



A Guide to the Disabled Students' Allowance for Dyslexia

This guide is here to help parents and students understand and get the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). We've gathered all the key resources into this easy-to-use guide.

If you are a university or college student studying full-time or half-time with a formal dyslexia report and eligible for student finance, you will get a DSA grant.

The grant amount is tailored to your individual needs and is provided to help cover dyslexia-related study costs.

What is the Disabled Students' Allowance?

The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) is a grant to help cover any disability-related costs for your studies, including those related to dyslexia. It covers support and equipment to help you succeed at university or college.

The grant is based on your individual needs and not your household income, it's not means tested and it doesn't need to be paid back.

It's for everyone with dyslexia. The DSA is available to all students with dyslexia, no matter how it affects them. It provides the tools and support needed to help you succeed.

Who is the Disabled Students' Allowance for?

The DSA grant is available for students with:

- Specific Learning Difficulties such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, ADHD, and autism
- Physical disabilities
- Mental health conditions (e.g., anxiety, depression)
- Long-term health conditions (e.g., cancer, heart disease)

This guide will help you get the grant you need for dyslexia at university or college. You can also use the same principles to apply for other assistance.

You are eligible for DSA with dyslexia if you:

- Have a dyslexia diagnosis from school or as an adult
- Are studying full or half-time for at least one year
- Are an undergraduate or postgraduate student studying in the UK
- Qualify for student finance

Sending a PDF of your original diagnosis is enough to be eligible for DSA. A childhood diagnosis report is sufficient. Your report has no time limit on when it was done.

What does the DSA grant cover?

Depending on your personal needs, the grant may cover a range of useful items and services:

- **Assistive Software:** Mind-mapping, text-to-speech, and other programs.
- **Hardware:** Laptops, printers, and other necessary equipment.
- **Study Skills Tutoring:** One-on-one sessions tailored to help with writing essays, preparing for exams, and managing time.
- **Other Costs:** Printing, photocopying, and training for new software.

These resources mean you'll have the equipment and support you need to make your degree work for you and your way of thinking. For many students, this support is crucial for their success.

The exact details of what you are awarded through the grant will be decided at your Needs Assessment during the application process.

How do you apply for DSA?

You can apply for DSA at the same time as your student finance application, or at any time during your course. It's recommended to apply as early as possible, ideally before you start university.

Here are the steps:

1. **Contact your university's Disabilities and Wellbeing Team.** This is a great first step. They are extremely helpful and can guide you through the process and the short form.
2. **Find your dyslexia assessment.** Look for a PDF in your emails or locate your paper copy.
3. **Apply online.** You can do this at the same time as your student finance application, or separately at any time. The application form can be found in your student portal or on the relevant DSA webpage for the country you are applying from. (These are linked below)
4. **Get a Needs Assessment.** You should hear from the student finance body within six weeks with a DSA1 letter and instructions on how to meet your needs assessor.
5. **The Award.** You will receive a letter (a DSA2 entitlement letter) listing what you will get, and be assigned a supplier who will be your main point of contact to deliver it to you.

The Needs Assessment: What to Expect

Once your application is processed, you will have a Needs Assessment. This is a conversation, not a test. At this point you can be confident that you will be given a grant. The Needs Assessor will talk with you to find out your personal needs and show you what tools and technology can help you.

To help you prepare, think about these questions:

- How does dyslexia affect you in daily life?
- Do you find it hard to take notes in lectures?
- How do you write essays, reports, or prepare for presentations?
- Is time management or staying organised a challenge?
- What has helped you succeed in the past?
- Are there any softwares that you already know about that could really help you?

The Award

This is not a pass/fail grant so you can be confident that you will get the right support following your needs assessment.

Your award letter will list everything the needs assessor has approved you for. It will also explain how your supplier will deliver the equipment, software, and support to you.

Congratulations!

At this point you will be set up with the tools and training you need to make the most of your degree with Dyslexia.

And Finally...

ivvi Notes is a notetaking app designed specifically for students with dyslexia. Ivvi Notes creates real time visual notes as mindmaps in your lectures so you can be confident you have notes that you will understand and will be able to remember what matters.

If you have asked for ivvi Notes and want to know how to make the most of the audio recording, transcript and mindmap ivvi will make for you, then get in touch with us at www.ivvi.app to get ongoing training and advice for free as part of your DSA software license.

Further Resources by Country

The application forms and portals are different for each nation within Great Britain. Your application goes to the funding body that provides your student finance.

The details for each nation can be found below:

England: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa/how-to-claim>

Scotland: <https://www.saas.gov.uk/guides/disabled-students-allowance/how-to-apply-for-dsa>

Wales: <https://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk/undergraduate-finance/full-time/tuition-fee-and-living-cost-students/what-s-available/disabled-students-allowance/>

Northern Ireland: <https://www.studentfinancenir.co.uk/types-of-finance/undergraduate/full-time/tuition-fee-and-living-cost-students/extra-help/disabled-students-allowance/applying/>