

SLC SP04/2021

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Coverage: Scotland

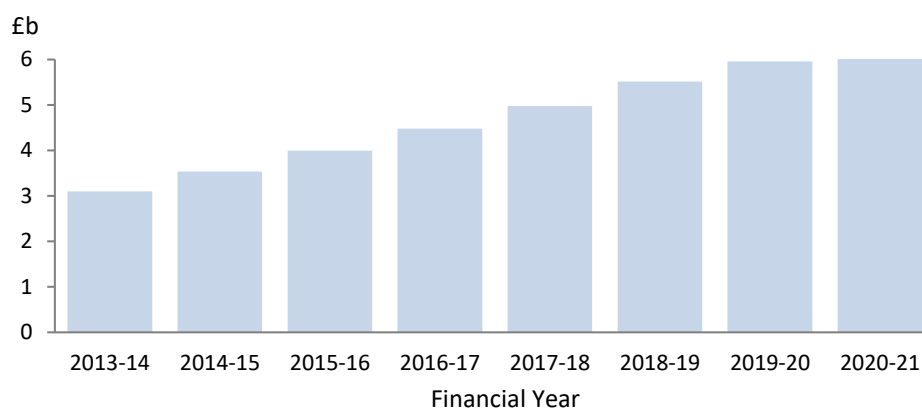
Theme: Children, Education
and Skills

Student Loans in Scotland Financial Year 2020-21

Income Contingent Student Loan Balance

Income Contingent Student Loan balance reaches £6.5 billion for Higher Education borrowers

Figure 1: Total Balance of Income Contingent Student Loans at the end of Financial Year 2013-14 to 2020-21 (£ billion)



Issued by:

The Student Loans Company
100 Bothwell Street
Glasgow
G2 7JD

Press Office:

✉: press_office@slc.co.uk

Public Enquiries:

☎: 0141 306 2000

Lead Official for Statistics:

Louise Miller

✉: information_office@slc.co.uk

Online:

SLC Statistics Home Page

The loan balance for Scotland borrowers reached £6.5 billion by the end of financial year 2020-21. This is a £0.5 billion increase on the previous end-financial year figure of £6.0 billion. *Table 1*

This 8.3% increase is in line with the 8.0% increase evident in the previous financial year.

The loan balance has increased year-on-year as new lending and interest added to existing balances outweighs repayments and write-offs.

Of the total balance, 71.2% are amounts which are liable for repayment. This means that a borrower has passed their Statutory Repayment Due Date (SRDD). This is the point they would become liable to begin repaying a loan, normally the April after graduating or otherwise leaving their course.

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Introduction

This statistics publication presents figures and observations on student loan outlays, repayments and borrower activity for Scotland domiciled Student Loans Company (SLC) customers. This covers students who are studying, or borrowers who have studied in Higher Education (HE) and Further Education (FE) in the United Kingdom (UK). Figures are also shown for European Union students studying in Scotland.

Figures provided here are for Income Contingent Repayment (ICR) Loans administered by SLC, which were introduced in Academic Year 1998/99.

This publication covers financial years up to and including 2020-21.

Complete information on student finance arrangements in Scotland are available at the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) [website](#).

What can you use these statistics for?

These statistics can be used as a reference to the value of the Student Loans Company (SLC) loan book at the end of the financial year, student outlay within a financial year and information on borrower activity and repayment amounts.

The data used in this publication is sourced from Student Loans Company's 'Customer Ledger Account Servicing System' (CLASS). This system only holds information on borrowers who have received funding from SLC. This publication also only includes information on loan products and does not include information regarding grants and bursaries. Under normal circumstances grants and bursaries are not considered repayable.

Due to this, these statistics cannot be used to analyse trends or to draw conclusions regarding the full UK education funding landscape.

Things you need to know

More Frequent Data Sharing (MFDS)

From April 2019 the frequency in which repayments data is provided to SLC by HM Revenues and Customs (HMRC) increased. Before this SLC received customer repayment data, reported by employers, annually from HMRC after the end of the financial year. This increased to weekly. This meant for SLC customers being paid monthly through the Pay as You Earn (PAYE) system, SLC receives information of student loan deductions monthly.

This increase in frequency resulted in a change in time series for repayments and interest applied for the 2019-20 financial year. For the 2020-21 financial year, the time series has normalised with a single years' worth of repayments data being included (those processed by SLC in FY 2020-21).

As a result of the above, inferences into short-term, or longer-term trends are not as straightforward as in previous years and therefore subsequent commentary in these instances may be reduced within this publication. Where relevant, it may be more valuable to compare 2020-21 to FY 2018-19 and commentary regarding overall increases over the two years is provided.

The MFDS Effect on Repayments Data in Financial Year 2019-20

Repayments of Income Contingent Loans are shown in this publication in the financial year they are posted to customer accounts. As SLC were previously notified of repayments by HMRC usually within one year of the financial year ending, the repayments shown in a given financial year (prior to FY 2019-20) were mainly for the year before. The same was also true for the associated interest calculations being applied to these customer accounts.

In the first financial year of receiving this information at a greater frequency (FY 2019-20) more repayments data was evident than in previous financial years. Almost two years' worth of customer PAYE repayments and interest calculations (those processed by SLC in both FY 2018-19 and 2019-20) were included.

HMRC still provide SLC with annual information within one year of the financial year ending, which is reviewed and applied to customer accounts like before. This end of year file will be the end of financial year position for the borrower. This could result in minor adjustments to customer balances. These adjustments will be included in the following year's reporting data.

It should be noted that **this did not adversely affect the borrower's balance** – this effectively brought a more up-to-date representation of loan balances at that point in time

The figures / trends in this publication which have been affected by MFDS are clearly marked throughout this publication but for additional information in regard to MFDS please see [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) webpage.

The MFDS Effect on Interest Rate Calculations in Financial Year 2019-20

The interest applied to accounts, like repayments, is reported within this publication in the financial year it was posted to the customer's account, and not necessarily the year the interest was accrued. For PAYE repayers this is dependent on when repayment information is received from HMRC and thus affected by the introduction of MFDS in the 2019-20 financial year (explained above).

