

DSA-QAG

Newsletter

March 2015



Outreach Audits

At the DSA-QAG December board meeting, associate members were informed that QAG would be reviewing the audit booking procedure for next outreach audit cycle. With this in mind, a survey was issued to assessment centres late January 2015, seeking practitioner views on when an outreach audit should be conducted:

- Within 3 months of the main centre audit
- Within 3-6 months of the main centre audit
- No preference

Also, IAC/NNAC representatives requested DSA-QAG to consider introducing and conducting an outreach registration visit as part of the registration process. Views were also sought on this within the survey. 80% of respondents voted in favour of DSA-QAG introducing registration visits. It was also agreed from the survey results that outreach audits would be conducted within 3 months of the main centre audit.

The outreach audit cycle is underway for the 2014/15 cycle. Registration visits have also been conducted for outreach applications which were held due to the moratorium put in place, while the process was finalised.

You will find the finalised outreach registration proposal here - <http://www.dsa-qag.org.uk/outreach-registration-proposal.html>. The proposal includes the timescales from making the application to becoming fully registered by DSA-QAG.

Updated DSA Computer Specifications

A new version of the Computer Specification document was issued to practitioners on 3rd March and is available on the DSA-QAG website via the following link - <http://www.dsa-qag.org.uk/assessors.html>

Assessors must use the updated specification when making recommendations within needs assessment reports.

Key changes in this revision:

- O/S updated to Windows 8.1.
- Removed footnote regarding 'Windows 8 to be supplied where the AT software is compatible'
- Laptop i3 minimum Ivy Bridge processor speed changed from 2.2 to 2.4GHz, to reflect products remaining in the marketplace.
- WKH / Classic 17" removed

- All computer specifications have alternatives to reflect withdrawal of 3rd generation and introduction of 4th generation processors
- Basic Apple specification guidance introduced
- Addition of table 3 - default printer definition and default voice input software headset definition
- 'Standard' packages for desktop and notebooks given more detailed descriptions for keyboard, mouse and laptop stand.

These specifications should be adhered to for needs assessment reports carried out on or after 16/03/2015.

SFE DSA Policy Guidance 2015/16

SFE published on the 27th March, the *DSA Policy Guidance Documents for both new and continuing DSA students for the Academic Year 2015/16*. The guidance can be found via the link below - <http://www.practitioners.slc.co.uk/policy-information/guidance-chapters.aspx>

NMH Provision

On 27th March, stakeholders were informed by BIS/SFE of changes to NMH arrangements for HEIs who operate a single/or preferred suppliers arrangement for NMH support.

As highlighted in the communication issued by SFE, **from 7th April**, assessors must seek two quotes for the provision of non-medical help for any new DSA applicants they assess. This is irrespective of whether the institution involved has an arrangement in place with a single or preferred supplier(s). Existing students may continue with their existing providers for 2015/16 to avoid the risk of any interruption to students' support.

If you are an HEI based centre and have any queries regarding the changes, you should contact SFE direct on dsaqote_exemption@slc.co.uk

Temporary Removal of Practitioner Process

DSA-QAG has recently encountered issues with a small number of practitioners, where timescales for audit action plan points have been exceeded; this is despite several call chasers being placed by QAG.

DSA-QAG want to ensure that there is a fair process in place for all practitioners, as the majority of practitioners meet action plan timescales. You will have will have received a communication on 17th March 2015, giving the following timescales:

- **Audit Action Plan 1st response** – practitioner will be contacted 1 working day after the due date of the action plan (*will be contacted 11 working days after the action plan issue date*).
- **Audit Action Plan 2nd response & above** – practitioner will be contacted 1 working day after the due date of the action plan (*will be contacted 6 working days after the action plan issue date*).

Needs Assessment Report Accessibility

DSA- QAG would like to thank Sight & Sound and Action for Blind People for their assistance in testing version 9 of the needs assessment report (NAR) before the release in November of last year. The NARs can be found in the following location on the QAG website: <http://www.dsa-qag.org.uk/assessors.html>

DSAKit De-registered

We have already informed practitioners that DSAKit are no longer an accredited DSA-QAG Assistive Technology Service Provider. The contact details for DSAKit remain the same, as noted below. Please ensure your team have this information readily available to issue to students, should you receive calls for technical assistance for students under warranty with DSAKit.

IT Services
Bangor University
Adeilad Deiniol
Deiniol Road
Bangor Gwynedd LL57 2UX

Tel:01248 382104 or email: dsakit@bangor.ac.uk



Useful Contacts

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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