access
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G-Cloud15

Access Select HR Service Definition

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1 Service Overview

Access SelectHR is a cloud-based Human Resources solution designed for UK and Irish organisations. Delivered as Software as a Service (SaaS), SelectHR provides a single, integrated platform that manages the complete employee lifecycle from recruitment through to offboarding. The solution combines comprehensive HR functionality with AI-powered capabilities through the Access Evo platform, delivering operational efficiency, compliance assurance, and improved employee experience. Core capabilities include centralised employee records, document management, absence management with Bradford Factor reporting, configurable workflows, onboarding automation, training records management, and employee self-service. SelectHR is available in three packages (Core, Premium, Pro) to meet different organisational requirements, with SelectPay payroll integration available as an add-on. The Access Evo AI Platform provides Copilot (AI-powered HR assistant), Feed (unified notification hub), and Spaces (customisable dashboards). The solution is hosted within UK-based data centres: primary at Telehouse N2, London Docklands; disaster recovery at Equinix LD3, Park Royal. Customer data is held in individual databases per customer with unique credentials, providing logical separation at the database layer. Access holds ISO 27001, ISO 27701, and ISO 42001 certifications, and Cyber Essentials accreditation. Data encryption uses TLS 1.2 and Secure File Transfer Protocol in transit, with Bitlocker and AES 256-bit encryption at rest. The platform supports Single Sign-On (SSO) via OIDC (recommended), Windows Authentication, or username/password, plus Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA). The mobile app uses OIDC authentication and does not store data on the device. The platform is developed and tested to WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility standards. The Access Group has over 34 years of experience delivering business software solutions, with more than 100,000 customers across the UK and Ireland. The People Division supports over 18,000 organisations with HR and Payroll solutions.

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2 Onboarding

Access Implementation Methodology (AIM)

Our consultants follow a 4-phase, 12-step process and we propose a scale of project, management and administration that's appropriate for your specific needs. From evaluation, planning and design, through to implementation of your business solution.

Phase 1, Pre-project planning

Step 1: Needs analysis - After detailed consultation we will clearly define your needs in a proposal that identifies the benefits you will experience by updating your systems.

Step 2: Solutions demonstration - We will take you through a tailored demonstration of your proposed solution and work with you to agree which elements will be included in the initial project. We listen and take account of all your feedback and will provide a quotation outlining the anticipated cost of your project.

Step 3: Sales handover - Having finalised the project's scope and agreed commercial terms, we prepare a handover document from sales to the project team who will partner you throughout implementation. They will meet with all appropriate members of your team to ensure continuity throughout the process.

Phase 2, Configure & Install

Step 4: Definition - The Access project team will work with you to define the structure and control processes that will guarantee the success of your project. Documents that we provide you at this stage will cover all your project objectives, the full specification and success criteria. This gives total clarity over individual tasks and responsibilities to ensure you're fully informed going forward.

Step 5: Solutions workshops - This step helps your project team become fully immersed in the proposed software. We map business processes to functionality so that you can understand how the solution will look and feel.

Step 6: Confirmation of requirements - Following your feedback from the solutions workshops, we will confirm the detailed actions and solution components necessary to meet the project success criteria we identified earlier.

Phase 3, Training

Step 7: Configuration - The components identified in Step 6 are delivered and a User Acceptance Test (UAT) system is built ready for you to carry out a pilot test. We configure and tune all the variables within the system to match your specific requirements.

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Step 8: User Acceptance Test (UAT) - The UAT is conducted in a workshop environment for your staff against an agreed test plan. At the end of this step you will be ready to go live.

Step 9: Education - With a fully designed, installed and tested system now in place, we will train your staff on all relevant areas of the software. We are highly skilled at adapting our training to the learning styles of each of your staff members. We can train all of your staff or, if preferred, we will train your in-house.

Phase 4, Support

Step 10: Go Live - The test system is converted into a live working environment ready for the processing of real-time business transactions. This is managed by a pre-agreed go live check list to ensure all possible circumstances are considered and addressed. We will be on-site to answer your questions and support your users throughout this time, helping them to get maximum clarity and impact from the software as they become increasingly confident.

Step 11: Support handover - We prepare a handover document and deliver it to our ongoing support team. This document contains all the information our support consultants need to answer any future queries you may have.

Step 12: Post project review - Your experience is extremely important to us. Shortly after you go live we will request feedback on your experience of the implementation process to help us further refine our delivery processes. We then agree sign-off for the project.

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3 Additional Service Options

The table below highlights the additional value-added services that our consulting teams can provide. Please take some time to review these.

