

NHS Student Bursary: Disabled Students Allowance

Application and Guidance notes

Introduction

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) help pay for extra costs you may have to pay in attending your course as a direct result of your disability. The allowances can help with the cost of non-medical personal helpers, major items of specialist equipment, travel and other course-related costs.

Eligibility

You are eligible to apply for DSAs through the provisions of the NHS Bursary Scheme if you have been accepted onto a NHS funded course, at an English university, (any UK country for medical and dental students), which leads to professional registration as an allied health professional, nurse, midwife, doctor or dentist. You are not eligible for DSAs if you are an EU student in receipt of a EU fees only bursary, or a sponsored or seconded student receiving a salary rather than a bursary.

The application form follows these instructions.

Contents

Your disability	2
Applying for DSAs	3
About DSAs	4
About the DSA needs assessment	6
Your questions answered	7
Contacts	8
How to complete the application form	9

Do I have to tell my higher education institution (HEI) about my disability?

No, but it will help you with your application if you contact the disability adviser at your HEI. They may be able to advise you and give you more information about the help the HEI can provide.

We will treat any information about your disability as confidential, but if you choose not to tell your HEI about your disability, the necessary reasonable adjustments may not be made. You can tell the HEI's disability adviser in complete confidence about your disability to make sure they get you the support you need.

If you are still worried about revealing your disability, you could contact 'Skill', the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities, or a disability organisation that specialises in your particular disability.

The role of disability advisers

Disability advisers are available at most HEIs and play an important role in the DSA process. The role of disability advisers may vary between HEIs but, generally, they will:

- help students with their DSA applications;
- advise as to whether DSA may be appropriate in your case
- offer disabled students advice on other sources of funding and support that may be available;
- arrange needs assessments on behalf of students;
- advise on the particular needs that may arise from specific courses;
- help put in place the support that is recommended in the needs assessment report;
- explain and give advice on educational psychologists' reports and the needs assessment reports;
- co-ordinate the network of support workers;
- work with accommodation services, social services, the NHSBSA and academic departments;
- make recommendations for the academic department in relation to students, for example, special exam arrangements;
- supervise and arrange training for support workers;
- research, develop and help put into practice HEIs' policies for exams, physical access and fieldwork; and
- develop and put into practice disability elements of various institutional strategies.

Without the involvement of a disability adviser, the process of getting DSA support might be more difficult. We recommend that you discuss all stages of the DSA process with your disability adviser and send them a copy of your needs assessment report.

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

Some students with disabilities do not want to reveal their disability for fear of discrimination. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001) has made it unlawful for HEIs to discriminate against disabled students by treating them less favourably in their admissions policies or the services they provide. Under the DDA, HEIs must make reasonable adjustments so that disabled students are not at a major disadvantage compared with students who are not disabled. The Disability Rights Commission should be able to answer more detailed enquiries about the DDA.

Applying for DSAs

If you have a physical disability, a mental health difficulty or a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, and you face extra costs to attend your course because of your disability, you may qualify for DSAs.

How do I show that I am eligible?

You will need to provide diagnostic evidence of your disability. If you have more than one medical condition, you should provide evidence for all of them. You cannot use the confirmation of your eligibility for Disability Living Allowance as evidence of your disability.

- If you have a physical disability or mental health disability, you will need to send us an up-to-date, original letter from your GP or specialist. The letter should detail your disability, the effect the disability has on your daily life, ability to study and whether the condition is recoverable.
- If you have a specific learning difficulty, you will need to send us a full psychologist's report. If the diagnosis was carried out before you were 16, you will also need an 'Assessment of Performance Attainment' ('top up' diagnosis).

We will not pay the costs for providing the diagnostic evidence.

How do I apply?

You need to complete the DSA application form that follows these instructions and post it to us.

When do I apply?

You need to apply as soon as you can before your course starts, to receive payments promptly. However, you can apply for DSAs at any stage of your course.

How will payments be made?

