

Guide for Disabled Students : Applicants to Higher Education SCA8a

Introduction

Askham Bryan College welcomes applications from suitably qualified disabled people. All applications are considered on academic grounds.

If you have a disability, medical or mental health condition, please make sure that you complete the disability coding box on your application form. In most cases this will be your UCAS application form. This information will allow the Learning Support (LS) Department to contact you prior to your course to ensure that we can work with you to make informed agreements about the support that you may require. With your permission, we can then also liaise with others who should know about the effects of your disability, such as your previous educational provider, your General Practitioner, staff in the department where you will be studying and the examinations officer.

It is important to understand the value and importance of declaring your disability. If we do not know about it, the College may not be able to provide the individual support you require. It is advisable and beneficial to declare your disability when applying; however, you can let the College know at any stage of your course.

Our most important piece of advice:

Please **disclose** ! We're here to help, we don't know if you don't tell us.

The Higher Education Student and the meaning of Disability

As a higher education student living in England, you can apply for a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) if you have a:

- disability
- long-term health condition
- mental health condition
- specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia

The **support you get** depends on your individual needs and not on income.

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The Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA)

The Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA):

- is a grant, not a loan, and does not have to be paid back.
- does not depend on a student's income or the income of their parents, guardians or carers.
- does not affect entitlement to other benefits.
- is available to both full-time and part-time undergraduates who are UK residents and pay home fees.
- helps disabled people to study in higher education on an equal basis with other students.

For further information regarding eligibility and general information please consult the publication Bridging the Gap – A Guide to the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) in Higher Education at: www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance.

Information in alternative format is available from www.brailleandlargefonts@slc.co.uk or by phoning 0141 243 3686

Further information can also be found in this series of seven videos showcasing the Disabled Students' Allowances available on the Microlink webpage:
<http://www.microlinkpc.com/>

To access DSA, you are required to complete an application form which can be found at http://www.sfenland.slc.co.uk/media/559155/sfe_dsa_1314_d.pdf . It is normal to be expected to provide medical evidence (such as a letter from your doctor or specialist) if you have a disability or mental health condition. If you have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, you must provide evidence in the form of a 'diagnostic assessment' from a psychologist or suitably qualified specialist teacher. If your needs were assessed before your 16th birthday, the assessment will need to be updated. The application and evidence needs to be sent to your funding body (normally Student Finance England). The guidance notes are very thorough and can also be accessed through <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/how-to-claim> .

Following application, the funding body will write to you to let you know if you qualify for DSA. If you are eligible for DSA you will be asked to have your needs individually assessed at an independent assessment centre (listed at www.dsa-qag.org.uk), or by a person with a specialist knowledge. The service can be very busy and applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible. In some instances from application to the production of the report can take several months. **Please apply early!**

There are four main awards under the general heading of the DSA, each with its own area of allocation of funds:

- **Specialist Equipment Allowance** – this can be used for the purchase of items of equipment you need because of your disability or specific learning difficulty. It can be used to pay for repairs, insurance or extended warranty costs.
- **Non-Medical Helper's Allowance** – this can be used to help pay for support workers such as note-takers, study skills tutors, specialist one-to-one support, sign-language interpreters etc.

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- **General Allowance** – this can help pay for other disability related spending. It can purchase items such as printer cartridges and paper, photocopying and buying books that might otherwise be only available through restricted short-term library loans.
- **Travel Allowance** – this allowance can help with any extra travel costs that you may have to pay to attend College because of your disability.

DSAs pay for study support and not personal care support. If you feel that you require personal care support (eg: help with shopping, washing, cleaning etc) funding can be provided via liaison with your home Social Services department.

Who can apply for Disabled Students' Allowances?

The Disabled Students' Allowance is available for students who experience difficulties in accessing their studies due to a disability, specific learning difficulty, or an enduring health condition, such as:

- an enduring mental health difficulty, for example depression, generalized anxiety conditions, bipolar disorder (manic depression), or other long-standing mental health issue.
- a specific learning difficulty, like dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia or AD(H)D.
- a social / communication disability, like Asperger's Syndrome, or another autistic spectrum condition.
- a sensory impairment that affects the ability to see or hear with ease.
- a physical or mobility difficulty such as needing to use a wheelchair or crutches (long-term), difficulty in using arms or hands, or other physical difficulties.
- an on-going illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS or ME), epilepsy, Crohn's disease, or other continuing health condition.

Applying for Disabled Students' Allowances

The process of applying for DSA can take up to three months so you should apply as soon as you can to make sure you have everything in place for starting your course.

10 Tips on applying for DSA:

1. DSAs can be applied for before or during your course
2. Obtain evidence (e.g. doctor's letter or full diagnostic dyslexia report)
3. Check evidence eligibility with ALS staff
4. Complete an application form available from the **your DSA** website:
<http://www.yourdsa.com/>
5. Your funding body will write back to you in approximately 3-4 weeks stating your eligibility.
6. If your application has been declined speak to ALS as soon as possible
7. If your application has been accepted, the letter will ask you to arrange a Study Needs Assessment
8. Book a Study Needs Assessment with an accredited DSA QAG assessment centre. ALS can advise on this.
9. Your chosen assessment centre will help you through the rest of the process.
10. Keep in touch with ALS so that they can make sure that everything specified in the DSA award is in place.