Scoping and Workshop	Additional consultancy time for Scoping and Workshop to help drive out the Confirmation of Requirements
Administrator Training	1 hour training covering all key areas for administration of SelectHR (maximum 3 delegates)
Integration Configuration	Configuration of third-party integrations including SSO providers, payroll systems and reporting tools
Workflow Configuration Training	Training on configuring approval workflows, absence management rules, and automated notifications within SelectHR
End User Champion Training	Agreement to train up to 4 End User Champions to then knowledge share and train end users / assist administrators (submitting, approving etc)
Enterprise Documentation Creation	Creation of collateral for Enterprise customers to cover bespoke requirements specific to the environment.
Bespoke Consultancy	Any consultancy required to be conducted on behalf of the customer. For example, Emergency Admin/Data entry, Reconfiguration etc. Please contact Onboarding with requirements for quotation
FlexPoints	Access FlexPoints are a cost-effective, flexible way to easily access and consume value added services including customisation, training, integration, analytics or reporting, as your business needs evolve. Access FlexPoints provide a simple way to create an allocation of points that you can call on at any time to spend on Access services. Having a banked allocation of FlexPoints provides the reassurance that as your business needs evolve you can use them to extend and modify your use of the technology.

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4 Service & Support Management Details

At Access we know why you choose our products, it's because you want to be more successful. We want you to be more successful too. So, we've taken a good long look at how we support you, taken on board feedback and made it a whole lot better. We're not just here to support you when you need a hand - we're here with you at every stage of your journey.

Support Commitment

We recognise that the systems, software and services we supply may be critical to the well-being of your business. Our aim is to ensure that you have continuous operational capability from our products. We will help you to achieve this by providing efficient support, resolving the majority of tickets at first-line contact.

We will help you maximise your return on investment by providing the best in technical assistance, advice and customer care. We own your support queries and will ensure that they are resolved as promptly and efficiently as possible.

We provide 2 main support plans as detailed below.

The Standard Plan

Get answers faster - as a Standard Plan customer you benefit from faster response times and can access our support teams via telephone and live chat, as well as through our Customer Success portal. To help your team be more productive, you are provided with continued access to our e-learning content as well as a programme of Success webinars, designed to keep you up to date with new features and share best-practice advice and guidance.

The Premier Plan

Boost productivity with direct access to the experts and achieve a higher return on investment: our Premier Plan enables your team to achieve more and improve productivity through an ongoing relationship with your own designated Customer Success Manager and named Technical Support Engineer. Your Access experts understand how you're using the technology and will advise you on how to get more from it. Working with the same people also makes faster resolution times likely when you're looking for advice and guidance.

Full details of our Customer Success Plans can be found here Access Customer Success Plans

Get to know our knowledge base

Knowledge Base is our huge database of commonly asked questions, articles and videos. All you need to do is Register and Login and you can find the answers you need any time of the day.

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The advanced search function not only searches articles from Knowledge Base, but links up with our Community hub to display the topics that you need. So you've got everything you need all in one place.

Can't find the article to answer your question? Not a problem. Each article links to our Community so you can ask a question, or to raise a case with the Access team.

Got a question? Ask our Community

Community connects our customers together to help them solve problems and share how to get the very best out of their Access products.

Our customers know more about using our products in their jobs than anyone else. Community gives you the chance to receive – and share – friendly expert advice that goes beyond normal customer support. Discover best practice hints and tips from peers in your industry to help you make the most of your experience with your Access product.

Each of our products has its own dedicated Community, so you can get straight to the discussions that matter to you. No unnecessary searching needed.

If a question can't be answered by Community a member of the Access team will reply. We'll make sure that no query goes unanswered.

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5 Account Management & Customer Success

At Access, we are committed to helping our customers maximise the value of their investment. With over 160,000 customers using our products, we have a dedicated team focused on ensuring continued success and adoption of best practice.

Our Customer Success team consists of product specialists who support customers on Standard and Premier Success plans. They deliver educational webinars, share guidance on new functionality and help embed best practice into day-to-day operations and system configuration.

Complementing this, our Account Management team works closely with customers, specialising in vertical sectors or specific products. Depending on complexity, Account Managers provide service remotely using advanced technology or through on-site visits. They keep customers informed about emerging technologies, prepare briefings on business, technical and financial benefits and collaborate to ensure awareness of the full breadth of Access solutions and support**.**

Implementation and Ongoing Engagement

During implementation, customers on the Premier Success plan are assigned a named Customer Success Manager (CSM). The CSM ensures the solution meets requirements, supports the transition to business-as-usual and drives engagement and adoption. They work closely with your project team, preparing action plans to keep the project on track and deliver expected outcomes and ROI.

The CSM acts as your trusted adviser and advocate, providing:

- Regular one-to-one meetings and telephone correspondence
- Solution demonstrations where appropriate
- Updates on new functionality, user events and enhancements
- Advice and recommendations to optimise system use
- Acting on feedback and product suggestions

They also serve as a point of contact for service-related issues, disputes or concerns and are familiar with your specific requirements. Our CSMs bring experience from roles in Support and Consultancy, giving them a broad understanding of Access solutions and customer needs.

