

Update on support for Students with SpLd in Higher Education November 2017

Abi James

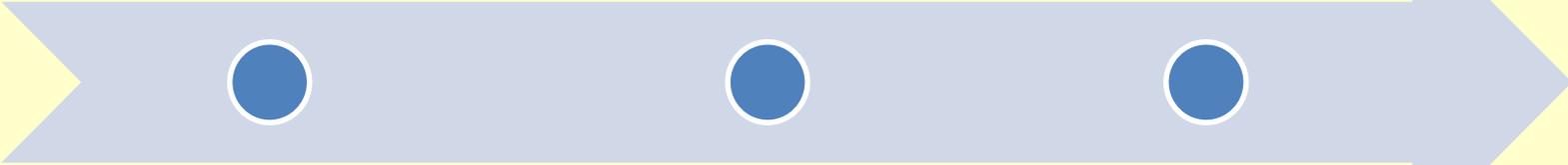
BDA New Technologies Committee

University of Southampton

Timeline of changing support for disabled students funded through SFE

April 2014: DSA modernization announced. HEPs to provide more support through Equality Act responsibilities

Sept 2016: HE providers required to provide areas of support previously funded through DSA



Sept 2015: £200 contribution towards cost of laptop for assistive technologies

Guidance on Inclusive Practices

- HE providers encouraged to develop inclusive teaching learning as part of their anticipatory duties
- First government guidance provided January 2017 by the Disabled Student Sector Leadership Group.
 - Aimed at senior management
 - No involvement of disabled students
- Nov 2017 “Models of support for students with disabilities. Report to HEFCE.” (Williams et al, 2017)
 - Surveys of Higher Education disability service providers and case studies

Impact of DSA Modernisation in England

- 2.8% decrease in students applying for DSA in England in 2015/16.
 - now 5% lower than Wales and NI where the reforms were not introduced.
- 17.8% drop in disabled student's receiving equipment through the SFE DSA.
- A survey of students in receipt of DSA by BATA found that
 - 10% of students did not pay the £200 contribution.
 - Of those that did pay, 30% took over a month to pay the contribution due to a lack of funds.
 - 42% of respondents said this had a negative impact on their studies.

Progress on Universities embedding support

“Most institutions reported high variability in their implementation of inclusive teaching and learning approaches. This results in patchy and inconsistent practice and pockets of good but also poor practice. Institutions therefore highlight the importance of bringing about cultural change and getting staff buy-in as they move to greater inclusion.”

HEFCE report

Example: 88% of HEPs have policies recommending notes available in advance

- 45% available to all students
- 55% only to individual students as part of a reasonable adjustment
- 38% provide notes, reading lists, presentations online

Responsibility is delegated to academic depts. and left up to individual academics to decide whether they will comply

Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: What's Next? (Draffan, James and Martin, 2017)

- Successful inclusive teaching and learning practices involve planning, design, delivery and evaluation of curricula.
- Require sector wide agreement about the minimum expectations for inclusive teaching and learning practices
- Strategic leadership is recognised as essential, but without collaboration with students including those with disabilities, results may not represent the needs of all stakeholders.
- Outcomes on inclusive practices must be open to public inspection
- Training and support to embed inclusion is vital

Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: What's Next?

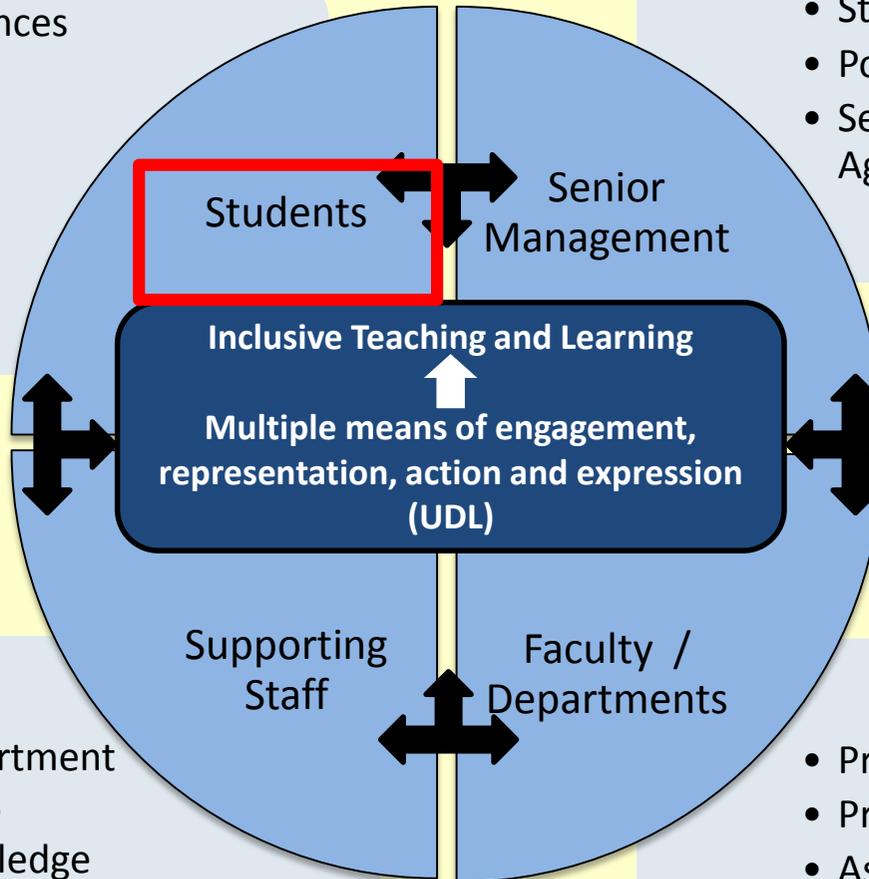
(Draffan, James and Martin, 2017)

- Being flexible, equitable and proactive in the provision of multiple means of curricula presentation and assessment modes.
- Effective implementation and training in use of technologies is required to enhance productivity and enable inclusion.
- Clear pathways for student communication with named personnel The sharing of expertise to support research into evidence of good practice.

Collaborative approach between stakeholders required to embed inclusive teaching and learning

- Share experiences
- Collaboration
- Engaging with Agenda

- Strategic
- Policies
- Setting the Agenda



- Cross department boundaries
- Prior Knowledge
- Training expertise

- Procedures
- Practices
- Assessment

Based on ([Lawrie, et al, 2017](#))

Enabling SpLD students to access support

- Students require to have SpLD report after age of 16 to apply for DSA
 - Many universities also require this for reasonable adjustments
- SpLD reports cost £400 - £600 and are not required to access reasonable adjustments in school, college or the workplace
- SpLD face £600+ cost in order to obtain assistive technology and training
- Perspective students believe support is not longer available
 - HEFCE report recommended “counter myths support is no longer available”

A Review of the Disabled Students' Allowances: Welsh Government, Nov 2017

- Over 60% of students agreed that without DSA support, they would not have been able to complete their study commitments
- DSAs application and awards process is overly complex and time consuming.
 - Recognised SFW operates a 'friendlier' version of the model
- HEPs in England admitted they needed considerable time to implement changes within their institution.
- DSAs remain an essential form of support for students attending HE

Recommendations

- Must be easier for SpLD student to access support, particularly if there is a clear history of need.
- Reduce paperwork and financial burden for the student.
- Higher Education providers should provide easily accessible, clear information detailing support provide at an academic dept. level
 - To aid prospective students
 - To encourage monitoring and ownership across universities
 - To allow for internal governance
- This is available all other stages of education through the SEND information report