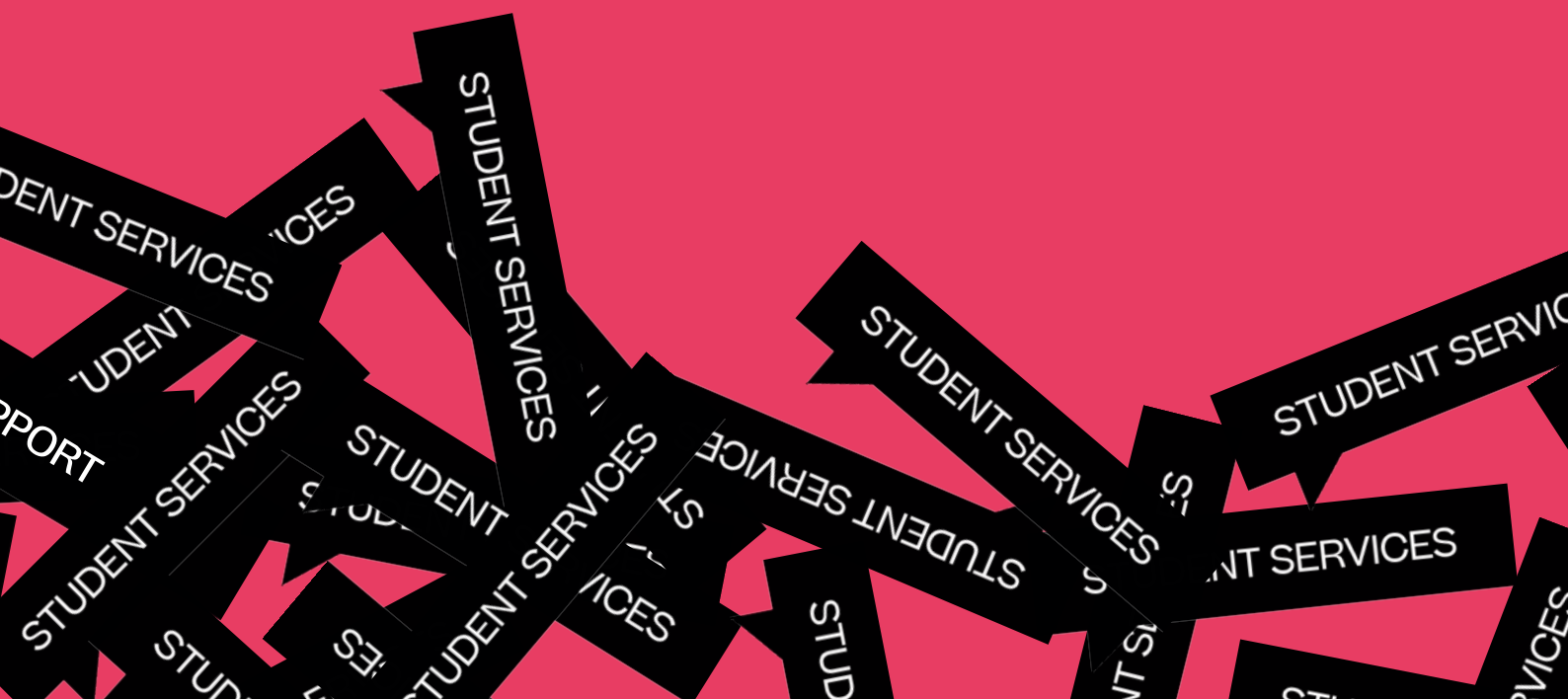


How to apply for Disabled Students Allowances (DSA)



What are Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA)?

DSA is support to cover the study-related costs you have because of a mental health problem, long term illness or other disability. The type of support and how much you get depends on your individual needs.

What DSA can pay for and help with the cost of:

- Specialist Equipment. For example, a computer or disability-related software
- A non-medical helper. For example, a study skills tutor or specialist mentor
- Day to day costs of studying that are related to a disability. For example, photocopying costs
- Extra travel to attend your course because of your disability

DSA does not cover disability-related costs you'd have if you were not attending a course, or costs that any student might have.

As a guideline, you will need to meet these criteria to be eligible for DSA:

- You're a UK resident
- You're an undergraduate or postgraduate student on a course that lasts at least a year (including part-time, Open University and distance learning courses)
- You qualify for Student Finance
- You've got a disability, medical condition, sensory impairment, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty that affects your ability to study.

You're unfortunately not likely to be eligible for DSA if:

- You're an EU student and only eligible for tuition fee support
- You're getting equivalent support from another source, such as your uni or a social work bursary (including the NHS Disabled Students' Allowances).

