

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs): What's available & how to apply

We recognise that every student faces individual circumstances and we regularly work with other organisations to raise awareness of the help and support available, and of how the DSAs application process works.

This helps us to deliver the best service we can, in the most appropriate way.

Further information is available below on DSAs.

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)

Full information is available at www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas but in summary;

If you are a student with a disability, DSAs exist to help with any extra essential costs you may have as a result of your disability.

This may cover;

- Specialist equipment – for example if you need a computer to run specialist software or braille display
- Non-medical helper – for example, if you need a BSL interpreter to attend lectures
- Travel – for example, if you need to use a taxi to attend University, rather than using public transport
- A range of general costs may also be considered, related to your disability.

The application process

DSAs do not depend on household income and do not need to be repaid. You can apply online if you are a full-time student in England and are applying for other support from Student Finance England at www.gov.uk/studentfinance

If you are not applying for any other finance then you can download an application form at www.gov.uk/student-finance-forms

Evidence of disability

You will be required to provide evidence of your disability but this will be made as easy as possible, especially at the moment, when social distancing may add other difficulties. For advice on what may be required www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/eligibility

You also may need to meet with an experienced Needs Assessor, however it will be possible to do this via video-link or telephone.

Please start the application process as soon as possible

Even if you are not certain which course or institution you may attend in the autumn, you are strongly advised to start the DSAs application process as soon as possible, to ensure that finance and support will be available for the start of term.

Further information

You may wish to visit www.thestudentroom.co.uk for further information.

Full time students in England can apply online now at www.gov.uk/studentfinance

Part-time and postgraduate students should currently download paper applications www.gov.uk/student-finance-forms

It is hoped to bring this service online during June 2020 but please do not delay in finding out what is required to start the process as quickly as possible.

[OSCE Observer Mission at two Russian Checkpoints on the Russian Ukrainian border: UK statement](#)

Thank you Mr Chairperson. I would like to start by thanking Ambassador Varga for updating the Permanent Council, and for demonstrating leadership by introducing measures to protect staff working in the Mission during the COVID-19 global crisis, as well as the local population.

The Minsk agreements call for permanent monitoring of the Ukraine-Russia State border and verification by the OSCE. Sadly your Mission cannot provide comprehensive monitoring of the border because of the absurd limitations placed upon it. You are only present at two border checkpoints along an uncontrolled segment of the border that stretches for hundreds of kilometres. Even within these two checkpoints, the observers' freedom of movement is extremely limited, creating blind spots. This impedes their capacity to fully observe activity at the checkpoints, including the trains that pass over the border near the Gukovo border checkpoint. The observers are prohibited from using any additional observation tools such as cameras or binoculars. They are also unable to check vehicles or interview people crossing the border.

Nonetheless, the Mission is still able to provide useful insight to the international community. The Mission's spot reports inform us about the so-called "humanitarian convoys" that Russia sends in violation of Ukrainian

sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Mission bears witness to the people in military-style outfits crossing the border from Russia into Ukraine. Your reporting also demonstrates that in sharp contrast to the restrictions imposed even on the Special Monitoring Mission by Russia-backed armed formations at the line of contact, movement continues, albeit reduced, from Russia to non-government controlled areas of Ukraine.

We also very much value the cooperation between your Mission and the SMM – noting the important link between ceasefire monitoring and border monitoring in helping to stabilise the security situation. We would be grateful if you could share more details of this.

The UK supports the Mission's work and pays tribute to the hard working staff serving in it. We recognise that the situation caused by the pandemic has made their role even more challenging and we commend them for continuing to fulfil the Mission's observation tasks. This is on top of the everyday complications already caused by Russia's refusal to grant the Mission legal status, such as having to operate on a cash only basis and without the assistance of locally recruited staff.

The UK will continue to support the work of this important Mission. We call on the Russian Federation in the strongest terms to end the unnecessary limitations they have placed on the Mission's work. The establishment of genuinely comprehensive monitoring of the entire segment of the Ukraine-Russia State border outside Ukrainian government control, as well as the restoration of full Ukrainian control over that border, is essential. The UK joins the many other States around this table in calling for an extension of the Mission to the entirety of the uncontrolled section of the border. If Russia truly has nothing to hide, then they should cease their opposition to this expansion.

Finally, let me also take this opportunity to reiterate the UK's unwavering support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

Letters from the Cabinet Secretary to Rachel Reeves MP and Ian Blackford MP

[unable to retrieve full-text content]The Cabinet Secretary, Sir Mark Sedwill, has responded to two letters regarding Dominic Cummings, special adviser to the Prime Minister.

Public urged to report sightings of tree pest Oak Processionary Moth

The public is being urged to report sightings of the tree pest [Oak Processionary Moth \(OPM\)](#) caterpillars.

Oak Processionary Moth was first identified in London in 2006 and has since spread to some surrounding counties. The caterpillars and their nests contain hairs which can cause itchy rashes, eye and throat irritations, and should not be touched under any circumstances at any time. The greatest risk period is May to July when the caterpillars emerge and feed before pupating into adult moths.

