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SLC Statistics

Advanced Learner Loans Paid in England, Academic Year 2020/21, August to July Inclusive

Introduction

This statistics publication presents figures on the Advanced Learner Loans (formerly 24+ Advanced Learning Loans) paid to Further Education Providers on behalf of Further Education learners. It covers the payments made in the full academic year 2020/21, August 2020 to July 2021 inclusive and also includes the figures for the equivalent period in academic years 2018/19 and 2019/20 for comparison.

Key points

The number of learners with Advanced Learner Loans paid to their Further Education Learning Provider in the period August 2020 to July 2021 inclusive was 76,200.

The amount paid in the period was £180.2 million and the average amount paid per learner was £2,360.

67,200 (88%) of the learners in academic year 2020/21 are UK domiciled and 9,100 (12%) are EU (non-UK) domiciled.

£147.9 million was paid during academic year 2020/21 (August 2020 to July 2021) on behalf of 56,900 learners starting courses in the 2020/21 academic year. For the same period, £157.0 million was paid on behalf of 62,100 learners in 2019/20 and £171.2 million paid on behalf of 69,500 learners in 2018/19.

Table 1 : Advanced Learning Loans Paid to Further Education Learning Providers on behalf of Learners in England
Academic Years 2017/18 - 2020/21 (Full Year)
Quarter 4 - August to July Inclusive



Key Points

- In academic year 2020/21, Further Education Learning Providers were paid Advanced Learner Loans on behalf of 76,200 learners which amounted to £180.2 million.
- For those learners starting courses in 2020/21 the amount paid in the equivalent period was £147.9 million on behalf of 56,900 learners compared to £157.0 million for 62,100 learners in the academic year 2019/20 and £171.2 million for 69,500 learners in the academic year 2018/19.

Entry Cohort	Domicile of Learner	Number of Learners (000's)	Amount Paid (£m)	Average Amount Paid (£)	Number of Learners (000's)	Amount Paid (£m)	Average Amount Paid (£)	Number of Learners (000's)	Amount Paid (£m)	Average Amount Paid (£)
		2018/19 (as at 31/07/19)	2018/19 (as at 31/07/19)	2018/19 (as at 31/07/19)	2019/20 (as at 31/07/20)	2019/20 (as at 31/07/20)	2019/20 (as at 31/07/20)	2020/21 (as at 31/07/21)	2020/21 (as at 31/07/21)	2020/21 (as at 31/07/21)
2017/18	UK	22.1	35.5	1,610	2.2	1.9	870	0.1	0.2	1,170
	EU (Outside UK)	1.0	1.9	1,900	0.2	0.1	750	-	-	750
	Subtotal	23.1	37.4	1,620	2.4	2.1	860	0.2	0.2	1,140
2018/19	UK	61.4	150.8	2,460	18.2	30.0	1,650	1.8	1.8	1,020
	EU (Outside UK)	8.1	20.4	2,530	2.8	4.8	1,720	0.1	0.1	840
	Subtotal	69.5	171.2	2,460	21.0	34.8	1,660	1.9	1.9	1,010
2019/20	UK				54.5	136.7	2,510	15.6	25.7	1,640
	EU (Outside UK)				7.6	20.3	2,650	2.4	4.5	1,890
	Subtotal				62.1	157.0	2,530	18.0	30.2	1,680
2020/21	UK							50.2	129.8	2,590
	EU (Outside UK)							6.7	18.1	2,720
	Subtotal							56.9	147.9	2,600
All	UK	85.7	188.9	2,200	74.5	168.9	2,270	67.2	157.5	2,350
	EU (Outside UK)	9.1	22.4	2,480	10.5	25.2	2,390	9.1	22.7	2,500
Total		94.8	211.3	2,230	85.0	194.1	2,280	76.2	180.2	2,360

The Entry Cohort is the academic year in which the Learner's Learning Aim begins.
The Learning Aim may continue into a following academic year and loans can hence be paid in academic years after the Entry Cohort year.
The mean average has been used for the Average Amount Paid.
The average loan paid in a subsequent year is likely to be lower than in the entry year because the Learning Aim may not run right till the end of that subsequent year.
Learners may have multiple paid loans but will be counted once in the total number of learners.
The number of learners in Academic Year 2020/21 with multiple paid loans in this or in earlier years is 2,271.