Pre MFDS, PAYE repayment information was received by SLC annually from HMRC for each borrower, usually after the end of the financial year. At this point the account was re-calculated using the repayment information supplied and interest backdated and applied. This would be reported within this publication in the following financial year data.

With the introduction of MFDS and repayments information more readily available, interest is also calculated and applied to the accounts more readily. **This resulted in a change in time series for financial year 2019-20 for interest applied**, as almost two years' worth of customer PAYE repayments and interest calculations was included (those processed by SLC in both FY 2018-19 and 2019-20). The time series has normalised in financial year 2020-21, as this includes just one financial year of repayments information and resulting interest calculations (those processed by SLC in FY 2020-21).

Self Assessment Data

Self Assessment repayment data is supplied from HMRC to SLC via a different process to PAYE. As a result, this will still be provided annually after the end of the financial year (and not weekly as for PAYE customers). This will therefore still show in the financial year in which it was posted to the customer's account, as in previous years. For this reason, financial year 2020-21 will mostly comprise of Self

Assessment repayments data from the previous financial year. This will also be true of the interest calculations being applied for these borrowers.

In Table 1, in previous years we have had to mark the figures relating to Self Assessment repayments as 'estimated' due to this being provided later than anticipated. From 2018-19 this has been provided as expected, allowing this to be included as final figures.

In Table 4A we therefore mark the latest financial year of repayment as 'provisional' as the 2020-21 Self-Assessment earnings information is received from HMRC after the 30 April effective date. The final figure is shown in the following years' publication.

Rounding, Totals and Averages

All borrower numbers and amounts have been rounded to the nearest 100 and £100,000, the nearest 1 decimal point on the data tables given. Average amounts are rounded to the nearest £10. Totals and averages are calculated from un-rounded numbers, these therefore may differ from adding up rounded components.

Effective Dates

The effective dates used in this publication are as follows:

Table 1 and 2: 31 March

Table 3, 4 and 5: 30 April

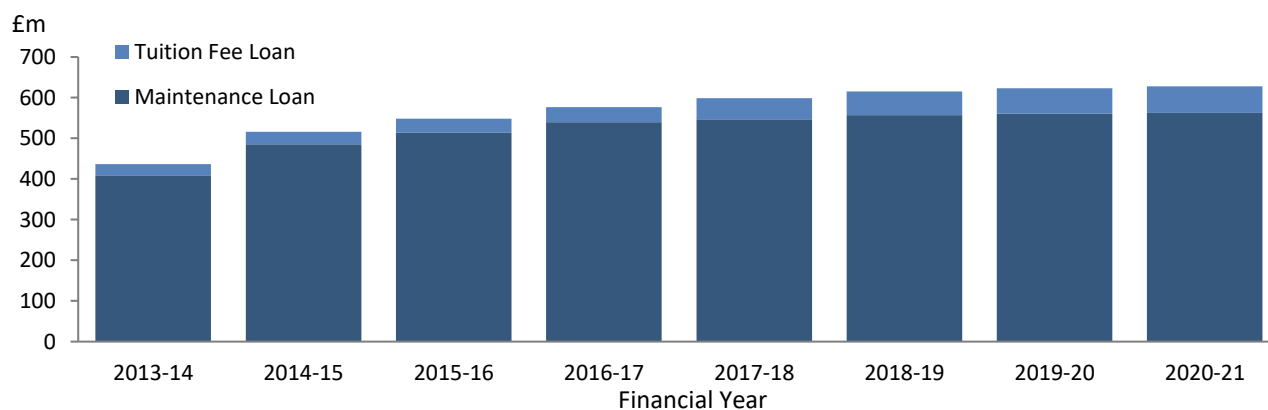
Tables 3, 4 and 5 provide information which requires annual PAYE end of year data supplied by HMRC to SLC, even after the introduction of MFDS. This is received after the financial year ends hence the later effective date.

Total Amount Lent to Student Borrowers

Loans discussed in this section include Tuition Fee Loans and Maintenance Loans for Undergraduates. Postgraduate funding is arranged via the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS).

Amount lent to Higher Education borrowers remains relatively constant at £627.6 million in Financial Year 2020-21

Figure 2: Total Amount Lent to Higher Education Loans Borrowers in Financial Years 2013-14 to 2020-21 (£ million)



The amount lent to Higher Education borrowers in financial year 2020-21 was £627.6 million. This was a £4.5 million increase (0.7%) in comparison to the previous year end position. The year-on-year % increase has steadily decreased since 2015-16, when the amount paid out increased by 6.2% in comparison to the previous year. *Table 1*

A total of £562.4 million was lent to Higher Education borrowers in the form of Maintenance Loans. This was a small increase of £1.5 million (0.3%) on end-financial year 2019-20. This is a lesser % increase than seen in the previous year (0.7%).

In regard to Tuition Fee loans, £65.3 million was lent in financial year 2020-21, a 4.8% increase to that in financial year 2019-20. This is a reduced increase than in the previous financial year, when a further 7.7% was lent in comparison to 2018-19.

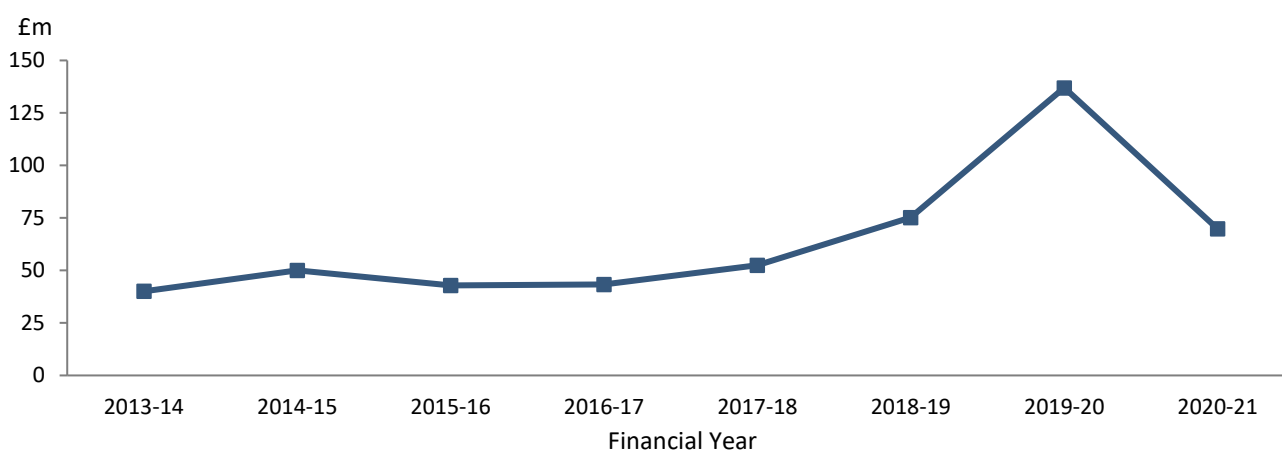
Tuition Fee Loans are administered by Student Loans Company for those studying elsewhere in the UK.

