



A2B Assessments

A2B'S DSA APPLICATION GUIDE

WWW.A2BASSESSMENTS.COM

YOUR NO HASSLE, SIMPLE GUIDE TO GETTING YOUR DSA IN PLACE



“

The assessor was great. The programs and applications available to help me was well explained. The next stages of my application for DSA was explained and any questions i had was answered. I would highly recommend. - Johnny (Student)



GETTING YOUR DSA IN PLACE

Welcome to the A2B Assessments', Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) application guide.

Our goal with this guide is to give you a straightforward checklist covering everything you need to know to get your DSA in place.

FIRST THINGS FIRST WHAT IS THE DISABLED STUDENT ALLOWANCE

The Disabled Student Allowances (DSA) provides extra financial support if you have an impairment, health condition (including mental health) or a specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia). DSA is in addition to other Student Finance support and doesn't have to be repaid.



WHAT DOES THE GOVERNMENT SAY ABOUT DSA?

'As a higher education student living in England, you can apply for a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) if you have a disability, including a:

- long-term health condition
- mental health condition
- specific learning difficulty, eg dyslexia

You must meet the definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. The support you get depends on your individual needs and not on income. Once your DSA is in place you can get help with the costs of:

- specialist equipment, for example a computer if you need one because of your disability
- non-medical helpers (such as 1:1 Study Skill Support or Mentoring)
- extra travel because of your disability
- other disability-related costs of studying

You may get a new computer if you don't already have one, or your current one doesn't meet the required specification. More information will be provided to you if you're assessed as needing a new computer.

You'll need to pay the first £200, which is the minimum cost that any student is likely to incur when buying a computer.'

OUR GOAL WAS TO CREATE A DSA NEEDS ASSESSMENT CENTRE THAT FIRMLY PLACED STUDENTS' NEEDS FIRST, AND ONE THAT WE WOULD WANT TO COME TO IF WE WERE A STUDENT.

STEP ONE GATHERING YOUR MEDICAL EVIDENCE

Before you can apply for the Disabled Student Allowance you need to have evidence of your disability and this evidence depends on what type of disability you have.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFULTIES

If you have a specific learning difficulty such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyspraxia or Dyscalculia then you need to get an educational psychologist's report. This report needs to be completed after your 16th birthday.

You will be responsible for the initial cost of this report but in some cases the disability team at your University may be able to assist with the cost, so it is always worth contacting them before you book. To find your nearest educational psychologist you can visit the link below, just type in your postcode and you can book an appointment with your nearest tutor:

<https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/SupportAdvice/TutorAssessorIndex/>



PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENT, LONG STANDING MEDICAL CONDITION, MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION OR SENSORY IMPAIRMENT

If you have any of the above disabilities, then as your evidence you will require a letter from a doctor or a suitable specialist confirming your condition. To ensure the necessary required details are received, Student Finance have a form that you can get your doctor to complete and sign, instead of a having them write a custom letter.

You can download the Student Finance form here: http://media.slc.co.uk/sfe/nysf/sfe_dsa_disability_evidence_form.pdf

If you are unsure whether or not you would be eligible for DSA then please visit this website for further information - <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/eligibility>

STEP TWO APPLYING FOR THE DISABLED STUDENT ALLOWANCE

Once you have your evidence it's now time to apply for your disabled student allowance. There are two types of forms. The DSA1 full form and the DSA1 Slim Line Form. You only need to complete one form.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The DSA1 Full form is for students who are not applying for other funding such as a student loan or grant. Basically students who will be in receipt of only DSA.

The DSA Slim line form should be completed if you are applying for, or are already in receipt of other funding from Student Finance such as a Student Loan or Grant.

APPLICATION MINI CHECKLIST

- 1) To begin your application process go here <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/how-to-claim>
- 2) Download the appropriate form.
- 3) Complete the appropriate form
- 4) Attach a copy of the evidence you got in step one.
- 5) Email the form and evidence to dsa_team@slc.co.uk

Once you have done this you will just need to wait up to 10 working days for your application to be processed.

After the 10 working days, if your application is successful you will receive an email confirming this and your DSA eligibility letter (DSA1 Letter) should be viewable in your online account. The DSA1 letter will also be posted to the address Student Finance England have on file for you.



STEP THREE BOOKING A NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Once you have received confirmation that your DSA application has been successful it is time to book Your DSA Needs Assessment.

WHAT IS A NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

A DSA Needs Assessment is a meeting between yourself and one of our trained assessors. Here we will discuss what specific problems you are experiencing as a result of your disability. A Needs Assessment is not a test!

We carry out our Needs Assessments as an informal discussion where you are able to talk through any difficulties you are experiencing in your studies. We also encourage you to discuss strategies that you have already found to be effective. From here, we demonstrate what further support is available through the DSA process.

We allow up to 2 hours for our Needs Assessments to ensure the meeting is detailed, comprehensive and unrushed.



HOW TO BOOK

If you are based in London or Reading you can book with us in a few simple clicks by visiting the A2B assessment website <http://www.a2bassessments.com/> and clicking the blue "Book a DSA Needs Assessment" button.

If you are based in other areas of the country then you will have to find your nearest centre by visiting <https://dsa-qag.org.uk/students/find-assessment-centre>

WHY BOOK WITH US?

Our goal was to create a centre that firmly placed students' needs first and one that we would want to come to if we were a student. Our centre consists of a small team of young, friendly and experienced assessors offering students a personal, efficient and knowledgeable service.

What does this mean for you:

- Our assessments are not tests!
- Our assessments are supportive and informative discussions, with a view to helping you beyond university.
- We communicate with your university to ensure your DSA experience is tailored to your needs.
- All our assessors are familiar with the demands and versatility of higher education.
- We communicate with your DSA suppliers to make sure you continue to receive the best support possible.
- Our assessors have experience in other areas of the DSA, meaning we understand the process beyond your assessment. These areas of experience include: Assistive technology training, Mentoring and Specialist 1:1 Study Skills

STEP FOUR ARRANGING YOUR SUPPORT

After you have attended your Study Needs Assessment (Step 3) your Needs Assessment report will get sent to your funding body.

Student Finance England will then have 10 working days to begin processing your report. This process can take a maximum of 20 working days but generally is much quicker. Once this is complete they will send out your DSA Entitlement letter (DSA2 letter).

Your DSA Entitlement letter (DSA2 letter) will clearly lay out all of the support that has been approved for you and who the agreed suppliers of that support are.

You should read through the letter a few times to get a clear understanding of everything that has been agreed and what you need to do next.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO NEXT?

- Contact the agreed suppliers of your support – Their phone number will be located on the letter.
- Simply give them a call to arrange delivery of any equipment and also put any of your non-medical helper support in place.





MASTER CHECKLIST

If you have read through the booklet and now know the process. You can use the below check list to easily keep track of where you are up to in the DSA process and tick off what you have done.

1

STEP ONE - GATHERING YOUR
MEDICAL EVIDENCE



2

STEP TWO - APPLYING FOR
THE DSA



3

STEP THREE - BOOKING A
NEEDS ASSESSMENT



4

STEP FOUR - ARRANGING
YOUR SUPPORT



OUR ASSESSMENTS ARE AIMED AT HELPING YOU AT UNIVERSITY AND BEYOND.



I was made to feel really comfortable and at ease - something that often feels forced by such meetings, but could both relate to and trust who I was speaking with. Helpful suggestions also provided. - Madeleine (Student)