

Disabled Students' Allowances

Disabled Students' Allowances provide extra financial help if you have a disability or specific learning difficulty like dyslexia. They are available on top of the standard student finance package and don't have to be repaid. This page is an introduction to what is available if you live in England. You can find out further information from www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Who Disabled Students' Allowances are aimed at

Disabled Students' Allowances are grants to help meet the extra course costs students can face as a direct result of a disability or specific learning difficulty. They are aimed at helping disabled people to study on an equal basis with other students.

Eligible full-time, part-time and postgraduate students can apply for Disabled Students' Allowances. The amount you get doesn't depend on your household income. Disabled Students' Allowances are paid on top of the standard student finance package, and don't have to be paid back.

What they can be used for

Disabled Students' Allowances can help pay for:

- Specialist equipment you need for studying – for example, computer software
- A non-medical helpers, such as a note-taker or reader
- Extra travel costs you have to pay because of your disability
- Other costs – for example, tapes or Braille paper

Eligibility

You can apply if you are a home student doing:

- A full-time course that lasts at least one year (including a distance-learning course)
- A part-time course that lasts at least one year and doesn't take more than twice as long to complete as an equivalent full-time course (including a distance-learning course)

Checking that you're eligible for student finance

To apply for financial help through Disabled Students' Allowances, both you and your course must meet some other conditions. It's worth checking these before you make your application.

Getting proof of your disability or specific learning difficulty

To apply, you will have to show evidence of your disability. If you have an impairment, medical condition, illness or a mental health condition, you will need to provide medical proof of this - for example, a letter from an appropriate medical professional.

If you have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, you must provide evidence in the form of a 'diagnostic assessment' from a psychologist or suitably qualified specialist teacher. If you have had a diagnostic assessment in the past, it may need to be updated.

You will have to pay for any tests to establish your eligibility for Disabled Students' Allowances. If you need a test but cannot afford to pay for it, you may be able to get financial help through your university or college's Access to Learning Fund.