

Disabled Students' Allowances

Proof of Specific Learning Difference (including dyslexia)

Disability Advice and Support



Student Services

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Who is this booklet for?

This information is for anyone applying to university who:

- Has a Specific Learning Difference (including dyslexia)
- Wants to apply for support from the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)
- Wants to know what proof of their Specific Learning Difference is required from their Funding Provider when applying for DSAs.

You must contact your Funding Provider to apply for the DSA; see 'Useful contacts and resources' at the end of this booklet.

Some students, for example the majority of those with the offer of a place on a course leading to registration as a healthcare professional, will apply to NHS Student Bursaries.

What proof of my Specific Learning Difference does my Funding Provider need?

You must be able to prove that you have a Specific Learning Difference and that it will affect your studies at university. This proof should be contained in the most recent copy of your assessment report.

What sort of report will be accepted?

The Government has produced guidelines regarding assessment reports accepted for Disabled Students' Allowances applications made by students with Specific Learning Differences.

The guidelines have been published in a very detailed report which specifies:

- The qualification(s) of the person conducting the assessment
- The format of the assessment report
- The tests administered during the assessment.

The full report is available on the internet on several websites. (See Useful Contacts and Resources for the address of one of these sites.) In summary, the person who assesses you will need to:

- Sign a statement that the assessment was conducted and the report written in accordance with the 'SpLD Working Group 2005/DfES Guidelines for Assessment of SpLDs in Higher Education'
- Be a suitably qualified member of a relevant professional body, for example the British Psychological Society or Patoss (the Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties)
- Hold a current Practising Certificate issued by their professional body.

The person who assesses you must include this information in your report. They are also required to update their Practising Certificate every three years through Continuing Professional Development.

If you are unsure whether your report meets these criteria, you should contact the person who assessed you and check with them.

What if my report is more than two years old?

If your report is more than two years old, but was conducted when you were older than 16 and meets the criteria stated above, your Funding Provider should accept it for a Disabled Students' Allowances application.

If you are unsure whether your Funding Provider will accept your report, check with them. You should ask to speak to an Awards Officer who deals with the DSAs and may need to send them a copy of your report.

What if my report is not acceptable to my Funding Provider?

You will need to have a new assessment, which meets the criteria stated above.

The Useful contacts and resources section at the end of this booklet includes some organisations which can help you find a suitably qualified person in your area who assesses adults with Specific Learning Differences. When you contact an assessor, you should check that their reports meet the above criteria.

What if I haven't got a copy of my report?

If you were assessed at school or college, but don't have a copy of the report, you should request a copy. This should not be a problem, especially when you explain how important it will be in applying for support at university.

If I need to have a new assessment, will my Funding Provider pay for it?

No, they will not pay to prove the existence of a Specific Learning Difference.

If I need to have a new assessment, can the University help me pay for it?

No. We can only help those who are currently enrolled De Montfort University students, where the student meets criteria defined by the Government.

This is because Disability Advice and Support can arrange for assessments for some students to be paid for from the University's **Access to Learning Fund**. There are strict Government criteria regarding eligibility for the Access to Learning Fund. To be eligible for help from De Montfort University's Access to Learning Fund, you must:

- Be enrolled on a De Montfort University course which is eligible for support from the Access to Learning Fund
- Be a home student.

You are not eligible for help from the Access to Learning Fund if you are currently enrolled as a student on a De Montfort University course which is eligible for support from the Access to Learning Fund and are:

- An EU student who receives fee support only

OR

- An International student.

Should I apply for the Disabled Students' Allowances before I start university?

Yes. The application process can take several months. If you do not start the application until you start university, your DSAs support will be delayed, and you may find the first few months very difficult without it.

However, if you need to have an updated assessment, and cannot afford this before you come to De Montfort University, you will not be able to start your DSAs application before you start your course. If this is the case, you should arrange an appointment with a Disability Officer in Disability Advice and Support as soon as you have enrolled at the University to discuss having a new assessment

and find out whether you are eligible for Access to Learning funding to pay for a new assessment.

The appointment will also give you the opportunity to discuss dyslexia support mechanisms at the University and find out what you need to do to access them.

Useful contact and resources

Disability Advice and Support

The contact details for Disability Advice and Support at De Montfort University are:

T: (0116) 257 7595

E: disability@dmu.ac.uk

Disability Advice and Support
Student Services
De Montfort University
The Gateway
Leicester LE1 9BH

Disability Advice and Support staff have produced a series of booklets relating to Specific Learning Differences, disabilities and support at university. Copies of the booklets are available from the Student Services Resources Area on the ground floor of Gateway House.

The booklets are also available at
dmu.ac.uk/disability

These booklets can be requested from Disability Advice and Support in alternative formats.

Guidelines for Assessment of SpLDs in Higher Education'

You can access the 'SpLD Working Group 2005/DfES Guidelines for Assessment of SpLDs in Higher Education' on the following page of the Patoss (Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties) website: patoss-dyslexia.org/DSA2.html

The report is displayed as 'Final Report: SpLD Working Group 2005/DfES Guidelines.'

