

Membership Standards for NMH Providers

1. This document sets out the membership standards (**Standards**) with which all Providers on the register of non-medical help (**NMH**) providers for Disabled Students' Allowance (**DSA**) (**Register**) must comply.

Background

2. The Register is managed and owned by the Department for Education (**DfE**). It is hosted on the Student Finance England webpage for NMH Providers at [Guidance for NMH Suppliers \(slc.co.uk\)](https://www.slco.uk/guidance-for-nmh-suppliers). It is also hosted, for reference, on the Student Finance England webpage for assessment centres at [Exchange blog - SFE, Practitioners \(slc.co.uk\)](https://www.slco.uk/exchange-blog-sfe-practitioners).
3. Providers must be on the Register in order to deliver DSA-funded NMH support.
4. Entry on the Register does not guarantee that Providers will be asked to quote for, or receive, DSA-funded NMH work and it is not an accreditation process.
5. DfE reserves the right to update and amend these Standards from time to time and will give reasonable written notice to Providers on the Register of any major changes.
6. Providers acknowledge and agree:
 - (a) it is their responsibility to ensure that their employees or persons registered with the Provider to deliver DSA-funded NMH services (together referred to as **Support Workers**) and other staff comply with the provisions of these Standards and other DSA policies published by DfE; and
 - (b) they are responsible for the acts and omissions of their staff and Support Workers as if they were the acts and omissions of the Provider.

Standards

7. Providers must ensure that they and any Support Workers have the necessary qualifications or professional body membership for the DSA-funded NMH roles that they deliver, as set out in the DfE qualifications matrix at:
[nmh-qualifications-matrix-july2023-updated-sept-23.pdf \(slc.co.uk\)](https://www.slco.uk/nmh-qualifications-matrix-july2023-updated-sept-23).
8. Providers must maintain a comprehensive and up to date statement of interests. This should be submitted to DfE when requested, and any material changes to the statement between returns must be notified to DfE within 10 working days. Further information on managing conflicts of interest can be found in the guidance at [final-conflicts-of-interest-guidance october-2021.pdf \(slc.co.uk\)](https://www.slco.uk/final-conflicts-of-interest-guidance-october-2021).

9. Providers must not advertise themselves as accredited by DfE, SLC or Student Finance England.
10. Providers must comply with any audit requests from DfE. Further information on DfE's auditing programme can be found at [Guidance for NMH Suppliers \(slc.co.uk\)](https://www.slc.co.uk/guidance-for-nmh-suppliers).
11. Providers are required to hold and maintain employer's liability insurance (£5m)¹, public liability insurance (£5m) and professional indemnity insurance (£1m).
12. Providers must:
 - (a) act in a timely and professional manner and devote such time, care, attention and skill as may be reasonably necessary to ensure the students' needs are met; and
 - (b) not act, or omit to act, in any way that may or does cause harm, including reputational damage, to DfE (including DfE staff) the NMH services scheme (including its staff), or any student in receipt of DSA.
13. Providers must ensure that they and any Support Workers or staff comply with all DSA policies published by DfE, as updated from time to time.

Actions available to DfE

14. Non-compliance with any part of these Standards entitles DfE to suspend or remove a Provider from the Register.
15. DfE also reserves the right to suspend or remove a Provider from the Register in other circumstances which will be determined by DfE at its absolute discretion (including but not limited to fraud, misconduct, negligence or incompetence)².
16. The names of Providers or support workers suspended from the Register may be published online and/or notified to all NMH Providers on the Register.
17. Providers or Support Workers will be given the opportunity to appeal a suspension or removal decision. Appeals will be considered by the DSA team within DfE and the final decision taken by a senior manager within DfE.

¹ Sole traders who are not required to hold employer's liability insurance will not be expected to provide evidence of this type of insurance.

² Anyone with concerns about an NMH Provider or its support workers can raise these with DfE by contacting Disabled.STUDENTALLOWANCES@education.gov.uk. Information provided to this mailbox will be treated in confidence. Investigations into concerns raised will be carried out either by DfE or by the SLC, or jointly, depending on the nature of the issue. DfE has sole responsibility for decisions on suspending or removing NMH providers from the Register.

18. There are a range of actions available to DfE depending on the severity of a Provider's or a Support Worker's non-compliance with these Standards. These include, but are not limited to, any or a combination of the following:
- (a) Formal warning.
 - (b) Audit or repeat audit at any time.
 - (c) Recovery of DSA funds.
 - (d) Suspension or removal of Providers or Support Workers from the Register.
19. DfE also reserves the right to report any concerns that DfE has in relation to Providers' or Support Workers' conduct to such third parties as DfE considers is reasonable in the circumstances. These may include, but are not limited to the Information Commissioner's Office, the police, and any relevant professional membership bodies.

Declaration (to be signed by the NMH Provider)

I agree / The Provider agrees to comply with the NMH Standards outlined above	
Signed	
Name	
Organisation (include company number or LLP number, if relevant)	
Date	