

# Online Applications

Disabled Student Allowances

Launching May 2017



Student Loans Company

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DSA Online opens:  
**31st May\***  
**2017**

*\*Subject to satisfactory testing*



# Who can apply for DSA online?

# Who can apply online?

When the application launches, SFE students who are studying in 17/18 as a full time undergraduate will be able to apply for DSA online...

...provided they meet these additional criteria:

**The student must be  
applying to receive  
DSA for the first  
time in this period  
of study**

**The student will  
need to make, or to  
have made, an  
application for  
'core' finance\***

**\*Requesting £0 funding should  
have no impact**

**For the core  
application the  
student can be a new  
student or a  
returning student**



# How do students apply for DSA online?

# Launching the application

When the student is completing their application for core finance they will be asked if they wish to apply for DSA.

If they select 'Yes' then a link will be available in My Account once their application for core finance is submitted.



The link will remain available in My Account.

So the student doesn't have to immediately start a DSA application after submitting their core application.

# Laura's account

## SCREEN SHOT

Customer Reference Number:15503454297

EU nationals: Currently, new students in 2016/17 must prove they have been living in the UK for three years before their course start date in order to get living cost support from Student Finance England. [view more](#) [delete](#)

### 1. 2017 / 2018 Full time CHEMISTRY & MATHEMATICS

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**STATUS** APPLICATION SUBMITTED

#### Your to-do list



##### 1. Give us your valid UK passport details

So we can check your identity, you need to give us your valid UK passport details.

[Enter passport details](#)

[Can't provide your passport details?](#)



##### 2. Disabled Students' Allowances

You have indicated that you want to apply for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs).

[Start your application](#)

[Tell me more about the DSAs application process](#)



##### 3. Give us your National Insurance number

We need this at least 4 weeks before your first payment is due to be made to you.



Students should **only apply once** –  
this includes online and by paper

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Once the application is submitted  
students **can't make changes**

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To make changes students should  
contact the DSA team

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# Information, Advice and Guidance within the application

Before students answer any questions they're shown  
6 pieces of information about DSA:

# Explanation of what DSA is

They'll need  
to send  
medical  
evidence

DSA doesn't  
depend on  
household  
income

They may  
need to  
attend a  
needs  
assessment if  
eligible

Applications for  
core finance take  
up to 6 weeks.

Applications for  
DSA can take up  
to 14 weeks

Their DSA  
application will be  
processed once  
medical evidence  
is received

# Application Timescales

Online students can get real time status updates about their core finance application.

This isn't available for the DSA application so we felt it was important to stress that the DSA application is a longer process.

# The Equality Act

In testing, some students were unsure what the Equality Act was or how it affected them.

Some were concerned about how they would be treated if they met the conditions of the Act.

We added information to help explain the Act and how it impacts them.

## What type of disability do you have?

To get DSAs your disability must meet the definition of a disability under the Equalities Act 2010.

### ▼ What is the Equalities Act?

The Equalities Act 2010 has made it illegal for universities and colleges to discriminate against disabled students by treating them less favourably in admissions policies or the services they provide. Under the Act, universities and colleges must make reasonable adjustments so that students with disabilities are not at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled.

This means that you can tell your university or college about your disability, long term health condition, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty in confidence to make sure you receive the support you need.

This means you may have a physical, sensory or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, including education.

You will be asked to send evidence of each disability you have, we'll give you more information about what you need to send at the end of your application.

#### Select all that apply

Physical disability

For example you have a physical impairment or mobility issue, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches

Blind / Partial Sight

For example you are blind or have a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses

Deaf / Partial Hearing

For example you are deaf or have a serious hearing impairment

Long term health condition

For example you have a long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy

Mental health condition

For example you have a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder

Specific learning difficulty

For example you have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D

Autistic spectrum disorder

For example you have a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder

Other

# What type of disability do you have?

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# Application Questions



A hearing impairment

Eg deaf



A sight impairment

Eg blind or partially sighted



A physical disability

Eg cerebral palsy or chronic pain



A long term health condition

Eg cancer



A mental health condition

Eg depression or anxiety



An autistic spectrum disorder

Eg autism or Asperger's



A specific learning difficulty

Eg dyslexia or dyspraxia



Other

# What type of disability?

The student is asked to select their **disability type** from the list provided

The student **can select multiple** categories

If the student is **unsure** or simply doesn't know they should **select 'other'**

They'll have the opportunity to provide more detail later on

**Select all that apply****Physical disability**

For example you have a physical impairment or mobility issue, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches

**Blind / Partial Sight**

For example you are blind or have a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses

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**Other****Continue**

# What is the disability?

Students can add more disabilities by selecting '+Add another'

There's a limit of 10 disabilities **that can be added**

The student **must add at least 1 disability per type selected**

Students can delete disabilities by selecting 'remove'

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## What is the name of your disability?

Test

[remove](#)

Test 2

[remove](#)

 [Add another](#)

[Continue](#)

# What is the disability ...<sup>(cont)</sup>?



Does it matter if  
the disability is  
spelt incorrectly?