Together, the Customer Success Manager and Account Manager ensure you receive both strategic and commercial guidance, helping you achieve long-term success and get the very best from your Access solutions.

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6 Backup and Disaster Recovery

The solution has been designed to cater for disasters ranging from a database restore through to a complete data centre outage. This section covers all Access managed data centres

All backups are stored on disk and are retained as indicated below. They are stored within a multi tenancy data vault and are encrypted at rest. The design of the architecture means that all data is simultaneously available in both the primary data centre and the secondary data centre meaning data is always backed up to another geographically diverse site.

All servers are backed up on a daily basis outside of UK core hours. These backups go directly to storage in the DR data centre to ensure off-site availability.

Backup technology in use is for our hosted environments is Cohesity

Recovery Point Objective & Recovery Time Objective

The solution has been designed to deliver Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) using the following definitions:

- RPO is the maximum time period in which data might be lost.
- RTO is the duration of working time within which data should be restored after a disaster. This time starts from when a support call is logged with Access.

Standard RPO & RTO times are as follows:

- SQL Server
  - RPO - 15 minutes
  - RTO - 12 hours
- Non-SQL Server
  - RPO – 24 hours
  - RTO – 12 hours

Retention for backups

NON-SQL Workloads - standard retention for non-sql data/servers is 30days with our RTO & RPO

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SQL Workloads

Retention for backups:

15-min SQL	28 days
Daily	28 days
Weekly	3 months
Monthly	6 months[1]

Backups will be deleted upon client request following termination of contract, otherwise they will be aged out via retention policies.

Standard Restore Testing - we undertake restores automatically on a weekly basis via an automated process to a separate server to ensure that the backup is consistent and valid on restore.

Standard Restore Testing - we undertake restores automatically on a weekly basis via an automated process to a separate server to ensure that the backup is consistent and valid on restore.

[1] Payroll Data is retained for 5 years this is based on database naming conventions. Some products also deviate from Monthly 6 months. Additional information can be requestioned from our DBA Team.

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7 Business Continuity Statement/Plan

We have invested in best of breed hardware with resiliency and redundancy at each tier to serve as the platform for our SaaS Service. Each tier has redundancy built into the architecture to facilitate patching and maintenance windows which would typically not require service downtime. Each tier has multiple nodes working in an intelligent load balanced manner. Should one of these nodes become unresponsive, there would be an automatic failover to another node. Behind these tiers is a series of hardware elements, each having an intelligent failover solution in place, providing both security and business continuity should an issue occur with any one single piece of hardware.

Customer data is protected via a layered approach with physical layers of security and redundancy between the public domain and the customer data.

The DR location at the secondary data centre mirrors the architecture of the primary data centre from the perspective of dedicated hardware and levels of resiliency at each tier.

For Access Evo, our internal hosting team, Access Cloud, manages the hosting environment up to and including the application infrastructure layer. This covers all hardware, VMware hypervisor software, storage, operating systems, SQL Database Servers, MySQL Servers, IIS Web Servers and RDS Servers.
Access applications run on top of this infrastructure and are fully supported by us.
All services operate within the primary active data centre, with failover capability to a secondary data centre, providing enterprise-level resiliency far beyond traditional cold standby disaster recovery solutions.

We are UKAS-certified for ISO 27001:2013 and ISO 42001. Our Cloud environment certification scope includes every office and is defined as:

'The Information Security Management System in relation to hosting, payroll services, software development, client data and infrastructure related to the organisation's software products in accordance with the statement of applicability.'

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8 Accreditations and Awards

As a business we have the following accreditations and awards:

- ISO Accreditation
  - ISO 27001 - accredited through our commitment to best practice with regards to our security controls.
  - ISO 27701 - an international standard that provides a framework for managing privacy information, specifically focusing on Personally Identifiable Information (PII), a privacy extension to ISO 27001.
  - ISO 42001[2] - this is an international standard that provides a framework for organisations to establish, implement, maintain and continually improve an Artificial Intelligence Management System (AIMS). It helps organisations ensure responsible and ethical AI development, deployment and operation. The standard focuses on risk management, transparency, accountability and alignment with ethical principles throughout the AI lifecycle.
  - Cyber Essentials: a UK government-backed and industry-supported certification scheme that helps organisations of all sizes protect themselves from common cyber threats by implementing basic technical controls
- Payroll Assurance Scheme - Our Payroll Services Division (APS) are CIPP *no recommendations we can make; The Access Payroll Team pass with flying colours!*"
- HM Revenue & Customs - Access payroll services meet the requirements of the published HM Revenue & Customs Payroll Standard and the relevant sections of HM Revenue & Customs Quality Standard. It incorporates online filing and supports Extra Pay Frequencies, Directors' NI, Contracted Out and Net Pension Deductions.

