# Travel funding factsheet for disabled students

This factsheet was created by Lead Scotland. We are a charity which provides information and support for disabled people to learn in post-school settings. The information in this factsheet relates to students studying in Scotland.

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## **Introduction**

We get lots of calls on our [Disabled Students’ Helpline](https://www.lead.org.uk/helpline-calls/), asking us who funds travel to get to and from college or university. The answer is not always simple, so we’ve produced this factsheet to try and make it easier to understand some of the options.

## **Travel training**

If you are starting a new course and do not feel ready to travel on your own, it could be a good idea to get something called **Travel Training.** Different organisations and charities can provide travel training for you.

Travel training might involve things like looking at bus timetables, planning a route, buying tickets and practicing a journey. Lead Scotland can provide travel training within some of our local projects. Please check our [Learn with Lead section on our website](https://www.lead.org.uk/learn-with-lead-scotland/) to see if we have a service in your area or call our Enquiries line on **0131 228 9441**.

Lead Scotland, like most charities, do not charge for travel training. However, you might have to pay for it at some other organisations. If you need funding to help pay for a travel training service and you are aged 16-25, have a look at the [ILF Transition Fund](https://ilf.scot/transition-fund/).

To find organisations providing travel training in your area, you could:

* Do an internet search for ‘travel training for disabled people’ plus the name of area where you live
* Call the [Disability Information Scotland](https://www.disabilityscot.org.uk/) helpline or search their online database
* Contact an Independent Living Centre in your area, like the [Edinburgh and Lothians LCIL](https://www.lothiancil.org.uk/)
* Ask your local social work department at the council if they can provide any travel training

## **Further Education at College**

If you are going to a college in Scotland and doing a course at SCQF Level 6 or below and you live more than two miles from the college, you may be able to get help with your travel expenses. This would be for the same amount as what it would cost to buy a local bus pass. You apply for this at the same time as applying for the main bursary.

If you’re disabled and have additional support needs that prevent you from using public transport, you may be able to access the **Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance (ASNLA)**.

This fund is provided by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) but is administered by colleges. The SFC give funding to colleges and universities on behalf of the Scottish Government.

Contact the college’s supported learning department (it might have a slightly different name) to arrange an appointment to discuss what help and support you will need at college. This is sometimes referred to as a ‘Needs Assessment’. Have a look at our [Preparing for a needs assessment factsheet](https://www.lead.org.uk/preparing-for-your-needs-assessment/).

If you need extra funding to travel to college because you are disabled, then the college might be able to help pay for this from the ASNLA.

The college can provide you with extra funds to pay for things like a taxi to get to and from your course, or petrol so you or someone else can drive you there.

If you already get the mobility element of one of the following benefits, the college will ask you to use this first to pay for travel expenses to and from college:

* Adult Disability Payment
* Child Disability Payment
* Disability Living Allowance for Children
* Disability Living Allowance
* Personal Independence Payment

If your mobility element isn’t enough to cover the cost of your travel, the college have the discretion to top it up, but not duplicate these funds, especially if you were awarded the allowance ***before*** you started college.

There is guidance from the SFC about how the ASNLA should be used by colleges. It is updated every year on the SFC’s website. The [guidance for 2024-25 is available on this link here](https://www.sfc.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/FE-Bursary-Guidance-2024-25-Award-Assessment-2024-25-1.pdf). You can read about the ASNLA on page 22. For subsequent years, do an internet search for ‘SFC bursary award assessment’ and the year, or contact our helpline.

If you are having difficulty with accessing funding to pay for travel expenses, email the college and make reference to the ASNLA.

The college **cannot** pay for a support worker to assist you to travel to and from college. They also cannot arrange specially adapted vehicles for you. Instead, you will need to contact your local social work department to discuss this if it’s something you will require.

## **Social services support to travel**

If you require someone to travel with you to college or university to assist you and keep you safe, you should contact your local social work department and ask to have an assessment of your community care needs. You should also contact them if you require an adapted vehicle. If you are still at school, then this might happen as part of your transition planning. Have a look at our partnership website, [Talking about tomorrow](https://www.talkingabouttomorrow.org.uk/health-and-social-care/role-of-social-services/) to read more about the role of social services and transitions.

You can find the contact details for your local social services department on the [My Gov Scotland website here](https://www.mygov.scot/social-services).

## **Shared transport services**

Some colleges may have a private bus service they provide for some learners in their communities. Ask the college about this.

It may also be possible for a small group of disabled students to arrange private supported or adapted transport to and from college with their local social work department by sharing their care ‘budget’. This would work if there was a group of disabled students living in the same community and travelling to the same college campus at the same time. Ask your social worker and the college if they might be able to support you to arrange this.

## **University or Higher Education at college**

If you are a disabled student studying at university or at Level 7 or above at college in Scotland, you may be able to get help to pay for travel to and from your course from the Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA).

If you are eligible for DSA, then you can apply for help with travel expenses for things like taxis or extra petrol costs, if you cannot use public transport as a result of being disabled.

You can read more in our [DSA factsheet here](https://www.lead.org.uk/disabled-students-allowance-factsheet-2/).

## **Further resources**

Lead Scotland’s enquiries line: 0131 228 9441

[Lead Scotland Disabled Students’ Helpline](https://www.lead.org.uk/helpline-calls/): 0800 999 2568

[Student Information Scotland](https://www.studentinformation.gov.scot/)

[ILF Scotland Transition Fund](https://ilf.scot/transition-fund/)

[Talking about Tomorrow](https://www.talkingabouttomorrow.org.uk/)

[Enquire – Planning for leaving school](https://enquire.org.uk/parents/leaving-school/leaving-school/)

Lead Scotland guides and factsheets:

[DSA factsheet](https://www.lead.org.uk/disabled-students-allowance-factsheet-2/)

[Preparing for your needs assessment factsheet](https://www.lead.org.uk/preparing-for-your-needs-assessment/)

[A guide to the Equality Act for disabled learners](https://www.lead.org.uk/a-guide-to-the-equality-act-for-disabled-learners/)

[Supporting you at college](https://www.lead.org.uk/supporting-you-at-college/)

[Supporting you at university](https://www.lead.org.uk/supporting-you-at-university-2/)