Note: This is a guideline on the general criteria for DSA applications in the UK. To see the specific eligibility criteria for your part of the UK, visit your Student Finance body's website.

When should you apply for DSA?

You can actually apply for DSA before your place at university is confirmed. The length of time that the application process takes can vary across the UK. It could take up to 14 weeks for your DSA support to be put in place, so it's best to start your application as soon as possible.

These are the steps you can expect to take when applying for the Disabled Students' Allowances:

1 Fill in your DSA application

If you're applying for other student finance, you'll be asked on your main application if you want to apply for DSA. When you've finished your main application, you'll be able to apply for DSA online. If you only want to apply for DSA and no other type of student finance, you'll need to complete a DSA1 application form, which you can download at [gov.uk/studentfinance](https://www.gov.uk/studentfinance)

2 Provide evidence

All students will be asked to provide evidence of their disability. Students can submit a digital copy of their evidence through their online account. Once you've submitted your DSA application, you'll be told what evidence you need to submit.

3 Confirmation

If eligible you'll receive an email/letter from your funding body advising of the next steps.

4 Needs assessment

Book and attend a study needs assessment (only after being asked to do so by the Student Finance organisation). Needs assessment can be face to face, online or via telephone as per your preference.

5 Approval

Copies of your needs assessment report will be sent to your funding body, yourself, and the university – wait then to hear if your application's been approved.

6 Award letter

Once funding has been approved, order your equipment, and arrange non-medical help, etc the suppliers and providers will be detailed on your DSA2 award letter (example below).

Example DSA2 award letter

Joe Bloggs
1a Isetta Square
New England Street
Brighton
BN1 4GQ

You need to write your Customer Reference Number on every document you send us.

Student Finance England
PO Box 210
Darlington
DL1 9HJ

www.gov.uk/studentfinance
0300 100 0607

Date: 1 September 2021

Customer Reference Number: **12345678912**

Dear Mr Bloggs,

We've approved additional support for your Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) 2021/22

We've received additional recommendations in respect of your DSAs support for non-medical helper's allowance. The following information shows what DSAs you have been awarded and what you need to do next. We've also enclosed a helpful Frequently Asked Questions about your DSAs.

This letter replaces the previous DSA support letter issued.

Keep this letter because you'll need to refer to it again.

You must be registered on and attending your course to be entitled to support. If you leave or don't start your course you must let us know as soon as possible.

If you have any queries regarding your support please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Sincerely,

Student Finance England

Your DSAs

Specialist Equipment Allowance

Item	Supplier	Contact Details	Quote Number	Amount you'll pay the supplier	Amount we'll pay the supplier
Equipment	Remtek Systems Ltd	0161 745 8353 orders@remtek-online.co.uk	123456	£200.00	£1500.00

Your next steps

1. You will need to contact the supplier(s) to arrange your support.
2. Pay the supplier £200.00 towards the cost of the agreed computer. All students are required to pay a contribution of £200.00 towards their agreed computer; we'll pay the rest of the computer cost.

The supplier will then invoice us directly for the agreed amount. If you've any issues with the equipment you should contact the supplier.

Insurance

Insurance is important and is included as a part of your equipment package from the date you receive your equipment. You must ensure you read the terms and conditions of the insurance when you receive your equipment.

DSAs can't be used to meet the cost of replacement equipment when the original has been lost, stolen or damaged.

Non-Medical Helper's Allowance

Item	Supplier	Contact Details	Duration	Amount we'll pay the supplier
Assistive Technology Training	Diversity and Ability	0800 978 8303 hello@diversityandability.com	8 hours in total	£62.00 (+ VAT) per hour
Specialist One to One Study Skills Support	Diversity and Ability	0800 978 8303 hello@diversityandability.com	30 hours per year	£60.00 (+ VAT) per hour
Specialist Mentor	Diversity and Ability	0800 978 8303 hello@diversityandability.com	30 hours per year	£60.00 (+ VAT) per hour

Your next steps

1. You will need to contact the above supplier(s) to arrange the support
2. You'll receive the support at the arranged time and need to sign timesheets to confirm the support has been provided.

The provider will invoice us directly to cover the cost of the support.

General Allowance

Please note you'll need to pay the following support upfront. We'll be happy to reimburse you for any items agreed once we receive receipts.