If your application is successful, we will refer you to an Access Centre for an assessment of your study needs. Once we have received your assessment of study needs we will review the recommendations and write to you setting out the funding we will provide.

We, or your DSA assessor, may recommend that you use a particular supplier for specialist equipment. These suppliers will normally offer an extended warranty to cover the whole of your course and a very thorough after-sales service. We expect that they will be able to:

- supply all or most of the equipment;
- set up any equipment; and
- install all the recommended software.

For smaller items such as photocopying, consumables, internet subscription, books or insurance we will normally make an initial payment of £100. If the recommendations for your expenses are in excess of this amount, receipts will have to be submitted for additional payments to be made.

Please note that Disabled Students Allowance payments for equipment and consumables are made directly to the student however payment for non medical support will be made directly to the university or provider on receipt of invoices and timesheets.

About DSAs

DSAs are not paid as a set amount. We will find out what you need and how much it will cost, usually by asking you to have a DSA needs assessment. You will only get enough money from DSAs to cover the cost of the equipment or support you need because of your disability. The amount of DSA you receive will depend on the needs assessment.

There is a limit to the amount of help you can get from DSAs. DSAs are meant to support people with a high level of need, so most people will get less than the maximum rate.

The current rates of allowances are:

Specialist Equipment Allowance

Up to £5,161 for the duration of your course.

Non-Medical Helper's Allowance

Up to £20,520 for a 52-week period.

General Disabled Students' Allowance

Up to £1,724 for a 52-week period.

Travel costs

You may also receive support for **necessary** travel costs incurred as a result of your disability.

Specialist Equipment Allowance

This allowance is to help you buy or rent any items of equipment you may need. You can also use it to pay for any repair, technical support, insurance or extended warranty costs arising from owning that equipment.

You must insure your specialist equipment. You can use your DSAs to pay the extra insurance premiums.

If it is more economical to rent, rather than buy, a major item of equipment, we will reimburse any rental costs.

When can I apply?

You can apply for the specialist equipment allowance at any time during your course. The needs assessment report may advise that you get some initial training in using any equipment that is recommended. The cost of this training would come from the non-medical helper's part of your DSAs (see page 5).

If you apply for help towards the end of your course, you may still be able to get a new piece of equipment if there is evidence of need, but we may consider more economical alternatives to buying equipment. For example, you could rent or hire equipment from a supplier or borrow it from your HEI. Non-IT options, such as human support, may be more effective when you only have a few weeks left.

Consider all your needs

When discussing your needs with your assessor, you need to think about suitable equipment that will meet your needs for time spent at your HEI and while on practice placements. For example, if you decide to opt for a desktop computer, we will not purchase or rent a laptop computer in addition to your desktop computer when you are on your practice placements.

Warranties

If you have a warranty with the supplier of your equipment, it might not be honoured if a computer you have received fails because you have loaded extra software that has not been recommended in the needs assessment report.

Non-Medical Helper's Allowance

This allowance may pay for any helpers such as readers, sign language interpreters, note-takers and other non-medical assistants you need to benefit fully from your course. DSAs are not intended to pay for disability-related spending that you would have to pay whether you were following your course or not. Your local social services department may help you with these personal costs.

If you have dyslexia or another condition that would benefit from extra tutorial support, you could receive funds from us under this allowance. The allowance would pay for extra support for literacy or personal management problems that arise from your dyslexia, if this has been recommended in a needs assessment carried out by a suitably qualified person. Specialist tutors should provide this support. The support may be available through your HEI, although you are entitled to arrange to receive it from another provider if that is more appropriate. You cannot use the allowance to pay for extra tuition in subjects that are part of your course.

General Disabled Students' Allowance

This allowance may be paid towards other disability-related spending. You can use it to buy items such as audio tapes, video tapes or Braille paper, or to top up the other two allowances if necessary.

Travel costs

If you have to pay extra travel costs to attend your HEI because of your disability, we may be able to assist you with these costs. Any travel costs of this sort will not depend on your income. You will not normally be eligible for help with everyday travel costs that any student would expect to have.