Funding Providers

Student Finance England
W: direct.gov.uk/studentfinance
T: 0845 300 50 90

Student Finance Wales
W: studentfinancewales.co.uk
T: 0845 602 8845

Student Finance NI
W: studentfinancenl.co.uk
T: 0845 600 0662

Student Awards Agency for Scotland
W: saas.gov.uk
T: 0845 111 1711

- Contact your national Student Finance Service for an update on your funding application
- If you still haven't applied for your funding, you can do so online at the above websites
- You can download all student finance forms (PN1, PR1, CO1, Tuition Fee Loan Request form) from these websites

Bridging the Gap

You can obtain a copy from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills' booklet about DSAs – 'Bridging the Gap' from the internet at studentfinancedirect.co.uk or by telephoning the free information line on 0800 731 9133 quoting reference S/BTGB/V10. You can request the booklet in large print, or on audio tape.

NHS Bursaries

- Students usually resident in England who will be applying for an NHS Bursary should contact:

NHS Student Grants Unit
Hesketh House
200–220 Broadway
Fleetwood FY7 8SS

T: 0845 3586655
E: dsa@nhspa.gov.uk (for Disabled Students' Allowances enquiries)
W: nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students

- Students usually resident in Wales who will be applying for an NHS Bursary should contact:

The NHS Wales Student Awards Unit
3rd Floor
14 Cathedral Road
Cardiff CF11 9LJ

T: (02920) 196167 (Bursary Enquiries)
W: nliah.wales.nhs.uk

- Students usually resident in Scotland who will be applying for an NHS Bursary should contact the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (address above).
- Students usually resident in Northern Ireland who will be applying for an NHS Bursary should contact:

The Department of Higher and Further Education
Training and Employment
Student Support Branch
4th Floor Adelaide House
39–49 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8FD

T: (02890) 257777

Each Faculty has a Faculty Disability Contact

In some cases, this person is also the Faculty Manager, while in others; it is another member of staff. The list of Faculty Disability Contacts is:

Art & Design

Rob Cummings
T: (0116) 250 6160
E: rcummings@dmu.ac.uk

Business & Law

Tracey Lee-Adams
T: (0116) 250 6292.
E: tlee-adams@dmu.ac.uk

Health & Life Sciences

Sarah Thomson
T: (0116) 257 7884
E: sthomson@dmu.ac.uk

Humanities

Donna Neal
T: (0116) 257 7003
E: dneal@dmu.ac.uk

Victoria Bilbao
T: 0116 2577621
E: vbilbao@dmu.ac.uk

Faculty of Technology

Leanne Franklin
T: (0116) 250 6114
E: lfranklin@dmu.ac.uk

The British Psychological Society (BPS)

St Andrews House
48 Princess Road East
Leicester LE1 7DR

T: (0116) 254 9568
F: (0116) 227 1314
E: enquiry@bps.org.uk
W: www.bps.org.uk

You can search the Register on their website by clicking on the 'The Public' icon on the home page and then on the 'Find a Psychologist' link under the 'Services for the Public' heading.

Adult Dyslexia Organisation (ADO)

T: (0207) 924 9559 (Helpline)
E: dyslexiahq@dial.pipex.com
W: adult-dyslexia.org

The ADO is a charity run by adults with dyslexia for adults with dyslexia and all those concerned with them.

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA)

Unit 8 Bracknell Beeches
Old Bracknell Lane
Bracknell
RG12 7BW

T: 0845 2519002 (Helpline)
W: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk
(Open from 10am-4pm Mon- Fri, 5pm-7pm Tues- Weds)

The BDA has worked to raise awareness of the evidence and effects of dyslexia. They are now working to develop and encourage services that meet the needs of people with dyslexia. Their priorities include regional development, supporting the growth of local dyslexia associations.

Dyslexia Action

Head Office and National Training and Resource Centre
Park House
Wick Road
Egham
Surrey TW20 0HH

T: (01784) 222300
F: (01784) 222333
E: info@dyslexiaaction.org.uk
W: dyslexiaaction.org.uk

Dyslexia Action is an educational charity, and conducts psychological assessments by chartered psychologists for adults and children. It employs specialist teachers, chartered psychologists, speech and language therapists and support staff. A number of educational psychologists work with Dyslexia Action on a consultancy basis. Dyslexia Action has centres in England, Scotland and Wales. You can find out where your nearest centre is by contacting Head Office, or clicking on the 'Contact us' link on the home page and then 'find your local centre' link.

Dyspraxia Foundation

Registered office:

8 West Alley
Hitchin
Hertfordshire SG5 1EG

T: (01462) 454986 (Helpline – open from 10am–1pm Monday to Friday)
E: dyspraxia@dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk
W: dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk

The Dyspraxia Foundation is a charity which exists to help people to understand and cope with dyspraxia. They are a resource for parents, teenagers and adults who have the condition and for professionals who help all of them. They run a number of local support groups around the country. Your local group may be able to provide you with contact details for professionals in your area who are qualified to provide assessments for adults with dyspraxia. You can find details of your local group on the Foundation's website.

Alternative formats

Where possible DMU publications can be supplied in alternative media. This includes via email (.pdf), CD-ROM and DVD-ROM.

You may request a large font size, audio or Braille version of any publication and where possible, this will be supplied for you. It may not be possible to supply all publications in full, due to size. On these occasions, you will be asked to request specific sections only.

DMU will make every effort to find an appropriate alternative format for all requests. For further information on how we can help, please contact The Enquiry Centre on 08459 45 46 47, dmu.ac.uk/enquiry or text phone +44 (0)116 257 7908.

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