Interest Added to Income Contingent Loans

The interest charge is affected by a cap at the bank base rate of +1%. The interest rate is the lower of the RPI at the preceding March, or 1% above the highest base rate of a nominated group of banks calculated regularly during the year. The interest rate does not affect the monthly repayment amount of Income Contingent Loans; it will affect the time taken to repay.

£69.9 million interest added to Higher Education Loans in Financial Year 2020-21

Figure 3: Total Amount of Interest Added to Higher Education Loans in Financial Years 2013-14 to 2020-21 (£ million)



The greater increase between 2018-19 and 2019-20 was predominantly due to '**More Frequent Data Share**' - the more readily available data provided to SLC by HMRC. This meant that effectively, almost two years' worth of customer PAYE repayments and resulting interest calculations (those processed by SLC in both FY 2018-19 and 2019-20) were included in the 2019-20 financial year. Prior to MFDS, repayments and interest shown in a given financial year were mainly for the year before.

The time series has normalised in financial year 2020-21, as it includes just one financial year of interest calculations (those processed by SLC in FY 2020-21).

As a result of the above, inferences into short-term, or longer-term trends are not as straightforward as in previous years and therefore subsequent commentary in these instances may be reduced within this publication.

Where relevant, it may be more valuable to compare FY 2020-21 to FY 2018-19 and commentary regarding overall increases over the two years is provided.

Interest added to loan accounts in financial year 2020-21 was £69.9 million, £5.3 million (- 7.0%) less than in 2018-19. Interest equates to 1.5% of the financial year's opening loan balance in 2018-19 and 1.2% in 2020-21. *Table 1*

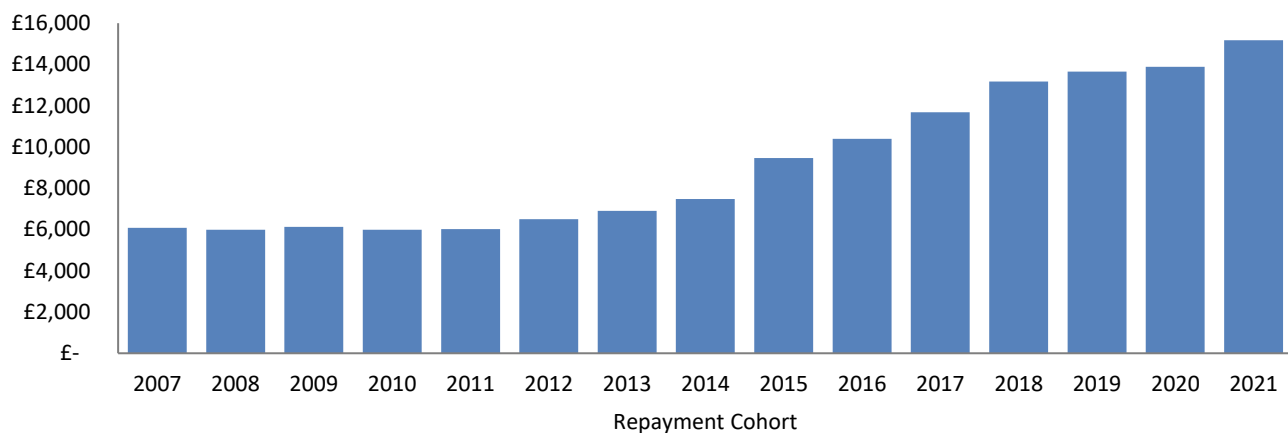
The decrease can be predominantly attributed to the reduction in the interest rate applied to Plan 1 loans in April 2020, reducing from 1.75% (which it had been set at since September 2018) down to 1.1%.

Average Income Contingent Loan Balances

This section looks at the average loan balance for borrowers at the point where their liability to repay first began (usually the April following the completion, or withdrawal from their course). The average loan balance reflects the amount paid to borrowers, plus interest added whilst they were studying, minus any voluntary repayments made by borrowers prior to them becoming liable to repay.

Average Higher Education Borrower's Loan Balance on Entry into Repayment increases to £15,170

Figure 4: Average Loan Balance on Entry into Repayment by Repayment Cohort as at the beginning of the Financial Year 2021-22 (£)



The average loan balance for the 2021 repayment cohort on entry to repayment was £15,170. This is a £1,290 (9.3%) increase on the previous repayment cohort. This is a larger increase than the 1.6% seen in the previous financial year. *Table 5*

