representation, the applicant should send written notice to the Scottish Government no later than 3 weeks from the date of the notification of withdrawal.

In the notification of withdrawal, the applicant may be asked to attend an oral hearing. The applicant may wish to be represented at the hearing. If so they should send the Scottish Government written notification of the representative's name, address and occupation within the timeframe specified.

## **Decisions on withdrawal**

The accreditation committee will hold an oral hearing where they will consider all representations made by or on behalf of the applicant and all other relevant material. A decision will be made whether to withdraw the accreditation in whole or in part.

The accreditation committee may also decide to disqualify the applicant from making a further application for a period of up to 3 years. The period of disqualification will be set a reasonable time in all circumstances. An applicant may be disqualified for circumstances such as:

- they been guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required to determine whether they meet the minimum selection criteria
- they have either:
  - tried to unduly influence the decision-making process of the Scottish Government
  - tried to obtain confidential information that may provide unfair advantages in the accreditation process
  - negligently provided misleading information that may have a material influence on decisions concerning exclusion or accreditation.

The accredited provider will be sent written notification of the decision within 2 weeks of the decision being made.

## **Suspensions**

An accredited provider's accreditation may be temporarily suspended if:

- their membership of, or registration with, a professional regulatory body is suspended or otherwise temporarily removed, resulting in a breach of the standard conditions
- a condition to similar effect has been breached
- they are not able to demonstrate their ability to deliver the minimum standards of service

The accreditation committee will send the applicant written notification of suspension within 2 weeks of the decision being made.

When an applicant's accreditation is suspended they must:

- not accept any new clients to the scheme
- continue to meet their obligations to existing clients under the scheme

## **Reviews**

Applicants may ask for a review of a decision in relation to either:

- their application
- their withdrawal

To request a review, applicants should email the Scottish Government at [AVE@gov.scot](mailto:AVE@gov.scot) within 4 weeks after being notified of the decision.

In the email, the applicant should both:

- specify which decision a review is being requested for
- include any written representations they wish to be considered

## **Review committee**

The outcome of reviews will be determined by the review committee. The Scottish Government will appoint a minimum of two of its members to form the review committee. This will include the convener who will chair the committee.

Members will be appointed from the Senior Civil Service at the level of deputy director or above. One of the members will hold a post in a different Scottish Government Directorate.

We will not allow members of the accreditation committee who made the decision under review to be members of the Review Committee.

Decisions will be taken by simple majority. If the review committee cannot agree, the chairperson will have the final decision.

The committee will be able to regulate its own procedures for dealing with matters, subject to the rules of the scheme.

If a committee member has a connection to an applicant, they should disclose this and immediately withdraw from the process.

This connection could be either:

- a close, direct, personal or financial connection
- a connection to a subsidiary or parent entity of the applicant

Once they withdraw, they will:

- take no further part in deliberation or decision-making in relation to the applicant
- not be present during any discussion of the applicant
- be replaced by an alternative Review Committee member

An alternative member will be appointed, subject to the same membership terms.

## Who can apply

Applicants can apply to be an accredited provider if they are able to meet all of the following:

- standard conditions
- minimum service requirements
- minimum requirements for accreditation categories
- the minimum technical requirements

## Standard conditions

Accredited providers must without exception meet all the standard conditions for:

- consumer credit authority
- insurance
- information security
- insolvency
- exclusion
- exit strategy
- expenses
- sustainability

## Consumer credit authority

Accredited providers must have must:

- have interim or full permission from the Financial Conduct Authority to carry out consumer credit activities throughout the period of accreditation
- meet the costs associated with applying for authorisation, and the annual fees payable to the Financial Conduct Authority

The accredited provider must inform the Scottish Government immediately if:

- they no longer have permission from the Financial Conduct Authority
- their permission is withdrawn or suspended.

If they no longer have permission, their accreditation may be withdrawn.

