

Claiming disability benefits as a student



If you are a student with a disability you may be eligible for disability benefit. This guide outlines the different kinds of benefit you can apply for.

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)

The Disabled Students Allowance helps fund equipment, travel, extra academic support and other disability-related costs for students.

The allowance is provided on top of your Student Loan and does not need to be repaid.

In order to receive DSA, you will need to provide medical evidence of your disability. This will be reviewed and, if you are eligible, you will be invited to book a Study Needs Assessment with an assessor in your area.

At this appointment your assessor will talk to you about your disability and how it affects your studies, and will determine what support you require.

Once this has been approved, you will receive a letter informing you of your allowances and how to arrange your support with external providers.

You can apply online through your Student Finance account or fill in a form and send it to Student Finance.

For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>

For additional advice about applying, please contact the Welfare team.

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

If you have limited capability for work due to a disability or illness, you may be able to claim ESA.

There are two types of ESA:

Contribution-based ESA

Students are eligible for contributory ESA if they have a limited capability for work **and** have paid enough National Insurance contributions. It is non-means tested i.e. the amount you get is not determined by your income.

Income-related ESA

Students are eligible for contributory ESA if they are already receiving Disabled Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payments or Armed Forces Independence Payments.

Income-related ESA is currently being replaced by Universal Credit. You may still be able to claim it if:

You are responsible for three or more children

You or your partner are receiving Contribution-based ESA and began claiming it before Universal Credit was rolled out in your area. (For information about applying for Universal Credit as a student, see the Universal Credit section of this guide.

Your income is low enough and your savings are below £16,000

You have a limited capacity for work

To claim ESA call Jobcentre Plus on 0800 055 6688 or visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employment-and-support-allowance-claim-form> to download the application form.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Personal Independence Payment is for people who require extra help with their personal care or mobility needs because of a disability, illness or mental health condition. It has replaced the Disability Living Allowance.

Full-time and part-time students can claim PIP.

PIP is not means tested, so any income or savings (including your Student Loan) is not taken into account.

You do not have to have paid any National Insurance to be eligible for PIP.

You are eligible if you require help with everyday tasks or getting around, and if you have required this help for at least 3 months and expect you will require it for at least 9 months more.

You are eligible if you have lived in England, Scotland or Wales for at least 2 years - unless you are a refugee or one of your immediate family members is a refugee.

For more information about eligibility and applying visit:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/sick-or-disabled-people-and-carers/pip/>

Universal Credit

Universal Credit is being brought in to replace a range of different benefits including Housing Benefit, Job Seeker's Allowance, Child Tax Benefit and Working Tax Credits.

Most **full-time students** are not able to claim Universal Credit, but you may be able to claim if you have a disability and are already receiving benefits because of your disability, e.g. PIP.

You may also be eligible if:

- You are responsible for a child
- Your partner is eligible for Universal Credit, if you live together
- You qualify for Pension Credit and live with a partner who does not

Part-time students may be eligible for Universal Credit if they meet the other eligibility criteria, as follows (from the gov.uk website):

- You are on a low income or out of work
- You are 18 or over
- You are under State Pension Credit qualifying age (or your live-in partner is)
- You and your partner have £16,000 or less in savings between you.
- You live in the UK
- Some areas do not yet have Universal Credit in place. Contact your local Benefits office or Job Centre to find out about Universal Credit in your area.

For more information about Universal Credit visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/universal-credit-and-students>

or call the Universal Credit helpline on 0800 328 5644

Further Information and Advice

From the Disability and Inclusion Team, based in Room 005, Wellbeing Team:
020 7400 6289 or email disabilityandinclusion@london.aru.ac.uk .

From the National Union of Students:

<https://www.nus.org.uk/en/advice/money-and-funding/can-i-claim-government-benefits-as-a-student/>

From financial support charity Turn2Us:

<https://www.turn2us.org.uk/Benefit-guides/Full-time-students-and-benefits/Can-full-time-students-claim-disability-benefits>

From Disability Rights UK free helpline for students:

0800 328 5050 (Tues 11.30 - 13.30 and Thurs, 13.30 - 15.30) or email students@disabilityrightsuk.org