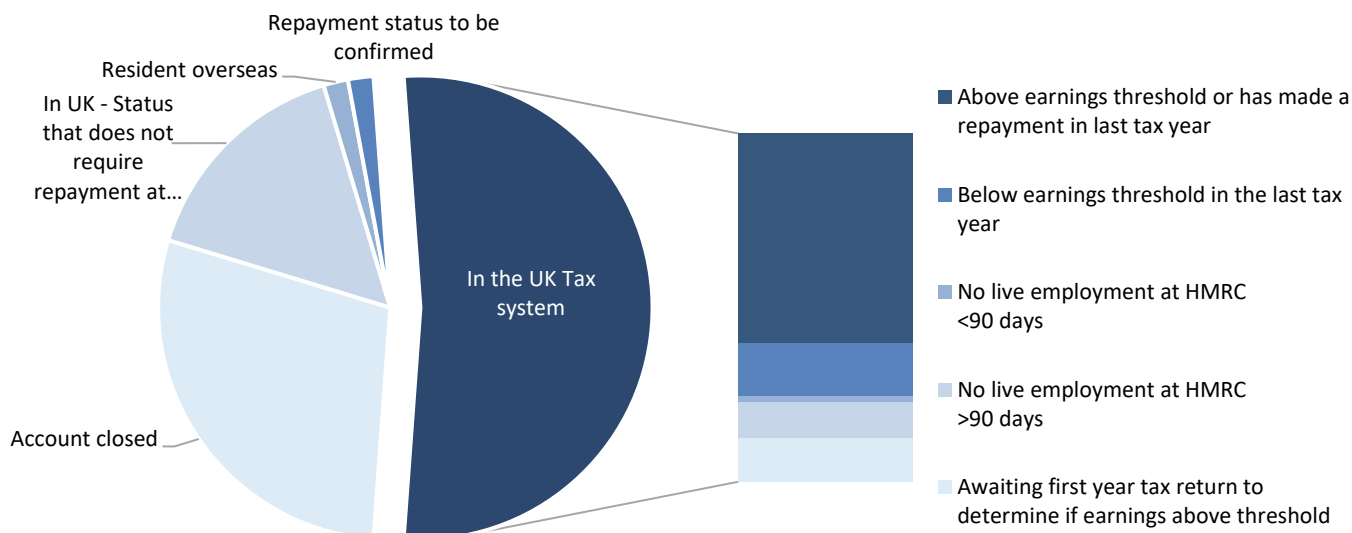
The number of borrowers with a loan balance increased by 2.6% between the 2020 cohort and the 2021 cohort, therefore the increase in the average balance can be attributed to the 12.2% increase in the amount owed.

Income Contingent Loan Borrower Repayment Status

Borrowers are categorised by their repayment status as at the end of the financial year. This status may change throughout the year depending on their circumstances. Until their Loan Balance is fully repaid or cancelled, they can move into and out of any of the other statuses.

59.9% of all ICR borrowers who are liable to repay are in the UK Tax system and 31.4% made a repayment in FY 2020-21

Figure 5: ICR Student Loan Borrowers by Repayment Status as at the beginning of FY 2021-22



The above chart includes all ICR loan borrowers in all repayment cohorts who have become liable to repay as at 30 April 2021.

28.5% of those who have become liable to repay no longer retain any loan balance, mainly due to full repayment. Therefore, of the 639,200 borrowers, 456,800 are still owing. *Table 3*

Included in these figures, is the 2021 repayment cohort. This cohort has been in repayment for less than one month from the effective date of the statistics shown. Therefore, the profile of this repayment cohort is very different to that of earlier repayment cohorts.

'Future Cohorts' shown in *Table 3* are borrowers whose SRDD (Statutory Repayment Due Date) has not been reached and are currently not liable to repay.

The numbers in a repayment cohort can change. Students begin in a cohort based on the length of their course. If they drop out of their course of study, the date from which they are expected to start repaying is brought forward to the April following the date they withdrew from their course.

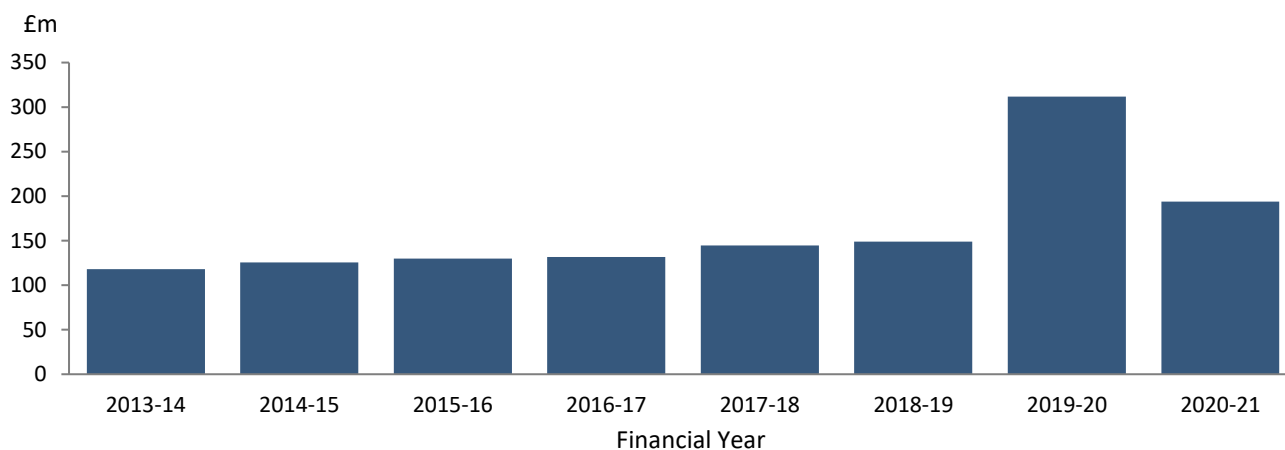
As a result of MFDS, the number of borrowers within the tax system are identified earlier as Student Loans Company are no longer reliant on an annual, end-of-year HMRC file of data to allocate their status.

Income Contingent Loan Repayments

Borrowers normally become liable to make repayments from the April following the completion of, or withdrawal from their course. Repayments are either made via HMRC (either PAYE and Self-Assessment) or directly to Student Loans Company in a scheduled or voluntary basis.

Higher Education borrowers repaid £193.9 million in Financial Year 2020-21

Figure 6: Total Amount Repaid by Higher Education Borrowers in Financial Years 2013-14 to 2020-21 (£ million)



The significant increase between 2018-19 and 2019-20 was predominantly due to '**More Frequent Data Share**' - the more readily available data provided by HMRC. This meant that effectively, almost two years' worth of customer PAYE repayments and resulting interest calculations (those processed by SLC in both FY 2018-19 and 2019-20) were included in the 2019-20 financial year. Prior to MFDS, repayments shown in a given financial year were mainly for the year before. Further detail on 'More Frequent Data Share' can be found [here](#).