## Insurance

Accredited providers must:

- throughout accreditation have appropriate levels of insurance in place to meet their legal obligations and level of risk
- take and meet the costs of taking appropriate advice about their insurance requirements



## **Information security**

Accredited providers must:

- develop and maintain an Information Security Management System and Security Management
- appoint a suitably qualified person to act as a single contact on all security matters who will liaise with Social Security Scotland's primary contact
- handle all data in accordance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- They must securely
  - protect all information provided by the Scottish Government and its executive agencies
  - destroy information when no longer required using a cross-cutting shredder and/or a professional secure waste paper organisation
  - send any paper documents containing information provided by the Scottish Government and its executive agencies to ensure no unauthorised person has access

## **Insolvency**

Accredited providers must notify the Scottish Government immediately if they:

- have insufficient assets to meet their liabilities as and when they arise
- become or are likely to become subject to any proceedings, whether in Scotland or elsewhere, related to insolvency, including any of the following:
  - administration
  - receivership
  - voluntary liquidation
  - compulsory liquidation
  - Company Voluntary Arrangement
- become or are likely to become subject to any proceedings, whether in Scotland or elsewhere, related to:
  - dissolution
  - winding-up
  - striking off from an appropriate register
  - to otherwise cease to trade
- are in a partnership, where any of the partners becomes or is likely to become subject to any insolvency proceedings
- are a limited company, where any of the directors, or members in a close company, becomes or is likely to become subject to disqualification

## **Exclusion**

The conditions for exclusion apply to both:

- the accredited provider
- any members of its administrative, management or supervisory body with powers of representation, decision or control

The accredited provider must inform us immediately if they or their members are convicted of any of the following offences:

- the common law offence of conspiracy where conspiracy relates to either:
  - participating in a criminal organisation as defined in Article 2 of [Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA](#) on the fight against organised crime(40)
  - an offence under sections 28 or 30 of the [Criminal Justice and Licensing \(Scotland\) Act 2010](#)
- corruption within the meaning of either:
  - section 1(2) of the [Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act 1889](#)
  - section 1 of the [Prevention of Corruption Act 1906](#), where the offence relates to active corruption as defined in Article 3 of the [Council Act of 26th May 1997](#) and Article 3(1) of [Council Joint Action 98/742/JHA](#)
- bribery or corruption within the meaning of sections 68 and 69 of the [Criminal Justice \(Scotland\) Act 2003](#), where the offence relates to active bribery or corruption
- bribery within the meaning of sections 1 or 6 of the [Bribery Act 2010](#) where the offence relates to fraud affecting the European Communities' financial interests as defined by Article 1 of the [Convention on the protection of the financial interests of the European Communities](#):
  - the offence of cheating the Revenue
  - the common law offence of fraud
  - the common law offence of theft or fraud
  - fraudulent trading within the meaning of section 458 of the [Companies Act 1985](#), or section 993 of the [Companies Act 2006](#)
  - fraudulent evasion within the meaning of section 170 of the [Customs and Excise Management Act 1979](#) or section 72 of the [Value Added Tax Act 1994](#)
  - an offence in connection with taxation in the European Union within the meaning of section 71 of the [Criminal Justice Act 1993](#)
  - the common law offence of uttering
  - the common law offence of attempting to pervert the course of justice;
- any offence listed in either
  - section 41 of the [Counter-Terrorism Act 2008](#)
  - Schedule 2 to that Act where the court has determined that there is a terrorist connection
- money laundering within the meaning of sections 340 and 415 of the [Proceeds of Crime Act 2002](#)
- an offence in connection with the proceeds of criminal conduct within the meaning of section 93A, 93B or 93C of the [Criminal Justice Act 1988](#)
- any offence under Part 1 of the [Human Trafficking and Exploitation \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) or under any provision referred to in the Schedule to that Act
- an offence in connection with the proceeds of drug trafficking within the meaning of section 49, 50 or 51 of the [Drug Trafficking Act 1994](#)
- any other offence within the meaning of Article 57(1) of the Directive as defined by the law of any EEA state or any part of it

## **Exit strategy**

Accredited providers will develop and maintain plans and procedures for the orderly transition of their services to a successor service provider.

## **Expenses**

Accredited providers will have to pay Social Security Scotland expenses for the administration services of the mobility allowance. Social Security Scotland will charge the accredited provider annually on a full cost basis.