OPM caterpillars feed on oak leaves and can increase trees' vulnerability to attack by other pests and diseases, making them less able to withstand adverse weather conditions such as drought and floods. A government programme is in place to limit their spread from areas where they are present.

The pest is established in London and surrounding areas but the majority of the country is designated a Protected Zone, which means it is free from the pest.

The Forestry Commission, working in partnership with others, have an annual programme in place to tackle the pest, with an ongoing programme of surveillance, treatment and research.

Andrew Hall, Forestry Commission Operations Manager, said:

At this time of year, many people are enjoying green spaces and it's really important for the public to be aware of the risk of tree pests like Oak Processionary Moth and to report any sightings via our [TreeAlert](#) website or by calling the Forestry Commission. This will help us with our programme of treatment and enables us to slow the spread of this pest.

Any sightings should be reported to the Forestry Commission via its [Tree Alert online portal](#). Alternatively, people can email opm@forestrycommission.gov.uk or call 0300 067 4442.

Since 2012, the government has invested more than £37 million in tree health research; this includes a dedicated programme of research on oaks and the pests that threaten them, such as Oak Processionary Moth.

The Government has also introduced tighter biosecurity checks at the border, and in 2019 introduced further restrictions on the import of oak trees to England following a number of interceptions of the pest.

Nests are typically dome or teardrop-shaped, averaging the size of a tennis

ball. They are white when fresh, but soon become discoloured and brown. The caterpillars have black heads and bodies covered in long white hairs which contain proteins which can cause itchy rashes, eye, and throat irritations. They can also occasionally cause breathing difficulties in people and pets, so should not be touched under any circumstances.

For more information on how to identify OPM, including common mistaken species, visit www.forestresearch.gov.uk/opm.

[Windrush Compensation Scheme pays out £360,000 within first year](#)

More than £360,000 has been paid out in compensation as part of the ongoing work to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation, the Home Secretary announced today.

Figures published by the Home Office show that a total of 60 claimants received payments through the Windrush Compensation Scheme within its first year.

The scheme, which has been operational since April 2019, continues to make payments on a weekly basis.

In the same period, the Home Office has additionally made offers of approximately £280,000 in compensation through the scheme. Once the offers are accepted by the applicants, the payments will be made.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

By listening to feedback from community leaders and those affected, we have begun to put right the wrongs caused to a generation who have contributed so much to our country.

The Windrush Compensation Scheme has been developed to ease the burden from the unacceptable mistreatment some have faced, which is why it is so important that people continue to come forward.

The payments made under the scheme vary, depending on the facts of the case, with one payment in excess of £100,000. Many payments made so far are interim payments, which means people will likely receive more at a later date.

While the scheme is making good progress and continues to process claims as quickly as possible, the Home Office is committed to getting more people to

come forward and claim.

That is why the Commonwealth Citizens' Taskforce and the Windrush Compensation Scheme are running a series of online engagement events, to ensure those affected continue to come forward and claim.

Alongside these events, the department continues to work closely with communities and individuals to listen to feedback on the scheme and to ensure claims are resolved as quickly as possible. Each case is personal, with careful consideration given to the specific circumstances in every claim.

As announced by the Home Secretary in March, the Home Office will shortly launch a separate £500,000 fund for grassroots organisations to promote the Windrush Schemes and provide advice services. The department will work with stakeholders to co-design the fund.

The outstanding offers of compensation had yet to be accepted by claimants or were going through a review so could not be included in the £362,996 paid out.

All those who have applied to the compensation scheme are then contacted by the Home Office and case workers work closely with claimants to process the claims as quickly as possible.

The Home Office continues its work to right the wrongs experienced by the Windrush generation, which is shown by the fact that over 12,000 people have been provided with documentation confirming their status so far.

In order for a payment to be made, an individual must first accept the offer made. As part of the scheme, anyone unhappy with their offer can request a free internal review. If they still do not agree with the outcome, the claimant can request a further review the Independent Adjudicator.

The Home Secretary extended the Windrush Compensation Scheme to 2 April 2023 to give more people time to claim.

To make the scheme more flexible to those who have suffered losses, the mitigation policy – the criteria by which financial settlements are made – has been amended to take a wider range of circumstances into account.

This change means people are no longer have to show they took immediate steps to resolve their immigration status, instead, simply that they tried to contact the Home Office or sought advice at any time.

Citizens Advice, funded by the Home Office, are continuing to provide free, independent claimant assistance during the pandemic for those wishing to apply to the Compensation Scheme. This can be accessed by referral through the Windrush Helpline: 0800 678 1925.

The Wendy Williams Lessons Learned review was published in March 2020. The Home Secretary made clear in her statement to the House of Commons on the day of publication that the department will carefully consider the detail of the report and its recommendations to develop a comprehensive plan for changing

the ways of working of the Home Office.