The time series has normalised in financial year 2020-21, as it includes just one financial year of repayments data (those processed by SLC in FY 2020-21). As a result of the above, inferences into short-term, or longer-term trends are not as straightforward as in previous years and therefore subsequent commentary in these instances may be reduced within this publication.

Where relevant, it may be more valuable to compare FY 2020-21 to FY 2018-19 and commentary regarding overall increases over the two years is provided.

The amount repaid in respect of Higher Education Income Contingent loans totalled £193.9 million in financial year 2020-21, £45.0 million (30.2%) higher than in FY 2018-19. *Table 1*

87.9% of the Higher Education repayments were received via HMRC and 12.1% were made directly to SLC (split does not take into account refunds made).

For more information on repayment of Income Contingent loans, please refer to the relevant section within **Additional Information** of this publication.

Income Contingent Loan Repayments by Repayment Method

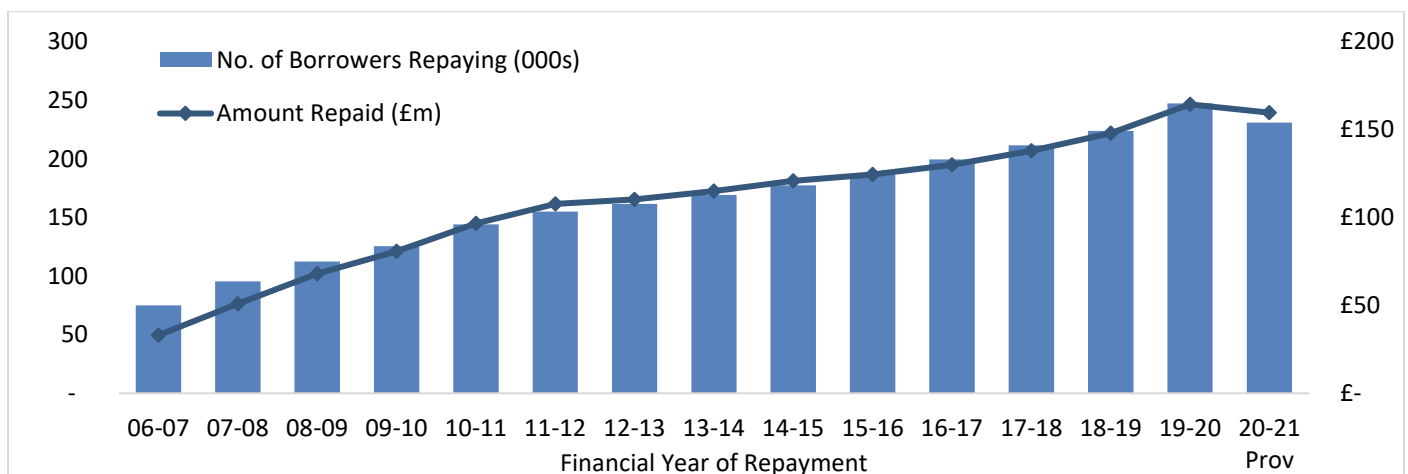
Repayments can be made in three methods, via HMRC (for UK taxpayers who are paid via PAYE or self-employed submitting Self-Assessment), along with scheduled and voluntary repayments which are made directly to SLC (outside of the HMRC deduction system). Scheduled repayments are made by borrowers nearing the end of their repayment term or from those overseas. Borrowers can opt to move onto a direct debit scheme paid directly to SLC to avoid overpayment via PAYE deductions. Voluntary repayments are additional repayments which a borrower can choose to make at any time and can be paid alongside scheduled repayments and those via HMRC.

Provisional figures indicate a potential reduction in the number of borrowers making repayments and the total amount repaid in FY 2020-21

Financial Year 2020-21 saw the first decrease in the number of borrowers who made a repayment and the total amount repaid across all three methods of repayment - via HMRC, and scheduled and voluntary to SLC.

Table 4A in our accompanying excel tables shows provisional figures for financial year 2020-21 for both the number of borrowers who made a repayment via HMRC and the amount repaid. This is marked as 'provisional' due to the 2020-21 Self-Assessment earnings information being received from HMRC after the Table 4A's 30 April 2021 effective date.

Figure 7: Number of ICR Student Loan Borrowers who made a Scheduled repayment via HMRC & Total Amount Repaid by Financial Year of Repayment 2006-07 to 2020-21

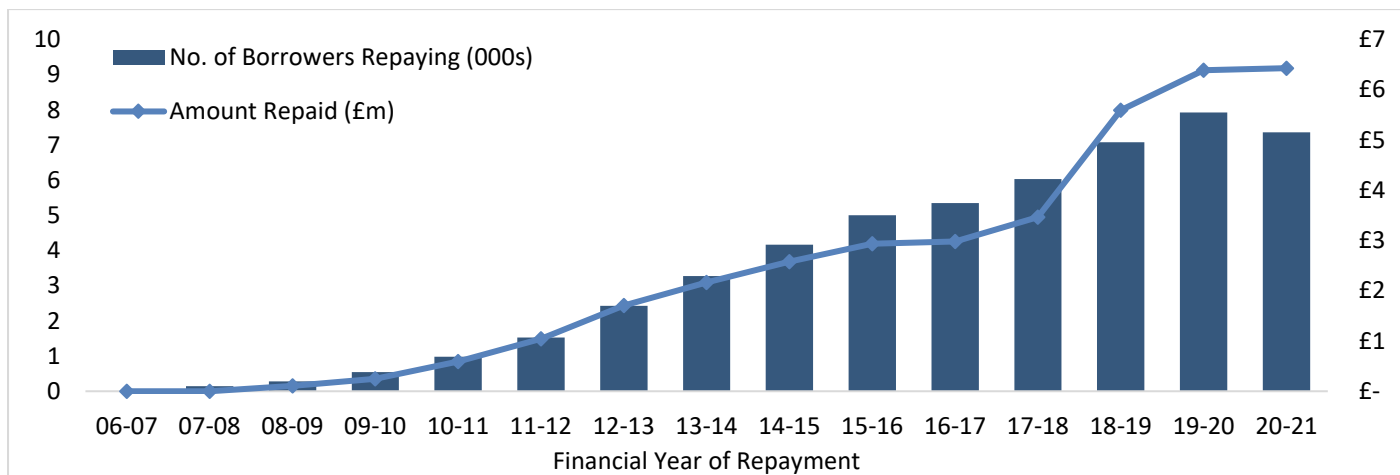


The provisional number of borrowers who made a repayment via HMRC in FY 2020-21 was 6.7% (16,500) lower in comparison to the final figure for FY 2019-20 of 247,400. The provisional amount repaid via this method was 2.9% (£4.8 million) lower in comparison to the final figure for FY 2019-20 of £164.3 million.

