



Update to DSA suppliers

July 2022

We wanted to share an update with you on the procurement of supplies and services for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

You may be aware that the first stage of the procurement has now concluded and all potential suppliers who submitted bids have been informed of the outcome. The second stage, the Invitation to Tender (ITT), has commenced with eight bidders moving onto this stage in each lot. The new contractual framework includes four geographical lots with suppliers providing needs assessments, assistive technology, assistive technology training, and the associated support services, in each lot. Moving to the second stage is a mixture of incumbent and new suppliers, including some consortium bids. In the second stage, one supplier can secure a maximum of two lots.

The suppliers that have progressed to the second stage have been invited to a bidders' day event. Following this, ITT submissions are expected by the end of August with presentations to follow in September. Working to these timelines, we expect contracts to be in place in December 2022 with a phased roll-out of the new framework to follow in 2023. We will be in a position to provide a further update on the timeline for suppliers later this year.

On behalf of the Department for Education and the Higher Education Division of Welsh Government, Student Loans Company (SLC) would like to remind suppliers that, while the procurement for DSA supplies and services is ongoing, we expect all companies that have been paid in advance for services to continue to support students during the full period, usually the student's expected course length.

Services, including warranty and insurance costs, are paid from students' Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) grant entitlement and, as public money, must be used for the purpose paid.

With this in mind, we expect students to receive a copy of all warranty and insurance agreements. If these have not been shared with the student, please ensure they receive copies as soon as possible.

If any supplier has any concerns that they are unable to fulfil the services that have been paid for, please contact SLC immediately.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of students in receipt of DSA and patience during the transition to the new supplier framework.