Item	Amount available to you
Photocopying and Printing Costs / Ink and Paper	Up to £218.40 per year
<p>Your next steps</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Purchase any items listed above that you require for your course2. Submit a claim form to us along with copies of receipts for the items. The claim form can be downloaded from https://www.gov.uk/student-finance-forms/y/english-student-full-time/claim-disabled-students-allowances-expenses <p>We'll reimburse the amount directly to your bank account once the claim has been processed.</p> <p>You can use this allowance for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• photocopying and printing costs• ink and paper suitable for your printer <p>You can't use it for specialised paper or stationery such as photo paper, glossy paper, matt paper, brown paper, cardboard paper, refill pads, notebooks, post-its, wall planners, flipcharts, diaries or card. Ink pens and ink refill pens are also not covered.</p> <p><u>Receipts must show the following information:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Date• Amount that has been paid• Item description <p>You can send receipts each time you purchase an item or you can send multiple receipts through together to:</p> <p>Student Finance England PO Box 210 Darlington DL1 9HJ</p> <p>Or you can email them to dsa_team@slc.co.uk</p> <p>Please note, only items purchased after the date of agreement and before your course end date can be refunded.</p>	

The following is paid from your General Allowance but we'll pay the supplier directly.

Item	Supplier	Amount we pay to the supplier
Study Needs Assessment fee	Your Assessment Centre	£600.00 (+ VAT)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How To Contact Us

Phone: 0300 100 0607

Post: Student Finance England, PO Box 210, Darlington, DL1 9HJ

Email: dsa_team@slc.co.uk

Please ensure you use the email address registered on your account and that you state your full name and customer reference number. This will help us to answer your query without any delays.

You can also visit our website at www.gov.uk/studentfinance for more information.

Part Time and Postgraduate Allowances

Are my allowances different if I'm a part-time student?

Part-time allowances for Non Medical Help and General Allowance are based on your intensity of study and the academic year in which you are studying. The Equipment Allowance is the same for full time and part time, regardless of intensity.

Intensity of study	Equipment Allowance (per course)			Non Medical Helper Allowance (per year)			General Allowance (per year)		
	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
25%	£5,212	£5,358	£5,529	£5,181	£5,326	£5,496	£435	£448	£462
50%				£10,362	£10,652	£10,992	£870	£895	£924
60%				£12,435	£12,783	£13,192	£1,044	£1,074	£1,108
75%				£15,543	£15,978	£16,489	£1,305	£1,342	£1,385

These figures are the maximum amounts - most students get less.

Are my allowances different if I'm a postgraduate student?

For both full-time and part-time postgraduate students there's a single allowance of up to £10,362 (16/17), £10,652 (17/18), £10,993 (18/19) a year. This single allowance is used for all areas of DSA; equipment, non medical help and general allowance.

Equipment

What if I feel I need additional equipment?

If you require equipment that hasn't been agreed as part of your DSAs entitlement, you'll need to contact your Needs Assessor to discuss your requirements.

I would like to upgrade my equipment to a higher specification/different model, how do I do this?

If you want to upgrade your equipment you'll need to pay any extra costs for this. To upgrade, contact the supplier to discuss what equipment you would prefer. The supplier will tell you if this meets the minimum specification and if it will run your recommended software. They'll also advise on the extra costs for the upgrade. The supplier will then invoice us for the amount we've agreed to cover with your DSAs and will then invoice you for the extra costs for the upgrade.

I would like to change the DSA approved equipment supplier, how do I do this?

It's possible to change the provider of your equipment. If you wish to do this, please email the DSA Team with your request to change provider before you contact the authorised supplier to process your order. Your email will need to include the following information:

- reason for changing provider
- name and contact details of new provider

Please note that we can only pay up to the amount agreed within this letter. You can find out the amount we'll pay by checking the 'Your DSAs' section of this letter.

Can I purchase a computer from the internet or high street supplier?

If you want to purchase your own computer you need to email us for further information.

Reimbursement can only be provided for a computer; all the remaining equipment and software must be purchased from the agreed supplier.

My equipment is faulty/not working properly, what do I do?

If you experience any issues with your equipment whilst it's under warranty, you'll need to contact your equipment supplier.

If you experience any issues with your equipment when it's no longer under warranty, you'll need to contact the DSA Team by email.

I have some questions about my equipment / I am not happy with the quality of my equipment, what do I do?

In the first instance you should contact your equipment supplier to discuss your queries/concerns. If this remains unresolved, you'll need to contact the DSA Team by email.

Non Medical Help**What if I miss or need to cancel a non-medical helper support appointment?**

Your provider can charge for any missed or cancelled appointments if you've not given reasonable notice (this is usually 24 hours but you should check this with your provider).

I feel I need additional or different non-medical helper support, who do I contact?

If you require additional non-medical helper support (not including assistive technology training) or feel different support is required, you'll need to contact your Needs Assessor to discuss your requirements.

I feel I need assistive technology training or need more than initially agreed, who do I contact?