No. It just needs to be close  
enough so we can find it within  
the medical evidence.



One of my disabilities doesn't  
have a name and another has  
several – what should I do?



For the disability without a name give us a term  
that best describes the main symptoms. This will  
help us find the information we need in your  
medical evidence.

For the disability with several names, its best to  
give the name it is most commonly known by

Students who indicate they have a specific learning difficulty will be asked an additional question.

This question won't be displayed for students who have other conditions which are not specific learning difficulties

If the student only indicated a SpLD, and answered 'No', they will be taken to an exit page

## Specific Learning Difficulties

"Was your specific learning difficulty last assessed after your 16<sup>th</sup> birthday?"

Clicking on 'Why is this important?' will explain why we're asking this question

Students who indicate they have other conditions, but have answered 'No' to this question, will be shown additional information then allowed to continue with their online application

# Has your specific learning difficulty been assessed after your 16th birthday?

## ▼ Why is this important?

If you have a specific learning difficulty and your diagnostic assessment was carried out before you turned 16 it will need to be updated. You'll have to pay for this yourself. This is so we can fully assess how your specific learning difficulty will affect your studies.

 Yes No

We'll assess you for DSAs for any other disabilities you have, but we can't assess you for your specific learning difficulties until you've had an upgraded diagnostic assessment.

[Continue](#)

**Student selected SpLD + an other category**

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## You can't apply for DSAs until you have had an updated diagnostic assessment.

As your last diagnostic assessment was carried out before your 16th birthday it will need to be updated. You'll have to pay for this yourself. This is so we can work out how your studies at university or college will be affected by your specific learning difficulty.

[Go to your account](#)**Student only selected SpLD**



On rare occasions we may be able to assess a student with a SpLD for DSA if they have other evidence – eg GP letter for Dyspraxia.

If the student only has a SpLD, and they've been unable to progress the online application, then they would need to contact the DSA team to discuss the evidence they have.

They may be required to submit a paper application form.

This should be regarded as an exception.

# Consent to Share

Students will need to complete DSA **consent to share** as part of the online application.

The application **explains why** consent is being requested, **how** it will be used and **what may** happen if it isn't provided.

The application also **explains who** the needs assessor and supplier **are** to help give a bit more context around why we want to talk to them.



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## Consent to share

If you allow us to share information about your application for DSAs, both Student Finance England and your university or college can work together to make sure you get the support you need.

### ▼ Do I have to share my information?

You don't have to tell your university or college about your disability or give us permission to share information about your application for DSAs. However, this will mean they can't make reasonable adjustments to support you and it may delay the support you need.

**The disability service at my university or college and Student Finance England may exchange information about my application for DSAs.**



I agree



I don't agree

Your application will still be processed if you don't agree to share information. However, it may take longer for your support to be arranged and you'll have to coordinate with the disability service yourself.

**My DSAs Needs Assessor and Student Finance England may exchange information about my application for DSAs.**

▼ [Who is my DSAs Needs Assessor?](#)

Your Needs Assessor will discuss your disability with you and recommend how DSAs can support you. Sharing information with them means we can discuss requests for support and your Needs Assessment with them.



I agree



I don't agree

Your application will still be processed if you don't agree to share information. However, it may take longer for your support to be arranged and you'll have to coordinate with the Needs Assessor yourself.

**My DSAs suppliers and Student Finance England may exchange information about my application for DSAs.**



I agree



I don't agree

Your application will still be processed if you don't agree to share information. However, it may take longer for your support to be arranged and you'll have to coordinate with the suppliers yourself.

**Continue**

# Is there anything else?

In the final question, the student will be given an opportunity to add any additional information they feel is necessary for their application.

This is an optional field and will accommodate up to 250 characters.

In testing most students simply moved on. Some students with more complex conditions welcomed the opportunity to give more detail.

## Finally, do you want to tell us more about how your disability affects you while you're studying?

You can tell us anything about your disability and how it affects you that hasn't been covered in the application. This is optional and it won't affect the outcome of your application if you don't give us any additional information.

Yes     No

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### Tell us more about how your disability affects you while you're studying

This is optional and it won't affect the outcome of your application if you don't give us any additional information.

[Continue](#)



# Submission

# Submit

Once the application questions are answered, the student will see an information page.

This page reminds them of the **timescales** and **key next steps** such as the need to **submit medical evidence** and to attend a **needs assessment** if they're made eligible for DSA.

At the bottom of the page the student will find the  
**“Apply”** button

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## Next Steps

Your application for DSAs will take up to 14 weeks to be processed. It will be processed separately from your application for student finance.

### Evidence

You'll have to send evidence of each disability you have. You can find out what you need to send in your to-do list.

### Arrange a Study Needs Assessment

If you're able to get DSAs we'll contact you by post when it's time to arrange your Study Needs Assessment. During your Study Needs Assessment your needs assessor will discuss how your disability affects your studies.