About the DSA needs assessment

We will normally ask you to have a DSA needs assessment carried out. A needs assessment will match your particular needs with those of your course so that you can get the help you need.

Who will carry out the assessment?

The needs assessment will be carried out by a person with specialist experience at an independent assessment centre, or at your HEI.

You should **not** arrange for the needs assessment without first confirming with us that we agree for you to do so, and that we approve of your choice of assessment centre. DSAs may pay the fee that assessors charge for carrying out a needs assessment.

What will happen after the assessment has been carried out?

You will receive a needs assessment report, which will help us assess your entitlement. We strongly advise that your HEI should be involved in your DSA application and should see the report and its recommendations.

What does a needs assessment report cover?

A needs assessment report should identify the types of equipment and other support you will need, how much it will cost and where to get it from. The report should also identify any training you might need to make the best use of the equipment recommended. The report will be used by the NHSBSA as a guide; it is not guaranteed that you will receive all of the recommended support. You can also use the report as supporting evidence in establishing special exam arrangements when you are on your course.

What happens if my disability becomes more severe?

You can apply to have another needs assessment carried out to identify any extra support you might need. You will be asked to provide recent medical evidence to support any further applications.

Your questions answered

Do DSAs depend on my income?

No, DSAs do not depend on your income or the income of your family.

Can I receive equipment before my course begins?

Possibly. Once we have established that you are eligible for DSAs, we can pay for any special equipment recommended in a needs assessment report. We will try to do this shortly before the start of your course so that you may use the equipment from the very beginning of your studies. However, we will ask for evidence that you have been accepted on your course before we will consider paying any costs. If you do not go on the course, you must return any equipment you have received.

What happens to the equipment when my course ends?

All equipment bought with your DSAs is, and will remain, your property. You may decide to offer the equipment to your HEI for other students to use, but you do not have to do this.

Will I have to repay my DSAs if I leave my course early?

Possibly. We may have to recover some or all of your DSAs if you abandon your course.

What if I have to repeat part of my course?

If you have to repeat periods of study or you need extended study, we may be able to continue making payments of your DSAs.

Contacts

If you have any questions about DSAs that are not answered in these instructions, contact:

NHS Student Bursaries
Hesketh House
200-220 Broadway
Fleetwood
FY7 8SS

Tel: 0845 358 6655

Fax: 01253 774490

Email addresses can be found at:

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students/2740.aspx

Web: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students

Other helpful contacts

Commission for Equality and Human Rights

Tel: 0845 604 6610

Textphone: 0845 604 6620

Web: www.equalityhumanrights.com

National Union of Students (NUS)

NUS HQ, 4th Floor, 184-192 Drummond Street,
London NW1 3HP

Tel: 0207 380 6600

Textphone: 0207 380 6600

Email: nusuk@nus.org.uk

Web: www.nus.org.uk

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA)

Unit 8 Bracknell Beeches, Old Bracknell Lane,
Bracknell RG12 7BW

Tel: 0845 251 9003

Textphone: 0845 251 9002

Email: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Web: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

Dyslexia Action

Park House, Wick Road, Egham
Surrey TW20 0HH

Tel: 01784 222300

Fax: 01784 222333

Web: www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk

Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB)

105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE

Tel: 0845 766 9999 (Helpline)

Fax: 020 7388 2034

Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk

Web: www.rnib.org.uk

RNIB offers support for blind and partially sighted students studying at all mainstream HEIs. RNIB can give information and advice on study options and skills, equipment, sources of funding and careers.

Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)

19-23 Featherstone Street

London EC1Y 8SL

Tel: 020 7296 8000

Fax: 020 7296 8199

Textphone: 020 7296 8001

Freephone voicephone:

0808 808 0123

Freephone textphone:

0808 808 9000

Email: informationline@rnid.org.uk

Web: www.rnid.org.uk

Skill, the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

Unit 3, Floor 3, Radisson Court, 219 Long Lane,
London SE1 4PR

Tel: 0800 328 5050

(open 1.30pm-4.30pm Monday to Thursday)

Minicom: 0800 068 2422

Fax: 020 7450 0650

Email: info@skill.org.uk

Web: www.skill.org.uk

Skill is a useful source of information about DSAs. They have published the booklet *Disabled Students' Allowances*, which gives guidance on the evidence we need from applicants. It also contains a useful checklist if you are planning to apply for DSAs. Skill also publishes several booklets and information sheets about DSAs and applying to HEIs, which are available from their information service. They can answer enquiries about higher education and disability by phone (voice or text), letter, fax or email.

How to complete the application form

Important note

The application form is for the disabled students' allowance for students undertaking eligible pre-registration nursing, midwifery, medical, dental and allied health professional courses.

Completing the form

- read the application instructions before completing the form.
- Use blue or black ink and write clearly in CAPITAL LETTERS. Do not use pencil.
- Answer all questions in full, even if you have previously supplied the details.
- If your application is incomplete, processing will be delayed and payments may be delayed.

If you need help

If you need help or have any questions about completing the form, you can phone our enquiry line on **0845 358 6655**

NHS Student Bursary

Application for Disabled Students Allowance

NHS Student Bursaries
Bridge House
152 Pilgrim Street
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE1 6SN

www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk

Helpline: 0845 358 6655 Hours: Mon - Fri 8.00am - 6.00pm and Sat 9.00am - 3.00pm

YOU MUST ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS ON THIS FORM

1. Personal Details

Student Reference Number	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Surname	<input type="text"/>
Other names	<input type="text"/>
Title	Mr <input type="text"/> Mrs <input type="text"/> Miss <input type="text"/> Ms <input type="text"/> Other <input type="text"/>
Date of birth	<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>
Current UK address	<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> Postcode
E-mail address	<input type="text"/>
Home telephone number	<input type="text"/>
Mobile telephone number	<input type="text"/>

2. College and Course Details

Name of University	<input type="text"/>
Name of Course	<input type="text"/>
Course start date	<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>
Course end date	<input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>

3. About your disability

Please give full details of the nature and extent of your disability or specific learning disability and provide current supporting evidence of the nature and extent of your disability from a doctor or qualified specialist. If you have dyslexia or a specific learning difficulty you must provide a full diagnostic assessment carried out after your 16th birthday by a psychologist or suitably qualified specialist teacher.

On what date was your disability last assessed?

/

/

Who carried out the assessment?

4. Previous Funding

Is this your first application for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)?

Yes

No

If No, please provide details of any previous DSA applications you have made.

Date of application.	Funding body you applied to.
<div>/</div> <div>/</div>	
<div>/</div> <div>/</div>	

You MUST provide full details of the support you have previously received and the documentary evidence of previous funding. Include a copy of any Needs Assessments you may have previously had.

5. About the equipment you already have

Do you own a computer or laptop?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Date purchased	<input type="text" value="/"/>	<input type="text" value="/"/>
Do you own a printer?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Date purchased	<input type="text" value="/"/>	<input type="text" value="/"/>
Do you have access to the internet?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>			

6. Data Protection Act 1998

The NHSBSA will use the information you have provided for the processing of your application and for the prevention and detection of fraud. We may contact you to discuss your application by methods you have provided. Your personal data will be deleted from our systems and files no later than seven years after the end of your course. We will not disclose your personal data to any third party other than: higher education institutions; local authorities; the Home Office; HM Revenue & Customs; organisations from which you receive benefits, bursaries, grants or support; the Student Loans Company. We will not transfer your personal data outside the European Economic Area.

The NHS Bursary Scheme is made pursuant to Section 63 of the Health Services and Public Health Act 1968.

