

Applying for Disabled Students Allowances (DSA)

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What we will cover

- What is it?
- Who is eligible?
- What do students get?
- How to apply?
- What to ask for from your university?
- Evidence required?

Disability support in Higher Education

The **DSA** helps students meet the additional costs of studying, due to their disability. It is not a lump sum payment, but does fund

- **Specialist equipment**
- **Non medical helper allowance**
- **General allowance**

Not a loan

Not means tested

Specialist Equipment Allowance

Students assessed for:

- IT equipment
- Accessibility software
- Ergonomic equipment

From September 2015 students will have to pay the first £200 towards any DSA funded IT equipment. The university may reimburse this for you if you can provide proof of purchase.

Non Medical Helper (NMH) allowance

Students assessed for:

- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Sighted guide
- Communication support
- Specialist notetaking

The University may also fund support for:

- Notetaking
- Campus or library support
- Laboratory support

General and Travel Allowance

- Reasonable spending on extra travel costs incurred due to disability
- Printing allowance for paper and ink cartridges.

Needs Assessment

- Once you have applied, and your application is accepted you will be invited to go for a DSA Needs Assessment.
- **Finding an assessment centre.**
- The **DSA Quality Assurance Group (DSA-QAG)** has a page where you can enter your home postcode to find an assessment centre near you.
- www.dsa-qag.org.uk/

DSA – How To Apply

Identify your funding body

Other

For example:

Student Finance Wales
Student Finance Ni
Research councils UK
Student Awards Agency Scotland

SFE (Student Finance England)

Applicable to:

- Students on a course that lasts at least a year
- NHS students
- Students who have lived in England for over 3 years
- Student receiving a loan/grant from SFE

Fill out the Application Form

Other

Please find application on relevant funding body website and submit this as per their guidance

SFE DSA Slim form

For full time, undergraduate students who apply for a grant or loan

SFE DSA 1 form

For part time students, postgraduates, or those not applying for a grant or loan (bring to Disability and Mental Health Advisers at university Student Life Centre to sign)

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview>

Wait to hear from funding body

(will receive response via email - can take up to 3 weeks. After this, chase with your funding body)

Book a Needs Assessment Appointment at a Local Needs Assessment Centre
<http://www.dsa-qag.org.uk/Find-an-Assessment-Centre/find-an-assessment-centre.html>

At your **Needs Assessment**, you will discuss support that may benefit you. You will then receive a **Needs Assessment Report** within 10 working days (if not, chase with your Assessment Centre). This will then be sent to your funding body for final approval.

Entitlement Letter

Check it has everything agreed at Needs Assessment

Arrange non-medical support with Disability and Mental Health Advisers at the University's Student Life Centre

Order equipment

University support

- Many universities will provide internal support or the material and lessons will be accessible because they are designed to be inclusive.

Ask about:

- The delivery and availability of teaching materials.
- Capture of lectures and seminars.
- Provision of any non medical helper support such as notetaking and campus assistance.

What counts as a disability?

- <https://www.mentimeter.com/s/8f65a89258a16bb13531ca5bdae1ecc2/f1e7bbfad31e>

What counts as a disability?

- Must have a **substantial** and **long term** adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

Types of evidence accepted

- <https://www.mentimeter.com/s/8f65a89258a16bb13531ca5bdae1ecc2/dadc50df0356>

What should you ask from your school or college?

- <https://www.mentimeter.com/s/646f93043db111ed5042b7007346fcd8/2bbafca4f33c>

Evidence

Diagnostic report

- Specific Learning Differences (SpLD)
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- ADHD

Medical evidence

- Long term physical and mental health conditions
- Sensory or mobility impairments
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)
- Other or multiple disabilities

Diagnostic report

- Specialist Teacher
- Educational Psychologist
- Dyslexia Action
- Independent assessors
- Universities often work with assessors or employ them.



Check if Suitable for Disabled Student Allowance (DSA)



Medical evidence

- GP or consultant letter
- Letter/report from physio or occupational therapist
- Community Psychiatric Nurse or care manager
- Care coordinator working in a mental health team (from CAMHS)