



## **DISABLED STUDENTS' ALLOWANCE**

### **What is it?**

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) helps to support disabled students and those with additional learning needs who are studying a course of higher education in England. The DSA offers extra support that can help with disability-related costs or expenses which are over and above those provided as reasonable adjustments by your university. The DSA is paid on top of the standard student finance package, or on its own. You don't have to pay the DSA back. The type of support and the amount you get is dependent on your individual needs – not on your household income.

### **Who can apply?**

You can apply for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) if you live in England and have a disability that affects your ability to study, such as a:

- specific learning difficulty, for example dyslexia or ADHD
- mental health condition, for example anxiety or depression
- physical disability, for example if you have to use crutches, a wheelchair or a special keyboard
- sensory disability, for example if you're visually impaired, deaf or have a hearing impairment
- long-term health condition, for example cancer, chronic heart disease or HIV

DSA will only be paid to students who:

- Will be an undergraduate or postgraduate student – full or part time (including Open University or distance learning)
- qualify for student finance from Student Finance England
- will be studying on a course that lasts at least a year

You cannot get DSA from Student Finance England if you're:

- an EU student who is eligible for fee support only
- eligible for [NHS Disabled Students' Allowances](#) (this is a separate scheme)
- getting equivalent support from another funding source, like from your university or a social work bursary
- on a higher or degree apprenticeship course



**What can it be used for?**

The DSA is a grant to help meet the extra course costs students face because of a disability. For example, the DSA may help pay for:

- **Specialist equipment** you need for studying like computer software (if you choose to buy a computer then you will be required to pay a contribution towards it – in the past this has been a contribution of around £200 but this may change each year).
- **Non-medical helpers**, such as a note-taker or reader
- **Extra travel costs** you have to pay because of your disability
- **Other costs** such as additional photocopying, printer cartridges or insurance of equipment
- **Regular study skills support**

**How do I apply?**

There are different routes to take to apply for DSA depending on whether you are studying full or part time. Follow this link for further information <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa/how-to-claim>

**When should I apply?**

Once you have applied for Student Finance, you can then apply for DSA.

**What evidence do I need to provide?**

| <b>Disability</b>   | <b>Evidence required</b>  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Long-term health condition</li> <li>- Physical disability</li> <li>- Sensory disability</li> <li>- Mental health need</li> <li>- Autism / Asperger Syndrome</li> <li>- OCD</li> <li>- ADHD</li> </ul> <p>(This list is not exhaustive)</p> | <p>A copy of a report or diagnosis from your doctor or consultant - you can also fill in the <a href="#">disability evidence form</a></p> |
| <p><b>Specific learning difficulty (eg dyslexia)</b></p>  | <p>A formal diagnostic assessment report.</p>   |



**Can I use evidence from College?**

No. If you were awarded 25% extra time after being assessed at King Edward's, those assessments are **not** valid for applying for DSA. The assessments completed in college only determine whether you are eligible for extra time – they are not diagnostic assessments and therefore **cannot** be used as evidence for DSA. This may also be the case for assessments completed at school – check with our Exam Access Arrangements co-ordinator if you are unsure (jo.preston@kedst.ac.uk).

If you have been awarded the use of 25% extra time in exams but do not have a diagnostic assessment and wish to explore the possibility of a private diagnostic assessment, we can recommend some Educational Psychologists or specialist teachers but these assessments **must** be funded privately – they **won't** be funded by college.

**Julia Middleton**

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**Educational Psychology for Everyone**

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01384 594083 or 07850 300479

**The Family Psychologist**

<https://thefamilypsychologist.co.uk/>

01562 610011

**Tonia Peters** – Educational Psychologist

<http://www.toniapeterspsychologist-herefordshire.co.uk>

If you feel that using an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Teacher to assess you may be too expensive, you can wait until after you receive your exam results and you have been accepted by your chosen university. You could then contact the Disability Officer at the university with a view to requesting a full assessment with the university Educational Psychologist. There may be a fee for this, but funding may be available which could cut costs.



**What happens once I have applied?**

The DSA team will send you more information about this after your needs assessment.

Once your eligibility for DSA is confirmed, Student Finance England may ask you to [contact an assessment centre](#) to work out what help you need.

This is known as a needs assessment. Do not book this until Student Finance England asks you to.

The assessment is paid for through any DSA entitlement you may have.

After the assessment, you'll get a report listing equipment and other support you can get for your course.

Do not buy any equipment until you've been assessed - you will not be reimbursed for it.

**Further Information**

If you have any queries regarding any of the above or would like to discuss DSA further, please contact either:

Isobel Dawes – SENCo at [isobel.dawes@kedst.ac.uk](mailto:isobel.dawes@kedst.ac.uk)

Or

Jo Preston – Exam Access Arrangements Co-ordinator at [jo.preston@kedst.ac.uk](mailto:jo.preston@kedst.ac.uk)

**The following website also provides helpful information:**

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