If you require assistive technology training that hasn't been agreed as part of your DSAs entitlement, you'll need to contact your Needs Assessor to discuss your requirements.

Can I change to another non medical help provider if they are unable to meet my needs?

If you wish to do this, please email the DSA Team with your request to change provider. Your email will need to include the following information:

- type of support you want to change (e.g. assistive technology training, mentor support, etc.)
- full explanation of why you want to change and why your current provider is not suitable/unable to meet your needs

Please note, SFE can only consider change of NMH provider requests if you are not satisfied with the service being provided and you have spoken with your provider to try to rectify any issues. A full explanation for your reasons must be provided. We cannot change your provider if you have not accessed/tried to access the support from your current agreed provider.

Also please be aware that if we agree to a change in provider, we will request new quotes from your Needs Assessor and write to you with the details of your new provider. You will not be permitted to choose your own provider.

Do I need to sign timesheets for the non-medical helper support I receive?

Your provider needs to provide signed timesheets when invoicing us as this will confirm you've received the support. You shouldn't sign any timesheets before you receive support.

Non Medical Help Framework – Registered Providers

On the 28th April 2016 a Non-Medical Help (NMH) Quality Assurance Framework was introduced. From that date all NMH Providers must register in order to be considered to provide support. As an exception, any student who was already in receipt of a type of NMH support has been allowed to continue to use their NMH Provider, even if their provider has not yet registered. This arrangement only applies if the student is in continuous study and the arrangement will end on the 31st August 2018. From 31 August 2018 all NMH Providers must be registered in order to continue providing support.

What this means for you?

If your current NMH provider is not yet registered, they have up to the 31st August 2018 to become registered, or we would need to allocate a new provider at that time.

If you were to have a break in study then upon your return you would need to use a registered provider. Also if any new NMH support is required, then you would need to use a registered provider.

Change of Circumstances**My circumstances have changed, what do I do?**

If your circumstances change this may affect your support. For example, if you've changed university or college the supplier of your non-medical helpers support may need changing. You need to email the DSA Team advising of any changes so we can ensure that your correct entitlement is in place.

My medical condition has worsened/I have an additional medical condition, what do I do?

If you've a medical condition(s) that hasn't been taken into account during your Study Needs Assessment, or your medical condition worsens you need to send us a copy of your medical evidence.

Medical evidence for a new condition must confirm:

- a diagnosis of your condition
- your condition is long term (more than 12 months)
- how your condition has an adverse effect on your ability to carry out daily activities

Medical evidence for the worsening of a condition must confirm:

- how your condition has changed/worsened since your Study Needs Assessment
- that the change is permanent or long term (not temporary)

Once we receive acceptable medical evidence we'll write to you to confirm if you can attend a review at the Needs Assessment Centre where your previous assessment was carried out. Your Needs Assessor will make recommendations for any support you may need as a result of a new condition.

Do I need to apply every year for my DSA?

You only need to apply every academic year on a DSA full form for DSAs if you:

- are a postgraduate student
- are a part-time student
- only get DSA funding (i.e. no tuition fees/maintenance loan etc.)

You don't need to provide medical evidence and ID every year if you're continuing on the same course at the same university or college.

Continuing into next year

Students who don't need to reapply: Full-time undergraduate students don't need to reapply for DSA each year if:

- they got DSA the previous year
- they took out a Maintenance Loan or Tuition Fee Loan, or both
- they're continuing on the same course

Students who need to reapply: Students should reapply each academic year if they:

- didn't take out a Maintenance Loan or Tuition Fee Loan
- change their course
- change from full-time to part-time study, or from part-time to full-time
- have suspended their studies and changed their course end date
- withdrew from their course and are returning to study
- are repeating a year of study



Useful websites

Government information website

gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa

UCAS

ucas.com/finance/additional-funding/disabled-students-allowance-dsa

Diversity and Ability

diversityandability.com/resource/dsa/

Save the Student

savethestudent.org/student-finance/disabled-students-allowances-dsa.html

Useful contacts

AUB teams

AUB's Senior Disability can offer advice and guidance with applying for DSA

disability@aub.ac.uk

AUB student advice team

studentadvice@aub.ac.uk

01202 363780

The below external DSA teams can offer advice, guidance and check progress of applications

Student Finance England

dsa_team@slc.co.uk

0300 100 0607

Student Finance Wales

sfw_dsa_team@slc.co.uk

0300 200 4050

Student Awards Agency Scotland

0300 555 0505

Student Finance Northern Ireland

0300 100 0077

Student Finance Jersey

studentfinance@gov.je

01534 449450

Student Finance Guernsey

studentfinance@gov.gg

01481 226560

Isle of Man Department of Education

studentgrants@doe.gov.im

