

A guide to completing your DSA1 Form **2017/18**

DSA1 Notes

These notes are also available at www.studentfinancenl.co.uk

This notes booklet will help you answer the questions on the application form. It will also advise you about what evidence you will need to supply to allow us to fully assess your entitlement to Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs).

Any original evidence you send with your application form will be returned to you as soon as possible.

Where can I find more information about Disabled Students' Allowances?

Visit www.studentfinancenl.co.uk

You can also find more information in the guide:

- 'Disabled Students 2017/18 Bridging the Gap A guide to the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) in Higher Education'.

How can I contact you?

- Visit www.studentfinancenl.co.uk
- Contact our Customer Support Office on **0300 100 0077** or **0300 100 0625 (minicom)**

Our opening hours are Monday to Friday 8.00am to 8.00pm, Saturday and Sunday 9.00am to 4.00pm.

Braille, large print or audio forms and guides

You can order forms and guides in Braille, large print or audio by emailing with your name, address, Customer Reference Number along with what form and format you require to:

- brailleandlargefonts@slc.co.uk

or you can telephone us on

- **0141 243 3686**

Please note, the above email address and telephone number can only deal with requests for alternative formats of forms and guides.

What do I need to do to get Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)?

Here is a summary of the steps involved in applying for and receiving DSAs.

Step 1

Complete and return the DSA application form with evidence of your disability, long-term health condition, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty.



Step 2

We will assess your application and send you a letter to let you know if you qualify for DSAs or not.



Step 3

We will ask you to attend a Study Needs Assessment to identify any specialist equipment and other support that you may need for your course. You will need to contact the Assessment Centre to arrange an appointment.



Step 4

You attend your Study Needs Assessment and receive a report which identifies any specialist equipment and other support you may need.



Step 5

We will send you a letter to tell you whether any specialist equipment and other support that has been recommended in your Study Needs Assessment Report can be paid for from DSAs. We will also provide information on how equipment can be ordered and other support arranged.



You will receive DSAs.

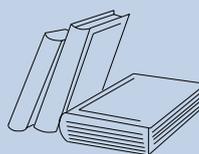
Delivery of specialist equipment



Non-medical helpers allowance



General allowance



Extra travel costs



Personal details

- a** You must send your original passport, Biometric Residence Permit, Birth Certificate or Adoption Certificate with your application form. Please note, we will not accept your passport if it has expired before we receive your application form.

If you choose to send your original Birth Certificate (this would include a UK Birth Certificate issued by a British Consulate abroad) or original Adoption Certificate it must be accompanied by a completed Birth/Adoption Certificate Declaration form. This form contains two separate declarations. The Declaration of Identity must be signed by you to confirm your identity. The Identity Confirmation is to verify your identity and must be completed by a person of good standing in the community (for example, a teacher, solicitor, civil servant or police officer) who has known you for at least two years.

You can download a Birth/Adoption Certificate Declaration form at www.studentfinancenl.co.uk/forms. Alternatively, contact our Customer Support Office and they will arrange to have one sent to you.

- e** If your name has changed from the name that appears on your Birth Certificate or passport then please send the relevant evidence confirming this and give details of any previous names you have had.

Your documents will be returned to you as soon as possible.

If you have lost your Birth Certificate you should get a replacement by contacting the Register Office in the sub-district where your birth was registered.

Previous loans

- b** If you are behind with repayments on a previous loan, you should not apply for student finance until you have resolved this issue.

If you have any Mortgage Style (MS) Loans please call your debt owner on the telephone number shown on the most recent correspondence that you have received from them. If you do not know who your debt owner is please call 0300 100 0632 for advice.

If you have any Income Contingent Repayment (ICR) loans, please call 0300 100 0611 for advice.

Contact details

- c** If you provide a term-time correspondence address all correspondence we issue will be sent to that address from the date you move there.

Armed Forces

d You may be eligible for support to study a distance learning course outside of the UK if you or your family member (who you live with) is currently serving overseas in one of the following:

- The Naval Service (Royal Navy and Royal Marines)
- The Army
- The Royal Air Force
- The Royal Military Police
- The Gurkhas

The following family members will be eligible students:

- A spouse or civil partner living with a member of the UK Armed Forces serving overseas
- A child, step-child or adoptive child living with a member of the UK Armed Forces serving overseas
- A dependant parent living with either;
 - A child who is a member of the UK Armed Forces serving overseas
 - The child's spouse or civil partner who is a member of the UK Armed Forces serving overseas

What you need to send

You need to send a letter confirming your name and your address (or BFPO address).