The full costs will be calculated based on:

- the full salary of the staff employed solely to make the transfers and associated activities
- a pro rata charge for staff with other duties
- overheads including those shared with other teams, for example management and support activities
- a proportion of other shared costs including but not limited to estate costs and corporate activities, including finance, human resources and technology

Subject to agreement, the accredited provider will also be required to reimburse the Scottish Government for any expenses reasonably incurred in the administration of the scheme.

## **Sustainability**

Accredited providers should actively promote vehicles with low or zero emissions. They should give due prominence to these vehicles in marketing activities.

## Minimum service requirements

Accredited providers must deliver a service that meets the minimum standards for

- general service
- customer service
- service continuity

### General service

Accredited providers must deliver a service that:

- protects the reputation of the scheme and the Scottish Government
- ensures the overall integrity of the scheme
- operates efficiently and cost effectively
- is accessible to all eligible clients regardless of their circumstances, location or income
- provides clients with a choice and range of vehicles at no additional cost above their qualifying benefit
- is in accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- provides clients with a fully inclusive service in accordance with the Accessible Vehicles and Equipment Scheme.

### Customer service

Accredited providers must deliver:

- customer service in accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- a freephone 24-hour emergency support phone number
- a choice of accessible telephone and online contact methods
- a website that complies with [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1 \(w3.org\)](#)
- a complaints policy published in a range of accessible formats on their website
- and publish an annual report detailing the number of complaints received, upheld/refused and average time taken to respond and shared bi-annually with Social Security Scotland

Client complaints must be treated as an “expression of dissatisfaction” about either:

- a service received or not received
- treatment of the client by the accredited provider

### Service continuity

Accredited providers should have measures in place to support clients following a change to or loss of their entitlement to a qualifying form of Disability Assistance. They must

- ensure the client is promptly notified at least 3 months in advance by the accredited provider that their lease will be coming to an end
- pro-actively sign-post clients to Social Security Scotland for questions about the decision to stop their benefit where it affects their lease
- allow clients to retain access to their car, wheelchair accessible vehicle, scooter, powered wheelchair or electric bike for a transitional period of eight weeks (unless in legal detention) following the decision to change or withdraw their entitlement
- ensure clients are notified 17 days after a suspension to inform them that their vehicle will be recovered
- recover the vehicle if the client's qualifying benefit is still suspended after 34 days

## **Minimum requirements for accreditation categories**

Accredited providers must meet the following minimum service requirements for each accreditation category they apply for. The accreditation categories are:

- cars
- wheelchair accessible vehicles
- scooters and powered wheelchairs
- electric bikes

Accredited providers may also provide equipment for transporting scooters, powered wheelchairs and electric bikes, such as:

- mobility lifts
- car hoists
- trailers

### **Cars**

#### **Types of cars**

Accredited providers must provide a wide range of make, models and colours of vehicles including:

- automatic transmission
- driving adaptations
- zero and low-emission vehicles
- vehicles that meet the needs of disabled people

#### **Affordability**

Accredited providers must provide a range of manual and automatic vehicles with no advance payment.

Clients can choose to pay an advanced payment towards the cost of their chosen vehicle. This will give them access to a broader range of vehicles. If the client loses their qualifying benefit or ends the lease early, the accredited provider will return the advance payment to the client on a pro rata basis.

Accredited providers must offer complete cost transparency to clients so they can make informed choices about the best deal for them.

## Leasing arrangements

The minimum leasing arrangements for accredited providers are:

- leases of 3 years or more
- inclusive road tax
- minimum 20,000 mileage allowance per year
- lease arrangements and support within an agreed geographical area
- no credit checks required for clients to join the scheme

## Changes of circumstances

Accredited providers will need to support changes of circumstances like:

- changes to qualifying benefit or hospitalisation
- a change to insured drivers or a change in carer arrangements
- allowing a client to change vehicle or end a lease early if their disability changes.

There should be no penalty if the client decides to end their lease early as stated in the lease agreement.

## Insurance arrangements

Accredited providers will need to arrange full comprehensive insurance for up to 3 drivers.

They will support clients by providing access to insurance due to changes of circumstances. This will include coordinating and updating client insurance agreements.

## Maintenance and dealership arrangements

Accredited providers will need to arrange maintenance, servicing and repairs and this should be accessible within an agreed geographical area.

They will support clients with scheduled service, maintenance and repair as included in the lease.