Awards

- Fosway Group, Core Leader for Digital Learning 2025
- Fosway Group, Core Leader for Learning Systems 2025
- Tech UK, President's Award Winner 2024
- PayTech Awards Winner 2024
- UK IT Industry Awards, Vendor of the Year Award Winner 2023
- UK Tech Awards, UK Tech Company of the Year Award Winner 2023
- UK Business Tech Awards, Tech Company of the Year Award Winner 2023
- Great British Care Awards, Care Innovator Award 2022
- Business Awards 2022 Large Business of the year
- Kofax UK & Ireland, Outstanding Growth Award 2022
- UK Tech deal of the year, UK Tech Awards 2022

[2] We are one of the first companies in the UK to be accredited ensuring responsible use of AI

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9 Development Life Cycle

Our development life cycle is based on Agile methodology, ensuring flexibility, rapid delivery and continuous improvement. Development is organised into sprints, with dedicated scrum teams of 5–6 developers and QA engineers working collaboratively on specific product areas. Backlogs are managed in JIRA, where detailed user stories form the foundation of development tasks.

Planning & Requirements

- User Stories & Backlog: tequirements are captured as user stories in JIRA, prioritised by the Product Strategy team.
- Threat Modelling: each sprint includes a STRIDE-based threat modelling exercise (Spoofing, Tampering, Repudiation, Information Disclosure, Denial of Service, Elevation of Privileges).

Design & Development

- Secure Coding Practices: all developers complete annual security training focused on OWASP Top 10 vulnerabilities and Privacy by Design principles.
- Code Reviews: mandatory peer reviews aligned to security guidelines before merging into the master branch.
- Version Control: code is managed in Git and Entra DevOps, with structured branching for developers and modules.

Testing Approach

- Automated Testing: automated test cases are written for all endpoints before passing the first quality gate.
- Quality Assurance: QA engineers perform detailed exploratory and user testing to identify issues.
- Regression Testing: every release cycle includes regression testing using scripted test packs and automated tools.
- Continuous Integration: CI/CD pipelines include:
    - Static and dynamic code analysis
    - Automated unit and API tests
    - Malicious payload testing (nightly)

Deployment & Release Management

- Continuous Release Strategy: updates and patches are delivered every 4 weeks via automated deployment.
- Non-Production First: patches are applied to non-production environments before production, following change management procedures.
- Release Notes: provided in advance via the Community Portal, along with training materials and documentation.

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Security Integration

Security is embedded throughout the SDLC:

- STRIDE threat modelling for every development cycle.
- OWASP Top 10 compliance in coding and testing.
- Automated vulnerability scanning and payload testing.
- Compliance with ISO 27001, GDPR and industry standards.

Compliance Assurance

- All development activities adhere to ISO 27001, ISO 27701 and GDPR requirements.
- Secure development practices ensure data protection and privacy by design.
- Continuous monitoring and regular audits maintain compliance with regulatory and legislative standards.

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10 Technical Requirements

The SelectHR solution is certified to the following operating systems and browsers:

SelectHR Web Application

- Operating System:
  - Windows 7, Windows 8.1, Windows 10 and above
  - iOS 14 and above
  - macOS 10 15 and above
- Certified Browsers:
  - MS Edge version v83 and above (portal only)
  - Mozilla Firefox v66 and above
  - Google Chrome v74 and above
  - iOS Safari v14 and above (iPad and iPhone)
  - OS X Safari v14 and above (MacBook)
- Certified Browser Plugin:
  - Sun JRE version 8 update u211

SelectHR Mobile Application (Native App)

- Operating System:
  - iOS 13
  - Android OS 8.1 (API Level 27)

In addition to the above, we support universal access and web accessibility through the user interface. We have spent time with one of our customers; Blind Veterans UK to ensure we provide a market leading solution for this need.

We have implemented an automated process which ensures our software is developed and tested to WCAG2.1 AA standards.

When we test new software or when a change is made to our web frontend, there is an automated tool that will check all dashboards on a test area to ensure they meet the standards required. This ensures current and compliance to this standard.

Furthermore, we have been testing with JAWSupport, Voice Over, NVDA although there are differences between them all. We have also tested with third party applications such as ZoomTech which is essentially an advanced magnifier and is used in Blind Veterans UK.

We are committed to ensuring digital accessibility for all. We are continually improving the user experience for everyone and applying the relevant accessibility standards.

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11 Service Constraints

The product can be configured to meet all standard set up requirements and our flexible workflow engine is a true differentiator for Select HR. As a true SaaS solution, specific customised development is not available. Termination Arrangements: On contract termination, customer data is returned as a SQL database backup in .bac format. Data is deleted via SQL script following termination unless there is a legal requirement for Access to retain the data. Technical support is provided by UK-based teams who access systems using their own credentials via secure remote connections.

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