

Skills Disability Support

Instructions on how to apply
for and manage support

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Introduction: the application process

This document is for Queensland Government Skills Assure Suppliers (SAS) to assist them in applying for Skills Disability Support (SDS) and to manage support provided. It should be read in conjunction with the:

- [Skills Disability Support Guidelines](#), which explain who is eligible to receive services, the type of services available and an overview of the technology loan and support services conditions
- [Skills Disability Support Terms of Use](#), which forms the agreement between users of SDS subsidised services and the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT).

Please contact SDS via SkillsDisabilitySupport@desbt.qld.gov.au if you require any assistance with submitting or managing your application.

There are four steps in the SDS application and support management process:

1. Submit application
2. Implement approved services (funding provided as a one-off, upfront grant payment)
3. Submit Bi-annual reporting
4. Finalise application (acquittal/return of any unexpended funds)

1 Submit application

Refer to **Appendix 1** for a visual summary of this step.

1.1 New applications

- The [SDS application form](#) can be downloaded from the DESBT website.
- An application form is required for each student seeking subsidised support.
- Applications should relate to the student's current program of study and identify subsidised support needs from the date of application or future support commencement date.
- Backdating of support is permitted up to 8 weeks.
- Prior to applying, student eligibility should be determined. Students must:
 - have an identified disability
 - be 15 years or over, undertaking DESBT subsidised training and not be a school student
 - not be eligible to receive the same resources through other programs, initiatives or services.
- All students with disability are eligible to apply for SDS subsidised support if they meet the above criteria. This includes students in receipt of a package under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

1.2 Completing the application form

- Refer to **Section 4** for details on how to complete the Evidence of need statement.
- Services are provided as reasonable adjustment to the student. Administration, coordination, staff induction, professional development, infrastructure, accessibility of learning resources and systems, general health or care, general foundation skills needs, course fees and teacher costs are not supported by SDS.
- Specialised support services include professional support workers, assessments of educational support needs and training in the use of technology.
- Student needs should be identified until the end of the current program of study. Subsidised support will only be provided once for a student and may not cover the full program of study.
- The completed application form is to be digitally signed and/or printed and signed by an RTO representative, the student and a parent/guardian for students under 18.
- By signing and submitting the application form, you, the student and the parent/guardian certify that all the information provided is complete, current, true, accurate and not misleading, and that you agree to the current version of the [SDS Terms of Use](#).
- Evidence of disability is to be attached to the application clearly stating the student's disability. For example, detailed medical reports and/or school reports containing specific detail of official diagnosis of disability and supporting documentation. If evidence of disability is not available, an application will not be progressed.

- Attach proof of enrolment to the application identifying:
 - student name and unique student identifier (USI)
 - qualification/course name and code
 - nominal hours of enrolled units
 - the state fund source code
 - start and close of study dates
 - student results to date (if applicable).
- Applications can only be submitted for enrolled students.
- SDS will advise you of the approval status of complete applications within 10-14 business days through an agreement detailing the services approved for implementation.
- Grant payments will then be made via a one-off, upfront grant payment to your organisation's nominated bank account.

2 Implement approved services

2.1 Specialised technology loans

- Upon approval, specialised technology will be sent to you (SAS) on a loan basis. The loan expiry date will be stated in the Agreement.
- The technology must be returned at loan expiry date, at the time of student withdrawal, on request by SDS or as otherwise agreed.

2.2 Technology stocktake and bi-annual electrical tagging

- If you have technology on loan during the annual stocktake (February/March) you will be asked to physically view and verify each item. A stocktake report form will be sent to you requiring the signatures of two employed officers.
- Electrical safety checks on electrical items must be conducted each June and December to ensure student safety. Electrical safety tagging is not reimbursable by SDS.

2.3 Specialised subsidised support services

- Upon application approval SAS are responsible for arranging and managing the subsidised support services as well as managing service quality and any risk associated with engaging personnel to provide the services.

2.4 Monitoring subsidised support services

- As per the *Disability Standards for Education (2005)* SAS are responsible for monitoring students' needs and the ongoing effectiveness of support.

3 Bi-annual report

3.1 Bi-annual report

- Following distribution of approved Agreement and associated grant funding, SAS are required to complete quarterly reports, providing SDS with the outcomes associated with the subsidised support provided to each student who has completed or withdrawn from study during the requested reporting period, plus details for ongoing students.
- Reports are required to be submitted by fourteen (14) days following the request.
- The department will provide a copy of the Bi-annual report noting active students for completion.

