

DSA-QAG

Newsletter

June 2017



Welcome

Welcome to the latest newsletter from the Disabled Students Allowances – Quality Assurance Group (DSA-QAG).

Since the last newsletter, we have been busy working with our practitioners (assessment centres, assistive technology service providers and non-medical help providers) to enhance the services to students funded from the disabled students allowances (DSA). This has included:

- Consultations on the Quality Assurance Frameworks (QAFs) for -
 - Assessment centres (ACs)
 - Assistive technology service providers (ATSPs)
- Consultation on revisions to the DSA Computer Specification Matrix – awaiting feedback from DfE to progress
- Published the 2017 -2018 Practitioner Service Level Agreement following stakeholder consultation
- Collection of the 2016-2017 assessment centre annual statistics

Assessment Centres

At the beginning of June, we reported to the Audit and Framework Committee the latest assessment centre performance statistics for the period 1 September 2016 through to 30 April 2017.

Whilst the overall performance related to students who received their assessment within 15 days remains relatively high at 90.6% this is marginally down from 91.1% on the same period last year. As shown on the map opposite this varies by region.

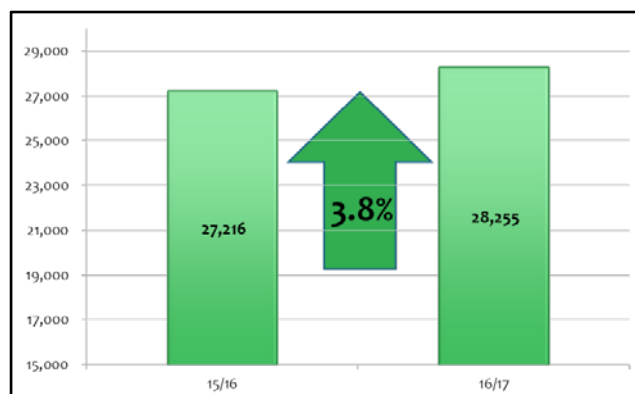


It should be noted that the performance information is based on the region where the main assessment centre is based. Although the performance is high there are a significant number of students who are not given their appointment within the 15 day target. This is broken down as follows:

- Between 16 and 21 days – 5%, this equates to nearly 1,300 students
- Over 21 days – 4%, this equates to just over 1,200 students. The regions where this is most significant are Yorkshire (11%), East Midlands (13%) and North East (18%) (the figures in brackets represents the percentage of the total assessments)

Annual Assessments

In terms of the number of assessments, the year on year comparison, as shown in the graph opposite shows a continued growth, 3.8%, in the number of assessments. Some of this increase is directly related to improved reporting, including paid reviews now being included in the monthly KPI submission.



Each year we request, from assessment centres, the completion of the annual statistical return, this allows us to report assessments carried by HESA code. However, this year we have included ‘unpaid reviews’ and therefore direct comparison with previous years statistics is not possible. Although we cannot compare previous years’ statistics, the movement in the proportion of the totals remain relatively similar. There was a large increase in the number of students who were recorded as ‘no known disability’; the centres concerned have confirmed the numbers are accurate. DSA-QAG has been requested by the Audit and Framework Committee to collect additional information from centres to gather information on the type of students allocated to this category.

Disability	2017 Volume	2017 Percentage	2016 Volume	2016 Percentage	2015 Volume	2015 Percentage
No known disability	210	0.5%	76	0.2%	54	0.1%
Student has Autistic Spectrum Disorder or Asperger's Syndrome	1819	4.3%	1601	4.0%	1269	3.1%
Student is blind/partially sighted	513	1.2%	528	1.3%	502	1.2%
Student is deaf/hard of hearing	681	1.6%	650	1.6%	653	1.6%
Student has an unseen disability, e.g. diabetes, epilepsy	2831	6.7%	2554	6.4%	2591	6.3%
Student has a mental health Condition, such as depression	6587	15.6%	5482	13.7%	4651	11.3%
Student has specific learning difficulty, e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	20775	49.3%	21665	53.9%	24563	59.7%
Student is a wheelchair user/has mobility difficulties	1613	3.8%	1506	3.7%	1365	3.3%
Student has a disability or special need not listed above	929	2.2%	1000	2.5%	1078	2.6%
Student has two or more of the above disabilities/special needs	6190	14.7%	5099	12.7%	4458	10.8%
Totals	42148	100.0%	40161	100%	41184	100%

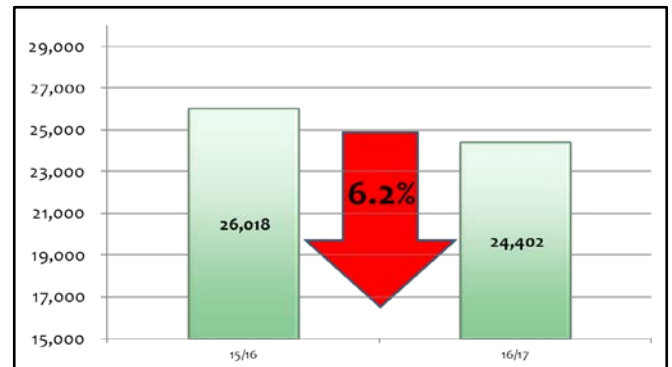
Continued Professional Development

During this audit cycle, the auditors have reported an increase in the absence of evidence from assessors and centre managers to meet the standards required for continuous professional development (CPD). The standards in the QAF have not changed and it is expected that centre managers and assessors are able to provide evidence of undertaking some form of CPD relative to their areas of assessment specialism. In addition to demonstrating CPD in their assessment specialism, there is also a requirement to provide evidence of CPD related to enabling technology and software.

Assistive Technology Service Providers

The total number of orders placed with the ATSP's in the period 1 September 2016 through to 30 April 2017 was 24,402. The graph opposite shows this year's activity compared to the same period last year. The year on year variance indicates a drop of 6.2%.

In the same period, the headline performance of delivering within 10 days of the order being placed remains high, 98% for the period to the end of April 2017 compared with 97% in the previous year.



Non-Medical Helper Providers

The NMH audit programme began in January 2017 and as a result of this, we will be producing a separate update for NMH providers which will be shared with assessment centres and assistive technology service providers.

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DSA-QAG is committed to providing a quality service to practitioners, students and stakeholders. We welcome all suggestions you may have for our consideration.

Please email your suggestion to administration@dsa-qag.org.uk