They will pay for or provide warranty for all non-cosmetic damage and mechanical repairs in the lease, including:

- windscreen repairs or and replacement
- repair and replacement of tyres (such as puncture repairs, wheel balance, replacement of stolen or vandalised tyres)

When a client's vehicle is off the road, a suitable alternative vehicle that meets the needs of the client should be provided where possible.

They will also need to make arrangements with dealerships to ensure vehicles can be viewed before a final choice is made.

## **Breakdown and recovery**

Accredited providers will need to arrange a breakdown and recovery service with a nationally recognised provider with the following minimum requirements:

- 24-hour breakdown recovery, 365 days a year
- alternative transport if a client's vehicle is off the road, for example a rental car or replacement vehicle
- transport for up to eight people to a single location
- overnight accommodation or travel costs up to the value of £100 per person or £300 per party - whichever is the lesser amount
- a breakdown provider that complies with the [Equality Act 2010](#) and provides adequate assistance to disabled drivers

## **Customer service and support**

The minimum requirements for customer service and support are:

- clients taking delivery of a new vehicle on the same day as handing back their old vehicle - if the new vehicle is not available, the client will be able to extend their lease until it becomes available
- for non-adapted vehicles, average of 2 calendar days from incident to replacement for thefts and write-offs
- for adapted vehicles, replacement as soon as is reasonably practicable, having regard to the complexity of the adaptation, the availability of suitable vehicles and a clear action plan communicated to the client to ensure a suitable alternative transport solution can be identified whilst awaiting a repair

## **Wheelchair accessible vehicles**

### **Types of wheelchair accessible vehicles**

Accredited providers must provide a wide range of wheelchair accessible vehicles including:

- automatic transmission
- driving adaptations
- zero or low emission vehicles
- heavily adapted vehicles enabling wheelchair users to drive

### **Affordability**

Accredited providers must provide a range of manual and automatic vehicles with no advance payment.



Clients can choose to pay an advanced payment towards the cost of their chosen vehicle. This will give them access to a broader range of vehicles. If the client loses their qualifying benefit or ends the lease early, the accredited provider will return the advance payment to the client on a pro rata basis.

Accredited providers must offer complete cost transparency to clients so they can make informed choices.

### **Leasing arrangements**

The minimum requirements for accredited provider leasing arrangements are:

- leases of 5 years or more
- inclusive road tax
- minimum 20,000 mileage allowance per year
- clients are able to change vehicle if their disability changes
- lease arrangements and support within an agreed geographical area
- no credit checks required for clients to join the scheme

### **Changes of circumstances**

Accredited providers will need to support changes of circumstances like:

- changes to qualifying benefit or hospitalisation
- changes to insured drivers or a change carer arrangements
- allowing a client to change vehicle or end a lease early if their disability changes

There should be no penalty if the client decides to end their lease early as stated in the lease agreement.

### **Insurance arrangements**

Accredited providers will need to arrange insurance for full comprehensive insurance.

They will support clients by providing access to insurance due to changes of circumstances. This will include coordinating and updating client insurance agreements.

### **Maintenance and dealership arrangements**

Accredited providers will need to arrange maintenance, servicing and repairs and this should be accessible within an agreed geographical area.

They will support clients with scheduled service, maintenance and repair as included in the lease.

They will pay for or provide warranty for all non-cosmetic damage and mechanical repairs in the lease, including:

- windscreen repairs or and replacement
- repair and replacement of tyres (such as puncture repairs, wheel balance, replacement of stolen or vandalised tyres)

They will also need to make arrangements with dealerships to ensure vehicles can be viewed before a final choice is made.

### **Breakdown and recovery**

Accredited providers will need to arrange breakdown and recovery service with a nationally recognised provider with the following minimum requirements:

- 24-hour breakdown recovery, 365 days a year
- alternative transport if their vehicle is off the road, for example a rental or replacement wheelchair accessible vehicle
- transport for up to 8 people to a single location
- overnight accommodation or travel costs up to the value of £100 per person or £300 per party - whichever is the lesser amount
- a breakdown provider that complies with the [Equality Act 2010](#) and provides adequate assistance to disabled drivers

### **Customer service and support**

The minimum requirements for customer service and support are:

- clients taking delivery of a new wheelchair accessible vehicle on the same day as handing back their old one
- a named customer service provider will take responsibility for ensuring the client's replacement vehicle is provided in a timely fashion

### **Scooters and powered wheelchairs**

#### **Types of scooters, powered wheelchairs and equipment**

Accredited providers must provide a wide range of scooters and powered wheelchairs.