The movement between provisional and final figures for FY 2019-20 was an additional 8.0% in regard to the number of borrowers who made a repayment (from 229,200 to 247,400) and an additional 7.1% in the amount repaid (from £153.4 million to £164.3 million). Therefore, whether this is a genuine change in trend in comparison to 2019-20 will not be evident until our next publication release, in June 2022.

The provisional position for FY 2019-20 can be found in the previous year's [publication](#).

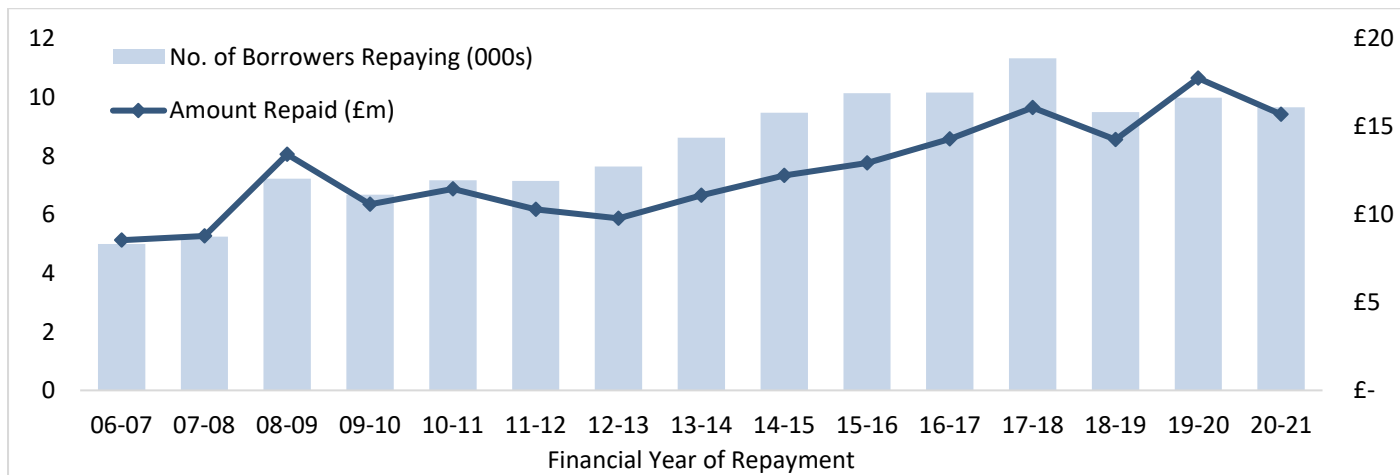
Figure 8: Number of ICR Student Loan Borrowers who made a Scheduled repayment to SLC & Total Amount Repaid by Financial Year of Repayment 2006-07 to 2020-21



The number of those making scheduled repayments has reduced by 600 (7.1%) to 7,400 in FY 2020-21, however, the amount repaid has remained relatively constant (+0.6%) at £6.4 million. Figure 12 indicates the trend since FY 2006-07.

This is the first reduction evident in comparison to the previous year in the number of borrowers who made a scheduled repayment. *Table 4B*

Figure 9: Number of ICR Student Loan Borrowers who made a Voluntary repayment to SLC & Total Amount Repaid by Financial Year of Repayment 2006-07 to 2020-21



As shown in Figure 9, voluntary repayments made directly to SLC are significantly more volatile than scheduled and HMRC repayments, so a reduction in financial year 2020-21 in comparison to the previous year is not necessarily a change in trend.

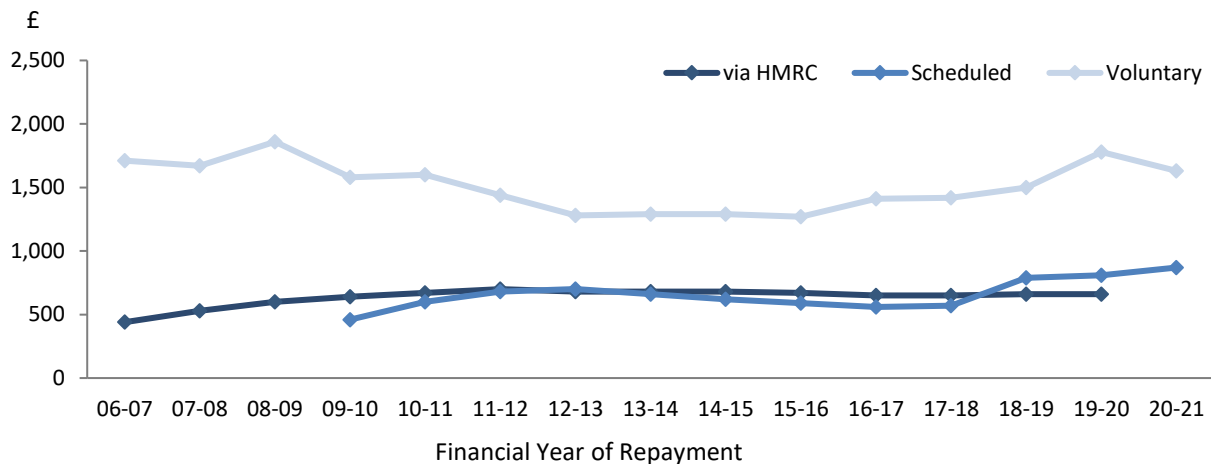
The number of borrowers making voluntary repayments reduced by 3.3% in FY 2020-21, to 9,700 and the amount repaid reduced by 11.6% to £15.7 million.

