

## DSA Stakeholder Update

### DSA Applications

Applications for DSA support for 2017/18 AY opened on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

### DSA Application Volumes (as at 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017)

- Student Finance England

Academic Year	Original Fcast	DSA Applic'ns received	Fully Proc'd	Cancel'd, Withdr'n, Ineligible	Pended for Eligib't'y	Lapsed	Outst'g NAR\ Student Action	In Progress
2016/17	80,000	68,664	50,032	3,896	1,748	3,315	9,642	31
2017/18	80,500	46,347	15,780	1,614	15,078	8	12,805	1,062

Peak week for DSA applications recently: **c. 2,910** p.w. received in first week of Sept. 2017

- Student Finance Wales

Academic Year	Original Fcast	DSA Applic'ns received	Fully Proc'd	Cancel'd, Withdr'n, Ineligible	Pended for Eligib't'y	Lapsed	Outst'g NAR\ Student Action	In Progress
2016/17	N/A	3,643	2,476	249	86	447	384	1
2017/18	N/A	2,113	698	45	739	3	546	82

**Note: All data is Raw Data, and is NOT official data prepared by the SLC's MI Team**

### DSA News

- From 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017.DSA it became possible to submit DSA applications electronically via the new Online DSA service.
  - Students who are **New, 1<sup>st</sup> Time** DSA applicants (including students from previous AY cohort) **AND** are **Full-time Undergraduate** students **AND** who are in receipt of TFL, ML, CCG, PLA, ADG, etc. can apply via this route.
  - Part-time, Postgraduate and DSA-only students will continue to complete hardcopy forms for this year. (It is hoped that next year these student types will also be able to apply online.)
  - Students can now also submit scanned copies of their medical evidence by e-mail to the new DSA disability evidence e-mail Inbox – [DSA\\_Disability\\_Evidence@slc.co.uk](mailto:DSA_Disability_Evidence@slc.co.uk) .
  - Over 750 online DSA applications were made in the first week (with no publicity of the service).
  - In the 4 months since the DSA Online service went Live around 16,871 DSA applications have been received via this route.

- 'Pends' of DSA Online applications are currently far higher than hardcopy DSA applications (c. 80%). (It is thought that a high number of students who apply via DSA Online only start to gather their medical evidence **AFTER** they have submitted their DSA Online application. Previously, most students submitted their hardcopy DSA application together with their Medical Evidence as a complete package.)
- Anything that DSA stakeholders can do to help DSA students to expedite their Medical Evidence and/or remind them to submit their Medical Evidence a.s.a.p. would be very helpful.
- With effect from 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017 pdf copies of DSA2 Letters are being sent to students by e-mail. Students now receive a PDF copy of their DSA2 Letter sent to the e-mail address that we hold on file in our database (that they supplied when they applied for DSA) **in addition to** the hard copy of their DSA2 Letter that is sent to the postal address that SFE hold on file.
- The new 'DSA Direct' telephone helpline for DSA customer (i.e. DSA students) to speak directly to a member of the DSA Team about any questions and queries that they have w.r.t. their DSA application went 'Live' on 10<sup>th</sup> July. During July and August the new 'DSA Direct' service answered a total of 6,323 calls from DSA students.

### **DSA Guidances Changes for 2017/18 AY**

- The DSA Guidance for 2017/18 AY, publication of which was delayed due to the General Election, was published on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017 and is available on the Practitioners' Website at <http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/policy/>
- The DSA Guidance changes for 2017/18 AY are relatively small:-
  - From September 2017, Armed Forces personnel on Overseas Service and their families will be eligible for Student Finance for Distance Learning study (and DSA, if they are eligible).
  - Students starting a Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professional (AHP) degree course from September 2017 will now be entitled to the same Student Finance support as all other **Undergraduate** students (Tuition Fee Loan, Maintenance Loan, Child Care Grants, Parental Learning Allowances, Adult Dependents Grants, etc.).
  - As an interim measure for 2017/18 AY, the government will continue to provide a Bursary support to meet the full course costs for a capped number of new **Postgraduate** healthcare students in 2017/18 AY.
  - The long-term intention for students on these Postgraduate healthcare courses is for funding to be reformed to fit the standard Student Funding model w.e.f. September 2018.
  - Students on other NHS-related courses, Paramedics, Medicine Courses, Dental Therapy, Graduate Entry Medicine courses, etc. are unaffected by the changes.
- Copies of all the recent SSIN's (Student Support Information Notices) containing a variety of clarifications of DSA Policy from the Department for Education can be found at <http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/policy/>