

FREE INFORMATION SHEET

ABOUT HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher Education means Universities and other institutions that offer degrees or other courses at level 4 and above. Some young people with DLD or related conditions might qualify for study at this level.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Universities should have a Disability Statement or Policy setting out how they support students with disabilities. They are also obliged under the 2010 Equality Act not to discriminate against students (or applicants) with a disability and to provide reasonable adjustments for them.

All universities also have Disability Services (though their name might vary) which provide information and support to students with a disability. Typically, they can provide or arrange:

- Diagnostic screening or assessment
- Access to specially equipped computers or other technology
- Guidance for the student's department on making appropriate reasonable adjustments
- Some generic support on e.g. organising your time or planning an essay

Students who require more specialised support should apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).



THE DISABLED STUDENTS' ALLOWANCE

The DSA is a non-means tested benefit which funds the specialist support that some students with disabilities need and is not routinely available otherwise. Typically for a student with DLD, this might include specialist tuition, specially equipped laptop and perhaps other electronic devices.

APPLYING FOR DSA

is quite a lengthy process, so do allow plenty of time.

THE FIRST STEP

is to provide evidence of the student's disability. For students with DLD, this usually means a recent report from an educational psychologist (which you will probably need to arrange and pay for privately).

IF THE REPORT IS ACCEPTED

the student will then be asked to attend a further assessment to identify the support they will need. This assessment is usually carried out at one of a network of assessment centres located mostly at universities, see www.bookyourdsa.com/

DEPENDING ON THE OUTCOME

of the assessment, the awarding body (Student Finance England) will inform the student how much money they will receive and how they are required to spend it.

POINTS TO NOTE

Although the situation is slowly improving, DLD is not really recognised as a condition affecting students and adults. Some disability services might, however, use the term 'dysphasia' to mean a language disorder. Generally speaking, DLD tends to be regarded as a form of dyslexia/specific learning difficulties and, to be fair, the support needs are often similar. Students with SCD or pragmatic difficulties, on the other hand, may have support needs that more closely resemble those of students with Asperger Syndrome or High Functioning Autism.



SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY

is largely absent from higher education. It is not routinely available and Afasic members have been told that speech and language therapy reports are not accepted as evidence of the student's disability. In most cases, students will only be able to access SLT if their assessment identifies that they need it. If so, they will be allocated funds to pay for it.



UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

are almost always over 18 and so are considered to be adults. As such, they are expected to manage their own lives and studies. This would include submitting their own complaints if they are dissatisfied in some way. Universities' complaints procedures should include details of the assistance available to students who need help or support with bringing a complaint.

A WORD OF WARNING

Many career options for university graduates expect a high level of language and literacy skills. This may make it harder for graduates with DLD and related conditions to find work. And many of the services that aim to help disabled people into employment do not accept people with a degree – on the assumption that their qualifications will make it easy for them to find work.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND USEFUL CONTACTS

OFFICIAL GUIDANCE

Official guidance on applying to University and other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs): Higher education courses: find and apply - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

DISABILITY RIGHTS

and guidance on applying for a student loan
and DSA: Student finance - GOV.UK
(www.gov.uk)



THE NATIONAL NETWORK OF ASSESSMENT

Centres: The National Network of
Assessment Centres (UK)
www.bookyourdsa.com/

INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIAHE) reviews student complaints about higher education providers in England and Wales: Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education - OIAHE



EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Guidance from the EHCR (Equality and Human Rights Commission) on Higher Education Providers' duties under the 2010 Equality Act [Higher education provider's guidance | Equality and Human Rights Commission \(equalityhumanrights.com\)](https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/what-we-do/our-legal-work/2010-equality-act-higher-education-provider-guidance).

DISABILITY RIGHTS UK

Disability Rights UK has lots of information about Higher Education and Disability: [Education Factsheets and Guides](#) | [Disability Rights UK](#)

PROSPECTS

Prospects provide careers guidance and information on job opportunities to university students and graduates: [Prospects.ac.uk](https://www.prospects.ac.uk)

To contact Afasic please use one of the following:

Telephone: 020 7490 9410

Email: info@afasic.org.uk

Website: www.afasic.org.uk