If your family member is in the Armed Forces, you need to send a letter confirming the following:

- their name
- their address (or BFPO address)
- your name
- their relationship to you

The letter you send must be signed, stamped and dated by the Armed Forces Unit Records Office.

Nationality

a1 If you answer 'Yes' to this question, you must send your UK passport, ROI passport or birth certificate as evidence of your nationality. If you were born outside the UK and have a British Birth Certificate issued by a British Consulate, send this instead of your passport or a letter or other document.

Armed Forces

If you, your parent(s) or partner are serving in the armed forces, you must apply for student finance in the UK country where you were ordinarily resident when you/they enlisted. Unless you permanently live in another area of the UK. We can accept certified photocopies of your residency evidence, stamped with your unit stamp. You should use your BFPO address for all correspondence.

a2 If you answer 'Yes' to this question, you must send your passport or national identity card as evidence of your EU nationality.

a3 If you answer 'Yes' to this question, you must provide evidence to show that you are the child of a Swiss national by sending us your parent's passport or national identity card. You must also send us your birth certificate or equivalent.

a4 To get student finance as the child of a Swiss national, your Swiss national parent must be resident in the UK on the first day of the academic year. We need a signed letter from your Swiss national parent stating their UK address, and that they live(d) there on the first day of the academic year. They must also send one of the following documents:

- Bank statement
- Utility bill
- Payslips
- Local Authority correspondence
- Tenancy agreement/Mortgage statement
- Government department correspondence

Use the information on page 7 to find out when your academic year starts.

Residence status

a5 The EEA or Swiss national must provide proof of their nationality with their passport or national identity card.

As proof of the current employment status of the EEA or Swiss national who is working, has worked or is looking for work, one of the following must be provided as evidence:

- A P60 or a letter from employer if currently working.
- Audited accounts, tax returns or details of income if self-employed.
- A letter from employer confirming the intention to continue working whilst studying.
- A P45, P60 or letter from previous employer on headed paper if currently looking for work or previously worked in the UK.

If your child, son or daughter-in-law or child's civil partner is the worker you must be dependent on them.

For children of EEA workers the term 'child' means a person 'under the age of 21 or dependants of the person or the person's spouse or civil partner'. This does not apply in cases where the EEA worker parent has died or left the UK and the child is staying on in the UK to finish their education.

a6 ‘Settled status’ means that you can live in the UK permanently without the Home Office placing any restrictions on how long you may remain.

You are free from any restriction if any of the following apply:

- You are a British citizen.
- You have been granted ‘indefinite leave to remain’.
- You have a right of ‘permanent residence’ in the UK.
- You have a right of abode in the UK

Further information about the right of permanent residence and other immigration issues can be obtained from the Home Office.

 If you do not have a British passport or Biometric Residence Permit which confirms your immigration status, but you have a letter from the Home Office which does, please send this letter with your application form.

Refugee status

a7 If you or your:

- husband, wife, civil partner; or
- parent(s), step-parent

have successfully applied for refugee status in the UK under the terms of the 1951 United Nations Convention on Refugees, and you or they have been granted refugee status, the Home Office will have sent you or them a letter and an immigration status document confirming this.

 Please send the Home Office letter and immigration status document, normally a passport or Biometric Residence Permit of the person who holds refugee status. You should also send evidence of your relationship to the person who holds refugee status if it is not you.

If you are claiming student finance as the child or step-child of a refugee, you will only be considered a ‘child’ if you were under the age of 18 at the time of your parent’s application to the Home Office.

If you are claiming student finance as the husband, wife or civil partner of a refugee, you must have been their husband, wife or civil partner at the time of their application for asylum.

Expiry date

If you or your:

- husband, wife, civil partner; or
- parent(s), step-parent; or
- parent’s or step-parent’s husband, wife or civil partner were granted refugee status without an expiry date you should mark the expiry date box as N/A (not applicable).

3 residence

Leave to enter or remain

a8 If you or your:

- husband, wife, civil partner; or
- parent(s), step-parent have been granted 'leave to enter or remain' in the UK as the result of an unsuccessful asylum application, the Home Office will have sent you or them a letter and an immigration status document confirming this.

e Please send the Home Office letter and immigration status document, normally a passport or Biometric Residence Permit of the person who has been granted leave to enter or remain. You should also send evidence of your relationship to the person who has been granted leave to enter or remain if it is not you.

If you are claiming student finance as the child or step-child of a person granted leave to enter or remain, you will only be considered a 'child' if you were under the age of 18 at the time of your parent's application to the Home Office.