Notes for users

Further Education learners may qualify for an Advanced Learner Loan. These loans help learners to pay the fees charged by colleges and training organisations. Household income isn't taken into account and there is no credit check. Eligibility to repay only begins from the April following finishing (or exiting) the course. The income threshold for which learners would be in scope to repay is currently earnings over £26,575 a year, increased from £25,725 for Academic Year 2020/21.

To qualify learners must be:

- studying with a college or training organisation in England approved for public funding
- enrolling on an eligible course which includes A levels, Access to HE Diplomas and other Diplomas and Certificates. These loans do not cover Degrees or other forms of Higher Education (HE)
- aged 19 or over on the first day of their course (there is no upper age limit)
- usually living in the UK on the first day of their course and have lived in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for three years immediately before this starting their course
- be a UK national or have 'settled status' (this means there's no restrictions on how long they can stay)

More can be found on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk).

The learners who are eligible as EU nationals are shown separately in this publication as EU (non-UK) domiciled. The remainder are shown as UK domiciled.

The amount learners can receive depends on their course, the fees charged by the college or training organisation and maximum amounts set by the Government. Student Finance England will assess a learner for the lower of the fee charged or the maximum funding rate. The minimum loan amount is £300. Learners can take out a loan for the maximum amount to cover their fee or they can pay all or part of the fee themselves. The fee for the course is set by the college or training organisation.

Student Finance England will pay the loan to the college or training organisation once they have confirmed attendance on the course. Attendance is confirmed initially two weeks after learners commence their course and on a quarterly basis thereafter. Payments are made monthly until the learner completes or exits their course. Liability incurs on a monthly basis, therefore if a learner leaves their course, they are no longer liable for future loan payments.

In the case of AS and A-levels, a learner can make loan applications to undertake up to four full A-levels. A full A-level can be studied by a learner enrolling on an A-level learning aim or enrolling

on an AS learning aim and then progressing to an A-level learning aim. Where a learner intends to study towards only an A-level exam they can apply for up to four loans for four A-level learning aims. These applications can be made one at a time or one after the other. Where a learner intends to study towards an AS level exam, not followed by an A-level they can apply for up to four loans for four AS learning aims. Where a learner undertakes up to four AS level learning aims and then decides to progress to up to four full A levels, they can apply for up to four loans for the four AS levels and up to four loans for the corresponding A levels.

If learners are undertaking an Access to HE Diploma and then go on to complete an HE course, the outstanding balance of their Advanced Learner Loan will be written off. To qualify for this write off they must have fully completed both courses. Learners do not need to take out a loan for the HE course. However, the course must be eligible for funding by Student Finance England. The HE course does not have to relate to the Access to HE course that the learners complete.

Policy changes

With effect from 2016/17, 24+ Advanced Learning Loans were renamed Advanced Learner Loans. This reflected the expansion of the scheme criteria to include both learners aged 19-23 on the first day of their course and Level 5-6 courses. The extension to those aged 19-23 does not impact on the legal entitlement to a fully funded first Level 3. Speak to your college or training organisation about any entitlement you may have.

All references in this publication series to 24+ Advanced Learning Loans have been amended to reflect this change.

Related published figures

DfE publishes [statistical series](#) for Learner participation and achievements in Further Education. Data for the full [2019/20 academic year](#) was published on 26 November 2020. The [November release](#) also includes data on loan applications received (including those not yet processed) sourced from the SLC application database, and on the number of learners participating with an Advanced Learner Loan, reported through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR).

The Advanced Learner Loans Paid data published by SLC shows payments made by SLC, whilst the ILR captures learners on a course with an Advanced Learner Loan that started during this period including some where the first scheduled payment date is beyond the payment period.

SLC publishes an annual statistical series for Student Loans Debt and Repayment for England. This series includes Advanced Learner Loans as well as the pre-existing Higher Education student loans. It provides statistics on what happens to the debt after payment (addition of interest, repayments, cancellations etc.).