They must offer a range of sizes to meet disabled people's needs and preferences.

#### **Affordability**

Accredited providers must provide a wide range of scooters and powered wheelchairs with no advance payment.

Clients can choose to pay an advanced payment towards the cost of their chosen vehicle. This will give them access to a broader range of scooters and wheelchairs. If the client loses their qualifying benefit or ends the lease early, the accredited provider will return the advance payment to the client on a pro rata basis.

Accredited providers must offer complete cost transparency to clients so they can make informed choices about the best deal for them.

### **Leasing arrangements**

The minimum requirements for leasing arrangements are:

- leases of 3 years or more
- clients are able to change scooter, powered wheelchair or equipment or end the lease early if their disability changes
- lease arrangements and support available and accessible in Scotland
- no credit checks required for client to join the scheme
- providing new clients with a weather-proof storage cover if required

### **Changes of circumstances**

Accredited providers will need to provide support for changes of circumstances such as:

- changes to qualifying benefit or hospitalisation
- changes to insured drivers or changes in carer arrangements
- allowing a client to change scooter or powered wheelchair or end a lease early if their disability changes

There should be no penalty if the client decides to end their lease early as stated in the lease agreement.

### **Insurance arrangements**

Accredited providers will need to arrange insurance for theft and damage.

They will support clients by providing access to insurance due to changes of circumstances. This will include coordinating and updating client insurance agreements.

### **Maintenance and dealership arrangements**

Accredited providers will need to arrange maintenance, servicing and repairs and this should be accessible within an agreed geographical area. They will pay for or provide warranty for all non-cosmetic damage and mechanical repairs, including:

- repairs or and replacement to be included in the lease
- repair and replacement of tyres to be included in the lease (puncture repairs, wheel balance, replacement of stolen or vandalised tyres)
- arrangements for scooter and powered and wheelchair batteries to be included in the lease

They will also need to make arrangements with dealerships to ensure vehicles can be viewed before a final choice is made. Home viewings should be made available upon request of the client.

### **Breakdown and recovery**

Accredited providers will need to arrange a breakdown and recovery service with a nationally recognised provider with the following minimum requirements:

- 24-hour breakdown recovery, 365 days a year
- alternative transport if their scooter or powered wheelchair is off the road, for example a rental or replacement scooter or powered wheelchair
- transport for up to 8 people to a single location
- overnight accommodation or travel costs up to the value of £100 per person or £300 per party - whichever is the lesser amount
- breakdown provider will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and provide adequate assistance to disabled drivers

They will support clients by providing access to insurance due to changes of circumstances.

This will include coordinating and updating client insurance agreements.

### **Customer service and support**

The minimum requirements for customer service and support are:

- clients taking delivery of a new scooter or powered wheelchair on the same day as handing back their old one
- average of 2 calendar days from incident to replacement for thefts and write-offs

## **Electric bikes**

### **Types of electric bike**

Accredited providers may provide a wide range of electric bikes. They must offer a range of sizes to meet disabled people's needs and preferences, such as:

- adapted electric bikes, such as:
  - hand pedal bikes

- lumbar support bikes
- biked with harnessing
- custom riding positions
- low entry electric bikes
- electric trikes
- electric step-through bikes
- electric cargo bikes
- multiple levels of electric assistance and power
- variety of battery sizes for wider range

These may not be subject to VAT relief. This is for accredited providers to determine.

### **Affordability**

Accredited providers must provide a wide range of electric bikes with no advance payment.

Clients can choose to pay an advanced payment towards the cost of their chosen electric bike. This will give them access to a broader range of electric bikes. If the client loses their qualifying benefit or ends the lease early, the accredited provider will return the advance payment to the client on a pro rata basis.

Accredited providers must offer complete cost transparency to clients so they can make informed choices about the best deal for them.

