

Application pack

Academic year 2010-11

Social Work Bursary: Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) for Postgraduate Students

Application form and instructions

If you require the bursary application pack in large print, contact Social Work Bursaries on 0845 610 1122.

Important note: The DSA is available to social work students on a postgraduate course only. If you are studying an undergraduate social work course and want to apply for support because you are disabled, details of the support available and how to apply can be found at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

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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 if you are eligible for a postgraduate bursary.

The bursary is administered under the Care Standards Act, which is the legislation authorising the NHS Business Services Authority (NHSBSA) to distribute public funds within the context of the bursary. The bursary also adopts certain elements of the Education (Student Support) Regulations 2010.

However, the bursary is not legally bound by these regulations.

An application must be submitted each year. The application form follows these instructions.

Your disability

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.

If you apply towards the end of your course and you need specialist equipment, we may rent this equipment on your behalf rather than purchase it outright.

How will payments be made?

If your application is successful, we will tell you the amount of help you can have from DSAs.

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.

In most cases we will order equipment or services directly from the supplier and we will also pay the supplier directly.

For smaller items such as photocopying, consumables, an internet subscription or insurance, we will normally make a yearly payment directly to you based on the recommendations on your needs assessment report.

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 rates of allowances for 2010-11 are:

Specialist Equipment Allowance

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

Non-Medical Helper's Allowance

Full-time: up to £20,520 for a 52-week period.

Part-time: up to £15,390 for a 52-week period.

General Disabled Students' Allowance

Full-time: up to £1,724 for a 52-week period.

Part-time: up to £1,293 for a 52-week period.

Travel costs

You may also receive support for **extra** 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 learning opportunity. 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 learning opportunity.

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 proposed 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.

If the assessor concludes that you would not benefit from DSAs, you will have to pay the fee for the needs assessment yourself (typically £400 to £500).

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, especially if your HEI employs a disability adviser.

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.

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:

Social Work Bursaries
Sandyford House
Archbold Terrace
Sandyford
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE2 1BF
Tel: 0845 610 1122
Fax: 0191 203 5507
Email: swb@ppa.nhs.uk
Web: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/swb

Other helpful contacts

Disability Rights Commission (DRC)

Freepost MID 02164
Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 9BR
Tel: 08457 622633
Fax: 08457 778878
Textphone: 08457 622644
Email: enquiry@drc-gb.org
Web: www.drc-gb.org

National Union of Students (NUS)

2nd Floor, Centro 3, Mandela Street
London NW1 0DU
Tel: 0871 221 8221
Fax: 0871 221 8222
Textphone: 020 7561 6577
Email: nusuk@nus.org.uk
Web: www.nusonline.co.uk

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA)

98 London Road, Reading
Berkshire RG1 5AU
Tel: 0118 966 2677 (Administration)
0118 966 8271 (Helpline)
Fax: 0118 935 1927
Email: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk
Web: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

The Dyslexia Institute

Park House, Wick Road, Egham
Surrey TW20 0HH
Tel: 01784 222300
Fax: 01784 222333
Email: info@dyslexia-inst.org.uk
Web: www.dyslexia-inst.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: E&Einformation@rnib.org.uk
Web: www.rnib.org.uk/student

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: information@rnid.org.uk
Web: www.rnid.org.uk

Skill, the National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

Chapter House, 18-20 Crucifix Lane
London SE1 3JW
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 taking an approved postgraduate social work course only.

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 610 1122**

Social Work Bursary: Academic year 2010-11

Application form for Disabled Students' Allowances

Official Use Box

1 Your details

1.1 About you

▶ Your bursary reference number

Your bursary reference number is not your GSCC registration number.

▶

Surname or family name
First name
Other names
Previous names
Date of birth DD / MM / YYYY

Use your legal name, which you should also use when applying to your higher education institution (HEI).

▶

Residential address
Town/city
Postcode

All correspondence will be sent to the address you give here.

Daytime phone number ()

Mobile phone number

Email

▶ Title Mr Mrs Miss Ms Other

1.2 About your HEI

▶ Give the address of the campus where you will be studying

Name of HEI
Campus address
Town/city
Postcode

4 Applicant's declaration

We cannot process your application for Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) unless every section is fully completed and the form is signed and dated.

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 that confirms the person's identity, the fact that they are acting on your behalf and a specimen signature.

- I understand that the NHSBSA cannot be responsible for meeting the costs of establishing my disability.
- I authorise the NHSBSA to use part of my Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) to pay for a Needs Assessment in higher education
- I understand that the recommendations in my Needs assessment will form the basis of my application for DSA
- I authorise the NHSBSA to confirm to the Disability Officer at my establishment and/or my assessor whether funding for an assessment of need, items of equipment and support has been approved
- I authorise the NHSBSA to contact to the Disability Officer at my establishment and/or my assessor if further information is needed to support my claim
- I authorise NHSBSA to pay the suppliers of equipment and support directly
- I understand that if I do not enrol in training I will be required to refund any advance payment of DSA made to me or my nominated supplier
- I have provided full details and documentary evidence of all previous claims for DSA
- I will inform the NHSBSA of any change in my circumstances such as a change of address, course or my disability, including a decision to withdraw from my course of study
- If I am overpaid DSA for any reason I undertake to repay the excess amount
- I understand that if I give the NHSBSA false information, or fail to give complete information, I may be prosecuted, my application for student support may be cancelled and any future application may be rejected.

Full name

Signature

Date

5 Posting your application to Social Work Bursaries

- ▶ **Keep** a photocopy of all documents sent for your own records. The NHSBSA cannot take responsibility for applications and evidence lost in the post.
- ▶ **Attach** a pre-paid, self-addressed special delivery envelope if you wish to have your documents returned to you.
- ▶ **Pay** the correct postage and write your name and address on the back of the envelope to avoid your mail going astray.
- ▶ **Post** your application and evidence by **special delivery** to guarantee your items are delivered to:
Social Work Bursaries
Sandyford House
Archbold Terrace
Sandyford
Newcastle Upon Tyne NE2 1BF

▶ **Data Protection Act 1998**

The NHSBSA will use the information that 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 any methods you have provided. Your personal data will be deleted from our systems and files no later than seven years after the month in which your application is processed. We will not disclose your personal data to any third party other than:

- higher education institutions;
- local authorities;
- organisations from which you receive benefits, bursaries, grants or support;
- the Home Office;
- Student Finance England;
- the Student Loans Company; and
- HM Revenue & Customs.

We will not transfer your personal data outside of the European Economic Area.