Students’ Guide to Queen’s Needs Assessment Centre

The University welcomes and encourages applications from disabled students. We endeavour to meet individual requirements to ensure that you have an enjoyable and positive experience of University life. One of the ways we ensure this is through the Needs Assessment Centre; offering a service to meet the diverse needs of individual students with disabilities so that all students can be assured equality of opportunity.

The Needs Assessment Centre is open to any students who are entitled to Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA) or Student Bursaries for Nursing students. Eligibility will be based on appropriate medical verification or an up to date Educational Psychologist’s report, and information obtained directly from you on the impact of your disability. We have a team of experienced and professional staff that can advise you on the application process.

The Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA) application process

If you are resident in the UK, as a student with a disability you may be entitled to the DSA. The allowance can help with additional costs for:

* Specialist equipment such as a computer, assistive software and any other aids which you may require to complete your course;
* Non-medical help such as note-takers, study skills tutors and specialist dyslexia tutors;
* Costs to help with the purchase of consumables such as paper, ink and photocopying;
* Additional travel costs if your disability prevents you from being able to access public transport.

To check your eligibility for DSA you need to:

* Complete a DSA1 form and send this to your Education Authority or equivalent funding body eg SFE.

*Please note that a DSA1 form is not required for Nursing students in receipt of a bursary*

* Include up to date detailed medical evidence or an Educational Psychologist’s report if you have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, along with your DSA1 form.
* If you are form the Republic of Ireland you may be eligible for funded assistance similar to DSA under the European Social Fund (ESF)

Once you have received a letter from your Education Authority confirming that you are eligible for DSA, **book your Needs Assessment by contacting the Needs Assessment Centre on 028 90975062 or** [nac@qub.ac.uk](mailto:nac@qub.ac.uk).

The Needs Assessment meeting

The assessment meeting will take approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours and will take place in one of our fully equipped assessment centres within the Student Guidance Centre.

On attending for assessment, you will meet with a suitably qualified member of staff to discuss your individual needs and the support available. Advice and support will be provided to all students with a disability including specific learning difficulties, mental health difficulties, Autism/ Asperger’s’ Syndrome, physical disabilities, sensory impairments or medical conditions.

Your Needs Assessor will be able to identify the support available to meet the your disability related needs and liaise with the Education Authority on your behalf to access DSA to fund areas such as specialist equipment, non-medical support, transport or general study costs.

Specialist equipment may include a laptop, assistive software or ergonomic furniture. Some of the non-medical support that your needs assessor may advise can include campus assistants, note takers, proof-readers, library assistants, sign language interpreters, study skills tutors, Asperger’s mentors and specialist dyslexia tutors. There may also be a consideration for other additional costs such as printing, photocopying, accommodation and travel allowance.

DSA confirmation

Following your meeting, your Needs Assessor will write a detailed report outlining the impact of your disability on your study and highlighting areas where support will be recommended. This report will be sent to you for approval before it is sent (along with quotes for equipment if required) to your Education Authority. If the report is approved, your Education Authority or funding body will write to you listing the funded support you will be receiving. Equipment will be ordered and delivery arranged directly by your Education Authority and supplier.

As a guideline, this process can take six to eight weeks but may take longer during busy periods, especially at the beginning of the academic year.

Our staff are committed to providing a quality service to offer advice and provide an appropriate support package, which has been tailored, as much as possible, to suit individual requirements.

The service we offer is available to any student wishing to access Higher/ Further Education at Queen’s or any UK university. We welcome any disability related enquires during or prior to application at your chosen University.

For further information regarding the Needs Assessment Centre at Queen’s University Belfast please contact 02890 975062 or email [nac@qub.ac.uk](mailto:nac@qub.ac.uk). Additional guidance can also be found at www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/Services