



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

# **Student Finance Wales Information Notice:**

## **Evidence requirements change for DSA students without a formal Autism (ASD) diagnosis**

### **March 2024**

SFWIN 03/2024

This Information Notice provides details of the change to evidence requirements for students without a formal Autism (ASD) diagnosis applying for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) from Student Finance Wales:

## **Evidence requirements change for DSA students without formal Autism (ASD) diagnosis (March 2024)**

For students to be eligible for DSA, they must provide medical evidence that confirms their mental health problem, long-term illness, or disability. For the purposes of the student support regulations the definition of a disability is in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

The current DSA evidence for ASD must be a formal diagnosis, however, students without prior diagnoses are increasingly unable to satisfy this requirement due to the current length of the waiting lists across Wales for adults seeking a formal ASD diagnosis; these students may be missing out on DSA.

Following detailed discussions with clinical leads delivering the Integrated Autism Service (IAS) in Wales, the decision has been taken to accept the IAS waiting list letter, provided at Step 5 of their process, as evidence to satisfy the DSA eligibility and evidence requirement. At this point in the IAS process, it is confirmed the individual is being put forward for formal diagnosis but will be subject to the waiting list in their local health board area; the individual will have undergone, and passed through, a number of robust diagnostic screenings and assessments for ASD.

To support this change, the requirement for the IAS letter to include the day-to-day impacts of ASD on the student has also been removed; an ASD is a lifelong condition and as such, the study needs assessor can determine the impact the student's condition has on their studies when completing their study needs assessment.

This change applies with immediate effect and can be applied for any application where evidence relating to an ASD diagnosis is pending.

The Student Finance Wales Medical Pro-Forma will continue to be accepted by way of alternative medical evidence.

## Enquiries

If you have queries about DSA, please [contact Student Finance Wales directly](#) .

If you have any queries about this Information Notice, please contact the Higher Education Division, Welsh Government: - [studentfinancedivision@gov.wales](mailto:studentfinancedivision@gov.wales).

Large print, Braille and alternate language versions of this document are available on request.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English