### **Leasing arrangements**

The minimum requirements for leasing arrangements are:

- leases of 3 years or more
- clients are able to change electric bike or end the lease early if their disability changes
- lease arrangements and geographic support available to be transparent to clients
- no credit checks required for client to join the scheme
- providing new clients with a helmet, security lock and high-visibility clothing if required

### **Changes of circumstances**

Accredited providers will need to provide support for changes of circumstances such as:

- changes to qualifying benefit or hospitalisation
- changes to insured drivers or changes in carer arrangements
- allowing a client to change electric bike or end a lease early if their disability changes

There should be no penalty if the client decides to end their lease early as stated in the lease agreement.

### **Insurance arrangements**

Accredited providers will need to arrange insurance for theft and damage.

They will support clients by providing access to insurance due to changes of circumstances.

This will include coordinating and updating client insurance agreements.

### **Maintenance and dealership arrangements**

Accredited providers will need to arrange maintenance, servicing and repairs and this should be accessible within an agreed geographical area. They will pay for or provide warranty for all non-cosmetic damage and mechanical repairs, including:

- repairs or and replacement to be included in the lease
- repair and replacement of tyres to be included in the lease (puncture repairs, wheel balancing, replacement of stolen or vandalised tyres)
- arrangements for electric bike batteries to be included in the lease

They will also need to make arrangements with dealerships to ensure bikes can be viewed before a final choice is made. Home viewings should be made available upon request of the client.

### **Breakdown and recovery**

Accredited providers will need to arrange insurance and breakdown recovery. This will be included in the lease and the minimum requirements are:

- 24-hour breakdown recovery, 365 days a year
- alternative transport if their electric bike is off the road, for example a rental or replacement electric bike
- transport for up to 8 people to a single location
- overnight accommodation or travel costs up to the value of £100 per person or £300 per party – whichever is the lesser amount
- breakdown provider will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and provide adequate assistance to disabled drivers

They will support clients by providing access to insurance due to changes of circumstances.

This will include coordinating and updating client insurance agreements.

### **Customer service and support**

The minimum requirements for customer service and support are:

- clients taking delivery of a new electric bike on the same day as handing back their old one
- average of 2 calendar days from incident to replacement for thefts and write-offs

## Minimum technical requirements

Information will be shared automatically and securely between the accredited provider and Social Security Scotland using an Application Programming Interface (API).

Applicants must be able to show that they can deliver a technical solution which complies with all of the following:

- 1) is compatible with an Application Programming Interface (API)
- 2) ensures all data transfers are routed through the Scottish Government file transfer platform
- 3) uses Secure Shell (SSH) protocol for authentication during remote connection and file transfer
- 4) uses a Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) for its front end website
- 5) uses OpenPGP File Encryption on all files being transferred
- 6) implements tiered access permissions for all users
- 7) uses the latest release operating system with patches and updates applied at the recommended frequency
- 8) has a test environment separate from live environment for testing and integration purposes
- 9) uses a network and connecting systems with a high level of security control, such as DDoS Protection, Web Application firewall and network firewall
- 10) mediates API interface connections from untrusted networks by an API gateway that perform access control and threat protection
- 11) ensures all user and system interfaces introduced by the solution must enforce access control via authentication and authorisation
- 12) integrates with the Social Security Scotland or SCOTS Identity Provider (IdP) platform for authentication of internal/staff users
- 13) adheres to the Social Security Scotland Password Management standards regarding strength, handling and storage
- 14) complies with the relevant legal and regulatory requirements
- 15) uses an internet connection layer that provides web gateway security controls
- 16) uses either federated identity authentication (preferred) or Multi Factor Authentication (MFA)
- 17) ensures data in transit uses encrypted channels for internal and external communications using secure cryptographic protocols
- 18) ensures data at rest is protected by using encryption or hashing using secure cryptographic protocols
- 19) ensures the platform processing Social Security Scotland information must have defined security hardened configuration baselines and associated measures must be in place to manage compliance
- 20) ensures all ingress file transfers undergo content threat inspection, filtering and, where appropriate, sanitisation
- 21) audits and logs all user, security and system events to provide an attributable account of all activity in order to support business, systems and security monitoring use cases defined specifically for the solution



- 22) considers data backup requirements and, where appropriate, uses a backup and restore capability that is both secure and routinely tested
- 23) ensures solution Information Security risks are identified, assessed and under management before service go-live

## How to apply

To apply to be an accredited provider, you must:

1. complete the Accessible Vehicles and Equipment Accreditation application form.
2. attach any evidence supporting your application.
3. email the form and supporting evidence to [AVE@gov.scot](mailto:AVE@gov.scot) by 24th February 2023.