3.2 Acquittal process

- Following completion of the Bi-annual reporting process the department will seek the return of any identified unexpended funds.
- Unexpended funds to be returned via transfer/payment of an invoice issued by the department to the relevant financial team/officer.

3.3 Returning technology

- SDS will arrange and pay for courier return of technology items, unless otherwise arranged. Please contact SDS as soon as items are ready to be returned and provide the following details:
 - number of parcels
 - brief description of contents of each parcel
 - weight, length, width and height of each parcel, including packaging
 - date parcels will be ready for courier collection and the times they can be collected
 - contact person, phone number, email and physical address, including block or building name plus any special instructions for the courier.
- SDS will email courier labels for you to attach to parcels.
- Prior to returning the technology please ensure:
 - any personal details or work is deleted from the technology
 - software has been deactivated and fully uninstalled (including deletion from the recycle bin) from any device owned by you, your organisation and the student.

3.4 Feedback

- Feedback about SDS services from SAS, students and employees working with your students is encouraged and can be submitted at any time. Feedback helps to improve the quality and delivery of SDS services.
- SDS may also periodically request feedback.

Appendix 1 – Application process

STEP 1: APPLICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skills Assure Supplier (SAS) identifies need for student support and/or student presents to SAS seeking assistance SAS assess eligibility to meet SDS Program Guidelines SDS support must assist completion of Diploma or Certificate and provide pathway to employment
STEP 2: COMPLETE APPLICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAS downloads and completes SDS application form SAS will be required to obtain student details and signature to enable progression SAS submits completed application to SkillsDisabilitySupport@desbt.qld.gov.au mailbox for assessment
STEP 3: ASSESSMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SDS team reviews application against the SDS Program Guidelines SDS team considers funding and technology requirements
STEP 4: DECISION / NOTIFICATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DESBT considers application and recommendations and makes decision Advice is provided to SAS of outcome
STEP 5: AGREEMENT / FUNDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support Agreement issued to successful applicants noting approved funding support (and if necessary, technology assistance) DESBT provides funding to assist delivery of approved support
STEP 6: DO / COMPLETE / ACQUIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SAS commences support, provides quarterly reports and acquits funds received against expenditure DESBT makes payments, monitors progress and evaluates program outcomes

4. Evidence of need statement

In the statement:

- please include relevant information to help the department understand the student's needs, the learning environment and why the subsidised support services you are requesting will work.
- clearly describe how the support you are requesting relates to the specific challenges the student is experiencing in their learning due to their disability.

Evidence of need fields	Guidance for completing
The student's specific VET challenges due to their disability. Please reference or attach professional diagnoses and/or supporting reports.	<p>As students with disability are not a homogenous group, this field is about the individual student and how their disability is impacting participation in their chosen program of study.</p> <p>Please attach recent medical diagnoses relating to the student.</p>
Describe previous support utilised by the student and its effectiveness (for example, during school or previous tertiary study).	<p>This field is for information on the effectiveness of previous support strategies. This will assist understanding of the type and level of your support request.</p>
What assistive technology has been explored or implemented?	<p>Assistive technology is specialised equipment and software that supports access to and participation in learning.</p> <p>Efficient and effective use of assistive technology can support the development of independence both in training and in employment and should be considered.</p>
What inclusive practices and/or reasonable adjustments have already been put in place? Include information about tutorial and foundation skills support.	<p>This section is for a description of the inclusive strategies that you already have in place such as tutorials, volunteer tutors, foundation skills support, visually based training delivery, extended time for assessments, peer mentoring and the provision of learning resources in alternative formats.</p> <p>These strategies form the foundation for specialised support through SDS.</p>
How will the support you are requesting assist the student to achieve study completion and employment outcomes?	<p>This field is about clearly defining the student's support needs and linking them back to the challenges the student is experiencing.</p> <p>For specialised support services, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tapering support as the student becomes more familiar with course content and the use of assistive technology • peak support periods based on the structure of the program of study (for example, whether support is needed consistently throughout a program or focussed on assessment periods) • how the support (Disability Coach, Disability Support Worker, Mentor/Scribe/Interpreter and/or Interpreter will assist to achieve study completion and • how the support will contribute to the student achieving an employment pathway/outcome.