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Advice on income related benefits for disabled students

Disabled students who meet certain eligibility criteria may be able to claim some means tested benefits. Some of your Student Finance will be counted as income when calculating your entitlement to these benefits.

- *Employment Support Allowance* (Income related ESA) – in addition to meeting the eligibility criteria for this benefit, a full time student must also be in receipt of any component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA).
- *Contribution Based Employment Support Allowance* – in addition to meeting the eligibility criteria full-time students must have paid sufficient national insurance contributions
- *Employment Support Allowance in Youth* – in order to be eligible for this benefit full-time
- students must have had a period of 28 weeks of limited capability for work which began when they were under 20 (sometimes 25) and do not need to have paid national insurance contributions.
- *Income Support* (IS) – this benefit only applies to students already receiving it. Students in receipt of IS can only continue to receive it if:
 - they qualify for the IS disability premium or severe disability premium; or
 - they qualify for a disabled students' allowance because they are deaf.
 - Full time students making a new claim must apply for ESA instead.
- A student who rents accommodation (including College accommodation) and receives IS or ESA will automatically receive full Housing Benefit. There are some other categories of disabled students who may be entitled to help with their rent.
- If you would like to apply for any benefits then please contact your local Jobcentre Plus office.

Who do I contact first?

Your first point of contact for queries and advice about access to learning and learning support provision for students with disabilities or sensory impairment is:

Miles Cooper – Learning Support Manager

miles.cooper@askham-bryan.ac.uk

Specialist Support Contacts:

- May Houseman
Autism Services Co-ordinator
- Ange Cousans
Mental Health Services Co-ordinator
- Julie Richardson
Dyslexia Services Co-ordinator

For other specialist support services please contact Milles Cooper (see above)

or

Marilyn Shersby – Student Support Services Manager

marilyn.shersby@askham-bryan.ac.uk

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Telephone 01904 772222

The Student Support Services Office is open:

Monday – Thursday 8.45 am – 5.00 pm

Friday 8.45 am – 4.30 pm

Telephone 01904 772201

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Facilities at Askham Bryan College (at centres with HE)									
Site	Ramped access	Wheelchair Access	Toilet for disabled	Car park close by	Hearing Loop System	Support with hearing impairment	Support with visual impairment	Specialist IT equipment	Support Assistant
York Main Building	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
York Teaching Block	YES	YES		YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
York East Barrow	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
York Westfield	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
York Science Block	YES	YES			YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
York Engineering				YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
York Equine	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
York Horticulture	YES	YES		YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
CENTRES									
Newton Rigg	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement
Guisborough	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES – by arrangement	By prior arrangement	By prior arrangement	YES – by arrangement	YES – by arrangement

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Organisations outside of the College

UCAS

Students with disabilities:

<http://www.ucas.com/how-it-all-works/explore-your-options/individual-needs/students-disabilities>

British Dyslexia Association

Unit 8 Bracknell Beeches, Old Bracknell Lane

Bracknell RG12 7BW

Telephone: 0845 251 9002

Fax: 0845 251 9005

Website: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

Email: helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)

Telephone: 0870 0010 336

Email: info@dius.gsi.gov.uk

Website: www.dius.gov.uk

Equality and Human Rights Commission

Website: www.equalityhumanrights.com

Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)

105 Judd Street, London WC1H 9NE

Telephone: 020 7388 1266

Fax: 020 7388 2034

Email: helpline@rnib.org.uk

Website: www.rnib.org.uk

Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)

19-23 Featherstone Street, London EC1Y 8SL

Telephone: 020 7296 8000

Textphone: 020 7296 8001

Fax: 020 7296 8199

Email: informationline@rnid.org.uk

Website: www.rnid.org.uk

SKILL: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

Unit 3, Floor 3, Radisson Court, 219 Long Lane,
London SE1 4PR

Telephone/textphone: 020 7450 0620

Fax: 020 7450 0650

Email: info@skill.org.uk

Website: www.skill.org.uk

Disability Rights UK:

Higher Education Guide:

<http://www.disabilityalliance.org/how-we-can-help/publications/higher-education-2013>

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About DisabledGo

Welcome to our website! Here you can find detailed information about the access to all kinds of places - hotels, restaurants, colleges, tourist attractions, libraries, hospitals, leisure centres - the list goes on! All access information has been collected in person by DisabledGo's team of surveyors. You can also use DisabledGo to find a job, catch up on the latest disability news, advertise events, post articles and join discussions on our forum. The website has been designed in constant consultation with disabled people and we would welcome your feedback and ideas so please get in touch

<http://www.disabledgo.com/en/home/>