Applications submitted after 24th February [will not be accepted](#).

## Application decisions

The accreditation committee will typically make a decision within two months of receiving an application. In exceptional circumstances, they might need longer. If more time is required to decide, we will notify the applicant within the two month period with reasons for the delay.

Applicants may be asked to attend a meeting with the accreditation committee. We'll give the applicant at least 4 weeks' notice of any meetings.

A decision to award accreditation will include:

- the period the accreditation will be valid for
- the purpose of the accreditation
- the conditions of the accreditation, which may include training or continued membership of or registration with a professional regulatory body.

## Providing evidence to support an application

Applicants should consider what evidence they can include to support their responses. Examples of relevant evidence are included on the application for accreditation.

The accreditation committee will be looking for the appropriate evidence when scoring each question. For example, they might provide a business plan or additional information such as:

- promotional flyers
- links to a website
- copies of annual audited accounts
- confirmation of their consumer credit license

- copies of insurance policies
- copies of organisational policies on complaints and customer service
- testimonials

## **The accreditation committee**

An accreditation committee will be set up by the Scottish Government. The committee will be responsible for making decisions about:

- which suppliers will receive accreditation
- any withdrawals or suspensions of accreditation
- the outcome of any complaints

The committee will be made up of a minimum of 3 members including one chairperson. Members will be appointed from the Senior Civil Service at the level of deputy director or above. The committee may also include a representative external to the Scottish Government. Decisions will be taken by a majority of the members. The committee will be able to regulate its own procedures for dealing with matters, subject to the rules of the scheme.

## **If a member has a connection to an applicant**

If a committee member has a connection to an applicant, they should disclose this and immediately withdraw from the process.

This connection could be either:

- a close, direct, personal or financial connection
- a connection to a subsidiary or parent entity of the applicant

Once they withdraw, they will:

- take no further part in deliberation or decision-making in relation to the applicant
- not be present during any discussion of the applicant
- be replaced by an alternative Accreditation Committee member

An alternative member will be appointed, subject to the same membership terms.

## **How the application process works**

The application form has 6 sections with questions on the client's ability to meet the minimum standards and conditions.

### **Section 1: Applicant information**

The applicant will be asked to provide information about their business and any groups, partnerships or other entities.

## **Section 2: Grounds for exclusion**

This section is to check if the applicant has any ground that will exclude them from applying.

## **Section 3: Standard conditions**

This section covers the applicant's ability to meet the standard conditions. Applicants must meet all of the conditions in order to apply.

## **Section 4: Minimum service requirements**

The section covers the applicants ability to meet the minimum requirements.

## **Section 5: Minimum requirements for each accreditation category**

This section covers the applicants ability to meet the technical requirements for joining the scheme.

## **Scoring**

Each response will be scored from 0 to 4 based on the evidence provided. Applicants must score a minimum of 2 for each question. If an applicant does not reach the required score, their application will be refused.

If an applicant fails to reach the required score, this will result in the accreditation committee refusing the application for accreditation.

The criteria for each score is as follows:

- **Unacceptable**

Nil or inadequate response. Fails to show previous experience/capacity/capability relevant to this criterion.

- **Poor**

The response is partially relevant but generally poor. The response shows some elements of relevance to the criteria. There is insufficient evidence to show previous relevant experience, capacity or capability.

- **Acceptable**

The response is relevant and acceptable. It shows broad previous experience, knowledge and skills/capacity/capability. It may lack in some aspects of similarity e.g. previous experience, knowledge or skills may not be of a similar nature.

- **Good**

The response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed. It shows a good amount of experience, knowledge or skills/capacity/capability relevant to providing similar services to similar clients.

- Excellent

The response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous. It shows thorough experience, knowledge or skills/capacity/capability relevant to providing similar services to similar clients.



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

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EH1 3DG

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