

DSA FAQs

Southport College University Centre

What is DSA?

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) is a Government grant that can pay for extra equipment and support that a student may need as a direct result of a disability, on-going health condition, sensory impairment, mental-health condition or specific learning difficulty.

As well as computer hardware, software and other specialist equipment, the recipient may be able to use the grant to help with the cost of having a non-medical helper and the cost of extra travel and other items for their course, such as additional books and photocopying.

I have applied to go to University in September, do I need to have applied for my DSA?

If you have evidence of a medical condition or long-term health condition then you can apply yourself if you wish. Evidence would need to be a letter from your doctor or consultant or a 'diagnostic assessment' from a practitioner or psychologist. There is help available from us here at the University Centre if you would rather wait until you start your course. Please bear in mind that it can take 6/7 weeks to complete the DSA application process.

You need to have applied for your student finance to apply for DSA.

I'm not sure if I have a specific learning difficulty eg. dyslexia or dyspraxia. Can I be assessed at the University Centre?

Please contact the Specialist Support Team at Southport College University Centre who will discuss your needs with you and then advise on the support available.

Do I receive an allowance from the DSA?

The DSA allocates funding for help with the cost of equipment, eg. a computer or laptop, software, non-medical help such as 1 to 1 specialist study support, note takers or readers, to name but a few and other disability-related costs of studying such as taxis and photocopying costs.

For full details of the types of support available please visit the DSA site at www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas

Do I have to pay back DSA?

You may claim the DSA in addition to your student finance loans and grants to cover any extra study-related costs you incur due to an impairment, mental health condition, or learning difficulty. It is neither a benefit nor a loan, so it doesn't need repaying.

Who can claim DSA?

You are eligible for DSA if you are a student on a higher education course, live in England and can prove you have a disability, on-going medical condition, sensory impairment, mental-health condition or a specific learning difficulty which affects your ability to study.

DSAs can help students with a wide range of disabilities, health conditions and impairments including:

- Dyslexia/dyspraxia
- Sensory impairments
- Asperger's syndrome
- Physical disabilities
- Chronic health conditions, such as diabetes and asthma
- Mental health conditions, such as anxiety and depression