



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Student Finance Wales Information Notice:

Changes to the Disabled Students' Allowance accommodation recommendation and award process

SFWIN 04/2023

This Information Notice sets out a change to the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) accommodation recommendation and award process for awarding support for a room upgrade.

Changes to the DSA accommodation recommendation and award process

DSA is extra support that can be used to pay for study related costs such as equipment, non-medical help, and travel. DSA can also consider any additional cost incurred by the student to secure accommodation suitable to their needs.

Current practice

DSA study needs assessors can make a recommendation to the Student Finance Wales (SFW) DSA Team for a student to be considered for an upgrade to their available student accommodation to ensure it is suitable for their needs. A recommendation for the additional cost this may incur must include the cost of a 'standard' room and the cost of the room that can accommodate the student's specific disability related needs in the same building or same location. The SFW DSA Team will consider awarding the difference between the two from the student's DSA.

New practice

DSA study needs assessors can continue to make recommendations to the SFW DSA Team for a student to be considered for a contribution towards the cost of accommodation appropriate to their specific disability related needs. They must continue to provide the cost of a 'standard' room. This accommodation must be within reasonable distance to the University, with reasonableness being considered as part of the recommendation (this may be combined with a recommendation for DSA Travel).

There is no longer a need to provide the price for cost of the accommodation appropriate to the student's specific disability related needs with the recommendation.

The SFW DSA Team will allocate an additional 50% to the cost of the standard room to provide a maximum amount for the cost of the accommodation appropriate to the student's specific disability related needs. There is no need for this accommodation to be in the same building or made available by the same housing supplier.

The student will need to provide evidence of the cost paid at the point of claim, whereby, SFW DSA will reimburse the difference between the standard room price and the price paid, up to the maximum additional 50% limit.

For example:

Recommendation for accommodation where standard room is £130 per week (SR = £130)

$SR\ 130 \times 1.5 = \text{limit of } 195$

Maximum award for accommodation is calculated as £65 per week (MA 195 – SR 130 = £65)

Where students feel they are unable to secure accommodation appropriate to the student's specific disability related needs within the additional 50% limit available, they need to discuss their individual circumstances with their study needs assessor. Their needs assessor can make a case for an exception to the SFW DSA Team.

This practice can take effect from the date of this Information Notice and can be applied for any student DSA application where an award for disability related accommodation is outstanding.

Enquiries

If you have any queries about the DSA process, please contact the SFW DSA Team direct on SFW_DSA_team@slc.co.uk Please be advised that the Welsh Government do not have access to student applications or student accounts – any queries relating to DSA application must be directed to the SFW DSA Team.

If you have any questions about this Information Notice, you can contact the Higher Education Division at Welsh Government by emailing studentfinancedivision@gov.wales. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

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