

**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](http://www.gov.uk/studentfinance)  
0300 100 0607

Date:

Customer Reference Number:

Dear

## **We've approved your Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)**

We've received your Study Needs Assessment report and can now confirm what support you're entitled to. The following information shows what DSAs you've been awarded and what you need to do next. We've also enclosed a helpful Frequently Asked Questions about your DSAs.

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

Handwritten signature of Mark Cassidy in black ink.

On behalf of Student Finance England

**We've also sent a copy of this letter to your Disability Adviser and Needs Assessor**

## Your DSAs

### Specialist Equipment Allowance

Item	Supplier	Contact Details	Quote Number	Amount you'll pay the supplier	Amount we'll pay the supplier
				£	£

**Your next steps**

1. Contact the supplier(s) to arrange your support.

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

**Your next steps**

1. 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

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

Item	Supplier	Amount we pay to the supplier

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### General FAQs about DSAs

#### **What are DSAs?**

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) are grants to help with extra costs you may have to pay during your studies as a direct result of a disability, long-term health condition, mental-health condition or specific learning difficulty like dyslexia.

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

Part-time allowances are based on your intensity of study:

Intensity of study	Equipment Allowance	Non Medical Helper Allowance	General Allowance
25%	£5,212 for the whole course	£5,181 a year	£435 a year
50%	£5,212 for the whole course	£10,362 a year	£870 a year
60%	£5,212 for the whole course	£12,435 a year	£1,044 a year
75%	£5,212 for the whole course	£15,543 a year	£1,305 a year

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

#### **What if my allowances won't cover the support recommended in my needs assessment?**

If the support recommended in your Study Needs Assessment exceeds the maximum allowances of DSAs funding then please speak to your Disability Adviser at your university or college.

#### **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.

#### **How can I contact you?**

You can contact us by:

Phone - 0300 100 0607

Email - [dsa\\_team@slc.co.uk](mailto: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.

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

You can also visit our website at [www.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.gov.uk/studentfinance) for more information.

## **Equipment FAQs**

### **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 helper FAQs**

### **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). Your DSAs won't cover these charges unless your absence is due to your disability or you give a good reason for your absence.

### **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.

**I want to change my non-medical helper support provider, how do I do this?**

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 the change is applicable for (assistive technology training, mentor support, etc.)
- reason for changing provider
- name and contact details of new provider
- hourly rate the new provider will charge
- how many hours of support you've already had from the previous supplier (if any)

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.

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for us to seek additional information from the supplier directly.

**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 circumstance FAQs****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 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/worsening condition.