However, we have seen reductions in previous years. Most significantly, between FY 2017-18 and 2018-19, when the number making voluntary repayments reduced by 16.2% and the amount repaid reduced by 11.4%. *Table 4C*

Average Amount repaid by Repayment Method

Average Amount repaid by ICR loan borrowers via HMRC remains relatively constant at £660 in FY 2019-20

Figure 10: Average Annual Amount repaid by ICR Student Loan Borrowers by Repayment Method £



The above graph indicates the overall average amount repaid by repayment method.

For both HMRC and scheduled repayments, this average includes only those borrowers who have become liable to repay (usually the April following the completion, or withdrawal from their course). For voluntary repayments, this includes all ICR borrowers who made a repayment (including those who are not yet liable to repay).

HMRC repayments for the 2020-21 financial year are not included in the overall average as this is considered 'provisional' until all Self Assessment data is included. This amount will be finalised in the 2022 publication.

Overall average HMRC repayments have remained relatively constant, with an overall decrease of £10 in the last decade and no change between FY 2019-20 and FY 2018-19. *Table 4A (iii)*

FY 2020-21's overall average scheduled repayment increased by £60 to £870 on FY 2019-20. *Table 4B (iii)*

For overall average voluntary repayments, these decreased by £150 to £1,630 on FY 2019-20. *Table 4C (iii)*

For more information on the repayment of Income Contingent loans, please see the **Additional Information** section.

Additional Information

Repayment of Income Contingent Loans

Borrowers normally become liable to make repayments from the April following the completion, or withdrawal from their course. This is their SRDD (Statutory Repayment Due Date).

Repayments are at the rate of 9% of income above the income threshold. The table below shows the change in income thresholds by financial year:

Period Applicable	6-Apr-00 to 5-Apr-05	6-Apr-05 to 5-Apr-12	6-Apr-12 to 5-Apr-13	6-Apr-13 to 5-Apr-14	6-Apr-14 to 5-Apr-15	6-Apr-15 to 5-Apr-16	6-Apr-16 to 5-Apr-17	6-Apr-17 to 5-Apr-18	6-Apr-18 to 5-Apr-19	6-Apr-19 to 5-Apr-20	6-Apr-20 to 5-Apr-21
Annual Income Threshold	£10,000	£15,000	£15,795	£16,365	£16,910	£17,335	£17,495	£17,775	£18,330	£18,935	£19,390

Further details on the calculation of interest can be found [here](#).

Interest Rates and Calculations

Whilst in repayment the annual Retail Price Index (RPI) from March to March is always used as the basis for the interest rate for all types of student loan from the following September to August.

The RPI at March 2014 was 2.5% so the cap was applied from 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015 where the interest rate was 1.5%. The RPI at March 2015 was 0.9% so the cap did not apply between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 where the interest rate was 0.9%. The table below shows interest rate by year:

Period Applicable	1-Sep-12 to 31-Aug-13	1-Sep-13 to 31-Aug-14	1-Sep-14 to 31-Aug-15	1-Sep-15 to 31-Aug-16	1-Sep-16 to 31-Aug-17	1-Sep-17 to 31-Aug-18	1-Sep-18 to 31-Aug-19	1-Sep-19 to 31-Aug-20	1-Sep-20 to 31-Aug-21
RPI @ March	3.6%	3.3%	2.5%	0.9%	1.6%	3.1%	3.3%	2.4%	2.6%
Interest Rate	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%	0.9%	1.25%	1.5%	1.75%	1.75%	1.1%

Office for National Statistics decision on Student Loans

In December 2018 the Office for National Statistics (ONS) reached a decision to partition UK student loans into lending (government assets) and expenditure (government spending) on the Government accounts. Up until this point they had been classed entirely as lending. This decision was implemented in September 2019.

This decision was based on the fact that repayments associated with ICR loans, are conditional on a borrower's future income, and under certain conditions the loan obligation itself may be cancelled. These cancellation conditions are reported on Table 1 and 2 of this publication.

It has been calculated that the treatment of student loans in this manner will better reflect the government's financial position. Government revenue will no longer include interest accrued that will never be paid due to the conditional nature of ICR repayments. Government expenditure related to the cancellation of student loans is also accounted for in the periods that loans are issued, rather than decades afterwards. The ONS decision on student loans has no effect on the figures produced within this publication. Further information on the ONS decision and the methodology used to partition student loans can be found on the ONS website.

Data Sources

This publication uses data from SLC's administrative systems. For details of the administrative data sources used in our publications see the [Statement of Administrative Sources](#).

Data Quality

SLC has published the Quality Guidelines that it follows. As per those guidelines a Quality Plan is produced for each publication. The Quality Plan stipulates two stages of Quality Assurance. Data is extracted from the administrative systems then reviewed using a standard Quality Assurance checklist. The statistical tables created using that data are quality assured using the Statistical Quality guidelines. See our [Quality Guidelines](#) for further information.

Revisions and estimates

Revisions within the data are denoted with an [r]. Further details can be found on our revisions policy. In previous years we have had to mark the figures relating to self-assessment repayment as estimated [e] due to this being provided later than anticipated. From 2018-19 this has been provided as expected, allowing this to be included as final figures.

Related Statistics Publications

SLC publish statistics on the repayment of Student Loans for Higher Education for England, Wales and Northern Ireland as part of the same series this publication belongs to. These are published at the same time as part of the series [Student Loans for Higher and Further Education](#).

SLC also publish statistics Higher Education Funding in the series [Student Support for Higher Education](#) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The latest release of this series was published on the 26 November 2020 covering Academic Year 2019/20.

The Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS) publish details of Higher Education funding in Scotland in their publication Higher Education Student Support in Scotland. The [latest release](#) of this series was published on 25 August 2020 covering Academic Session 2019/20.

