

Disabled Students' Allowances - Late final year applications

Guidance for partners

Customer process

What happens when a student who is applying for DSAs late in their final year, goes through the standard application process?

Due to the length of the application and needs assessment process, students applying late in their final year may not receive their DSA support before the end of their course.

What are SFE doing to ensure these students receive DSA support as quickly as possible?

Instead of sending these customers for a needs assessment, SFE will guide them directly to their university or college Disability Adviser, to get access to the support they need quickly.

(see appendix A for a copy of the letter SFE send to these students).

We will accept and agree recommendations received from Disability Advisers for these customers, regarding non-medical helper and general allowance claims.

Which students does this apply to?

This is applicable to customers who submit their application form within five months of their course end date, in their final year.

Disability Adviser recommendations

How should Disability Advisers make recommendations for support?

Disability Advisers should detail their recommendations and justifications in a letter and forward this to disability_adviser@slc.co.uk

Is more than one quote required?

No, we only require one quote for non-medical helper allowance at this stage. We expect the Disability Adviser to use their experience to identify the most appropriate supplier to meet the student's needs.

What if the Disability Adviser is not confident about making these recommendations?

If the Disability Adviser is not comfortable about making recommendations, or there is some uncertainty, then the student must make an appointment at an Assessment Centre.

SFE ask that the Disability Adviser contacts us by email to confirm this and we can then look at working with the relevant Assessment Centre to expedite the assessment where possible.

Can Disability Advisers also make recommendations for assistive technology at this stage?

No, if it is felt assistive technology is needed, we require the student to attend a Needs Assessment at their preferred Assessment Centre.

At this point, SFE would expect to see comparative quotes for rental and purchase. We only require one quote for each, rather than the usual three quotes at this stage.

SFE expect Needs Assessors to use their experience to identify the most appropriate supplier to meet the student's needs and then provide relevant justification in the Needs Assessment report.

Contact or support already in place

If interim support was in place before the DSA application was submitted, would this be reimbursed?

Yes, we can reimburse interim support.

If items have been purchased by the student or interim support has been put in place, we would expect the student to be referred to an Assessment Centre and the interim support to be detailed in the Needs Assessment report.

What happens if the student had already made contact with the Disability Adviser before applying for DSAs? Would SFE still issue the letter directing them to their Disability Adviser?

SFE would need to be made aware that discussions have already taken place with the student and we suggest this is confirmed within the DSA1 application form.

We will then get in contact with the Disability Adviser to discuss the required support, rather than issuing a letter to the student.

Continuing past end date

What if the Disability Adviser has identified that the student will be continuing on past their current end date i.e. repeating their final year or doing a top up course?

In these cases the student must arrange an appointment at an Assessment Centre.

We would ask the Disability Adviser to email us confirmation of this, so we can update our records.

How fast will SFE turn around the recommendations / Needs Assessment report in these circumstances?

SFE will process these reports/recommendations within 10 working days as standard.

APPENDIX A

Student Finance England
PO Box 210
Darlington
DL1 9HJ

28 February 2011

Customer Reference Number: [\[Customer Reference Number\]](#)

Dear [\[Student Name\]](#)

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) Late Application 2010/11

Thank you for your application for DSAs and supporting evidence.

You are entitled to Non Medical Helpers Allowance and General Allowance.

As your course is due to end in [\[Month Year\]](#) you will not have to attend a Study Needs Assessment. The Disability Adviser at your university or college can recommend this support to us.

You will need to contact your Disability Adviser now to arrange this.

However, if it is felt you would benefit from a Study Needs Assessment please ask the Disability Adviser to contact us and we can refer you to a Needs Assessment centre.

If we do not receive any recommendations we will not be able to provide you with any support.

For further information about DSAs go to www.direct.gov.uk/dsas, call us on the number provided or email us at dsa_team@slc.co.uk.

Yours sincerely

[\[NAME\]](#)

On behalf of Student Finance England

Please note that the student's full name and Customer Reference Number must be provided on all correspondence to Student Finance England in order to avoid delays in processing.