Important Notes

When posting the application please ensure you have:

- completed and signed all the relevant sections of the application form, and
- enclosed photocopies of all relevant supporting documents. **We cannot be held responsible for the loss of original documents.**

Please ensure that the package is weighed and the correct postage is paid as the application form and enclosures may weigh more than the minimum postage cost.

7. Additional Information - Please use the space below to give additional information you feel may be useful.

8. Declaration

If your disability makes it impossible for you to sign the form we will accept the signature of someone acting on your behalf. You must provide a letter bearing the name and address of that person, the fact that they are acting on your behalf and a specimen signature.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Disabled Students Allowance Guidance Notes.

I understand and accept that NHS Student Bursaries cannot be responsible for meeting the costs of establishing my disability.

I have provided full details and documentary evidence of all previous claims for Disabled Students Allowance.

I understand and accept that the recommendations in my Needs Assessment will form the basis of my application for Disabled Students Allowance. I also understand that the cost of my Needs Assessment in higher education will be met from my Disabled Students Allowance entitlement.

I authorise NHS Student Bursaries to contact the Disability Officer at my Higher Education Establishment and/or my assessor at my Access Centre for the purpose of: (a) verification of information provided on this form and to obtain further information if necessary (b) to confirm whether funding for an assessment of need, items of equipment and support has been approved.

I understand that any equipment is to be utilised for my course of study and that NHS Student Bursaries is not responsible for payment of any repair costs incurred due to misuse of the equipment.

I confirm that I will inform NHS Student Bursaries immediately in the event that my personal or contact details change, there are any changes to my or if I leave the course for which my NHS Bursary was awarded, or if there is any change in the nature or extent of my disability.

I understand that if I do not enrol on training I will be required to refund any advance payment of Disabled Student Allowance made to me or my nominated supplier.

I will inform NHS Student Bursaries immediately of any change in circumstances that might affect my entitlement to financial support or NHS Student Bursaries records relating to me, including but not limited to:

- withdrawing, suspending, deferring or interrupting the course temporarily or permanently for any reason, regardless of whether I intend to return;
- changing my study pattern from full-time to part-time, or vice versa;
- taking a year or a term out from study;
- changing the account I want my payments made to; or
- changing address.

I accept that NHS Student Bursaries will immediately terminate or suspend my funding if:

- I withdraw, suspend, defer or interrupt the course temporarily or permanently for any reason, regardless of whether I intend to return;
- I take a year or a term out from study;
- NHS Student Bursaries determines as its absolute discretion that it is reasonable for it to do so; or
- NHS Student Bursaries in its absolute discretion determines that I am no longer entitled to financial support.

Declaration - (continued)

I will pay back to NHS Student Bursaries within 30 days of receiving notification any excess payment, fees and any other charges, in the event of the following circumstances:

- changing my study pattern from full-time to part-time;
- withdrawing, suspending, deferring or interrupting the course temporarily or permanently for any reason, regardless of whether I intend to return;
- taking a year or a term out from study;
- being overpaid because I have failed to inform NHS Student Bursaries of a change in my circumstances;
- a NHS Student Bursaries administrative error; or
- where NHS Student Bursaries at its absolute discretion determines I have been given financial support to which I am not entitled.

Should I fail to make full repayment of any amount due or agree an acceptable repayment plan with NHS Student Bursaries, the debt may be passed to a debt collection agency. I agree that I will be charged for any additional recovery costs at the rate of 7% which will be added to the balance outstanding on referral.

I declare that the information given on this form and the supporting documents provided is complete and accurate. I understand and accept that if I provide false or misleading information, financial report may be refused or withdrawn and I may be liable to prosecution and/or civil proceedings.

I understand that the administration of NHS student bursaries and responsibility for counter fraud and security management in the NHS are both responsibilities of the NHS Business Services Authority. I understand that NHS Student Bursaries may share the information on this form with the NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service for the purposes of the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of fraud or any other unlawful activity affecting the NHS.

Signature

Date

The fully completed form should be returned to:

NHS Student Bursaries
Bridge House
152 Pilgrim Street
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE1 6SN