If you are claiming student finance as the husband, wife or civil partner of someone who has been granted leave to enter or remain, you must have been their husband, wife or civil partner at the time of their application for asylum.

b2 Date study begins between

- 1 August until 31 December inclusive
- 1 January until 31 March inclusive
- 1 April until 30 June inclusive
- 1 July until 31 July inclusive

Date academic year begins

- 1 September
- 1 January
- 1 April
- 1 July

4 about your course and your university or college

b If you're studying part-time and want to apply for DSAs you must meet one of the following:

If you started your part-time course before 1 September 2017, you must be planning to complete your course in no more than twice the time it would take you to finish it if you were studying full-time. For example, if the course you are studying takes 3 years to complete on a full-time basis, you must complete it in no more than 6 years studying part time.

If you start your part-time course on or after 1 September 2017, you must be planning to complete your course in no more than four times the time it would take you to finish it if you were studying full-time in order to receive support. For example, if the course you are studying takes 3 years to complete on a full-time basis, you must complete it in no more than 12 years studying part time.

5 your university or college

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability (NI) Order 2005) has made it illegal for universities and colleges to discriminate against disabled students by treating them less favourably in their admissions policies or the services they provide. Under the Act, universities and colleges must make reasonable adjustments so that disabled students are not at a substantial disadvantage compared with other students who are not disabled.

This means that you can tell your university or college about your disability, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty in complete confidence to make sure that you receive the support you need. However, if you do not want to tell your university or college, you should include a letter explaining why you did not want to pass the form to your university or college to complete this section.

your disability, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty 6

- a** If you have a **physical disability or mental health condition** please send an up to date written medical statement from a doctor or appropriate qualified specialist confirming the nature of your disability or mental health condition. It is your responsibility to pay any cost in relation to obtaining this evidence.
- e** If you have a **specific learning difficulty (for example, dyslexia)** please send a full diagnostic assessment carried out after your 16th birthday by a psychologist or suitably qualified specialist. It is your responsibility to pay any cost in relation to obtaining this evidence.
- b** If you had a diagnostic assessment carried out before your 16th birthday it will require an update so we can fully assess how your study will be affected by your specific learning difficulty.
- c** Please send letters showing the result of each previous DSA funding application you have made and any DSA Needs Assessment Report you received from the funding authority.
- e**

Declaration

If you cannot sign this form, it must be signed on your behalf by your Power of Attorney. The Power of Attorney letter must be sent with this application before a signature from that Power of Attorney will be accepted.

You must notify the Education Authority about any change in your circumstances which may affect your entitlement to financial support. The most common change of circumstance for students would be if:

- you are absent from the course for more than 60 days because of illness;
- you are absent for any other reason;
- you leave, abandon or are expelled from the course;
- you stop attending the course and do not intend, or are not allowed, to return for the rest of the academic year;
- you transfer to a different course at the same, or a different, university or college;
- you transfer from a full-time to a part-time course;
- you repeat part or all of a year of your course; or
- the date of the start or end of your course changes.

Information about data sharing for bursary and scholarship purposes

Universities and colleges will be offering financial awards such as bursaries or scholarships to their students. To help them administer these awards (i.e. to determine eligibility and entitlement to, and if relevant pay, a bursary or scholarship - 'bursary administration purposes') they will ask the Department for the Economy, the Education Authority or the Student Loans Company for access to information you provide in connection with this application for student finance (whether on this form or at a later date).

We will share the relevant information with them, unless you indicate that you do not wish us to do so by ticking the box on the declaration. If you **do not** give consent for us to share this information, the payment of any bursary or scholarship to which the student may be entitled could be delayed.

Please contact the university or college if you require further information about their bursaries and scholarships.

Data Protection Act 1998

The Student Loans Company (SLC) is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1998.

We hold information for the purposes specified in our notification to the Information Commissioner including determining eligibility for student finance, assessing the maximum amount of financial support available, payment of student finance and the detection and prevention of fraud, and may use this information for any of these. The Department for the Economy is a joint Data Controller for your information.

If false or inaccurate information is provided and fraud is identified, details may be passed to fraud prevention agencies to prevent fraud and money laundering.

We may share the information you have given us with other organisations including the Department for the Economy, other Government bodies and with the university or college for these purposes. We may also get information about you from other organisations. If so, it will only be for the purposes described and as the law permits us to do.

For more detailed information about with whom we share your information and for what purpose, go to www.studentfinancenl.co.uk/dataprotection