They'll ask you about any benefits you get as a result of your disability, like the mobility components of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment. They'll also ask you about your laptop or desktop computer if you have one. You should take information about the make and model of your computer and the processor it uses.

**By submitting this application for DSAs, you're accepting and agreeing to the terms and conditions in the Student Finance Declaration.**

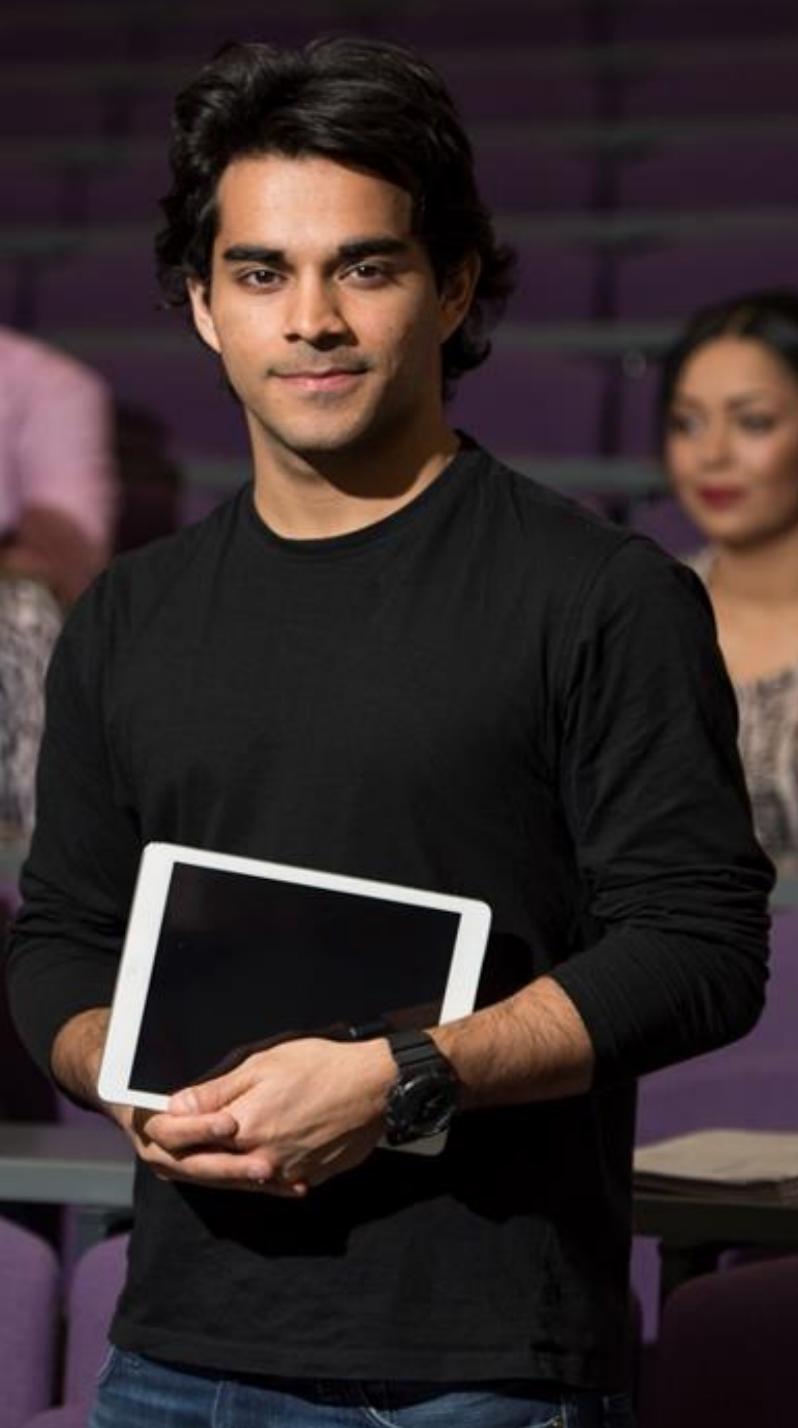
▼ [What is the Student Finance Declaration?](#)

The student finance declaration is a form you must sign, date and return before you receive any student finance. It's available in your online account once you've applied for your main student finance. You only need to return this form to us once each year.

[Submit](#)



# My Account



Returning to My Account, the student should see that their application is 'submitted'.

The student will also see more detailed information on what medical evidence they need to send.

The specific information displayed will be based on the disability type(s) the student selected in their application

The student will be directed to send their evidence to  
[dsa\\_medical\\_evidence@slc.co.uk](mailto:dsa_medical_evidence@slc.co.uk)  
Or via post to PO BOX 210

Customer Reference Number:15503454297

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#### Your to-do list



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So we can check your identity, you need to give us your valid UK passport details.

[Enter passport details](#)

[Can't provide your passport details?](#)



##### 2. Disabled Students' Allowances

For each other disability you have, send us: a written statement or letter from a doctor or appropriate qualified medical professional which confirms the long term affects your disability has on your ability to carry out day to day activities including education.

[Tell me more about the DSAs application process](#)