Notes on Policy

The statistics on student loans in this release were compiled by the Student Loans Company. They include public sector loans only, which are repaid on an income contingent basis. Student loans are available to eligible full-time undergraduate students and those taking full-time or part-time postgraduate initial teacher training courses. In the four academic years from 2000/01 onwards some other part-time students were able to take out loans, but these were then replaced by part-time course grants and part-time fee grants. From academic year 2017/18 part-time fee loans were re-introduced in addition to the above grants.

Tuition fees were abolished for Scottish students studying in Scotland from Autumn 2000. The Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) pays tuition fees for full-time eligible students studying at publicly funded institutions in Scotland.

The graduate endowment was introduced for higher education students who commenced studying in 2001. The graduate endowment was a one-off payment made in recognition of the benefits of higher education and the income generated will be used to contribute to student support for future generations. Some students were not liable to pay the graduate endowment as a result of personal circumstances during their course. These included mature students, lone parents, students with a disability and those students who do not progress beyond a Higher National Certificate or Higher National Diploma qualification. The Graduate Endowment could be paid in three ways, by paying the full amount in cash, by taking a student loan or by a combination of paying part cash and part by student loan. Amounts lent for Graduate Endowment shown in Table 1 from financial year 2011-12 onwards represent the notification by SAAS of amounts advanced in respect of earlier academic years (prior to abolition of the graduate endowment).

On the 13 June 2007 the as then Scottish Executive announced plans to publish a bill for parliament to remove the graduate endowment fee for students who graduated from 2007 onwards and would therefore have been liable to pay the endowment on 1 April 2008. The Graduate Endowment Abolishment (Scotland) Act 2008 came into force on 1 April 2008 for all students who graduated on or after the 1 April 2007. Therefore, financial year 2007-08 was the last year that student loans for graduate endowment were taken out. There was an exception for postgraduate students who had previously deferred payment of the graduate endowment and these loans carried over into financial year 2008-09.

Students with additional costs such as those with dependents, or those who have a disability, may be eligible for specific grants on top of other student support. These grants are distributed by SAAS, with the exception of the Lone Parents' Childcare Grant which has been distributed by institutions since academic year 2011/12.

Up until academic year 2012/13 the Tuition Fee Loans were just for Scottish domiciled students studying elsewhere in the UK. Eligibility was extended in academic year 2012/13 with the introduction of the postgraduate tuition fee loan scheme which covers eligible EU and Scottish domiciled students on selected taught postgraduate diploma courses in the UK, excluding PGDE.

New postgraduate Scottish domiciled and EU students can apply to SAAS for a Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan (PTFL) from April 2012. In that first year 2012/13, full-time students could apply for a tuition fee loan of up to £3,400 and part-time students can apply for up to £1,700 (per year). The PTFL is only available to part-time students who are undertaking at least 50% of a full-time course, and must therefore, complete their qualification in no more than 2 years. In 2018/19, full-time students were eligible for up to £5,500 and part-time students up to £2,750.

National Statistics

This is a National Statistics publication. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

This publication series was awarded National Statistics status in October 2011 following a full assessment against the Code of Practice, which can be found on the Statistics Authority [website](#). Tables 3, 4 and 5 were awarded National Statistics status in April 2014 having initially been assessed as a separate publication, which can also be found on the [website](#). These tables were subsequently merged into this publication.

Since the assessments by the Office for Statistics Regulation we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made several improvements including the following:

- **Direct repayments** – From 2017 onwards we have included tables to show borrower numbers for borrowers repaying directly to SLC. In 2018 we disaggregated these tables further to show borrower numbers for those making scheduled and voluntary payments.
- **Cross Country Comparisons** – First introduced in 2014, providing a cross country comparison of total debt, average debt on entry into repayment and average annual repayment amount.

Definitions

Account repaid in full	The borrower has repaid the account in full without it being cancelled or written off. It includes accounts with trivial balance write-offs.
Cancelled loan	The borrower no longer has any liability to repay as provided for in the loan's regulations. An ICR borrower's liability shall be cancelled: On the death of the borrower; When, in the case of pre-2007 student loans, age 65 is reached; When, in the case of post-2007 student loans, the 35th anniversary of the date on which the borrower became liable to repay the student loan; or If/when the borrower is disabled and permanently unfit for work
Entered repayment status / in repayment status	The borrower has reached the point where repayment is scheduled to commence, that is, the April after he/she graduates or leaves his/her studies.
In Arrears	Borrowers who have at least one loan on which repayments are overdue. Arrears arise when a borrower moves overseas and fails to repay SLC according to their repayment schedule. Additionally, any borrower who moves overseas and fails to provide the information required to agree the appropriate repayment schedule will also be placed in arrears.
Income Contingent Loan	Also known as Income Contingent Repayment (ICR) Loan. Introduced in 1998, repayment is 9% of income above the income threshold. Includes ICR maintenance loans, tuition fee loans, hardship loans and part-time loans. Hardship loans and part-time loans ceased to be issued after academic year 2003/04.
Income Threshold	The income level at which borrowers liable to repay will make repayments. In the case of repayments deducted by employers under Pay As You Earn (PAYE) the term "earnings threshold" is also used.
Net repayments	Repayments minus refunds of repayments.
No live employment at Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC)	Borrowers in the UK tax system where HMRC does not have a record of any current employment when the data cut is taken for these statistics and SLC does not yet have information to determine an alternative status.
Overdue Debt	That part of the Loan Balance that is overdue for those borrowers who are in arrears.
Refunds of income contingent repayments	Where over-repayment is identified, a refund is provided to the customer by SLC.
Repayment Cohort	A borrower is placed in a single repayment cohort. In some circumstances the repayment cohort may change, i.e. withdrawal from course of study. The repayment cohort is based on the year of the earliest Statutory Repayment Due Date (SRDD). See definition of SRDD below.
Statutory Repayment Due Date (SRDD)	The point a borrower becomes liable to begin repaying a loan: the April after graduating or otherwise leaving their course. After the SRDD borrowers are required to make repayments if their income is above the threshold.

Written off loan	The borrower remains liable to repay but recovery is deemed unlikely by the loan administrator or not possible by legal judgement.
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