



Ministry
of Justice

Legal aid statistics in England and Wales

Guide to LAA CSVs

General

The information provides the user with breakdowns of Legal Aid data from April 2000 in some areas but also quarterly for the last five year where possible. The aim is to maximise the usage of data by users so analytical work can be carried out independently.

The data is provided in a comma separated value (CSV) machine-readable format so that it can easily be imported into analytical software packages. These packages include R, Access, SQL, SAS, up-to-date versions of Excel but not versions of Excel prior to 2010 (because of insufficient number of rows). This format enables the user to manipulate and aggregate the published data in different ways.

Figures displayed may differ from previously published due to improvements in data processing.

Below are full descriptions of the variables and the list of possible values for each dataset provided.

Each data-set has the following standard variables:

fin_yr: This is the financial year to which the data relates e.g. 2009-10 would refer to April 2009 to March 2010.

fin_qtr: Each year is divided into four quarters and this is the quarter to which the data relates. These are based on financial years:

fin_qtr	description
1	April to June
2	July to September
3	October to December
4	January to March

scheme: This outlines the broad scheme of LAA statistics the data falls within.

Scheme	description
Crime Lower	This area covers pre-charge, the early court system and prison assistance. It covers work carried out by legal aid providers at police stations and in magistrates' courts in relation to people accused of or charged with criminal offences. Prison law is also included within the latter category.
Crime Higher	Information is provided on legal representation in the Crown Court and above. This includes, Crown Court cases (typically solicitor prepares case for trial and barrister or solicitor advocate provides representation), Very High Cost Cases (extensive evidence reviewed and case prepared by solicitor where the senior counsel (QC) often presents)
Legal Help	This is a form of civil legal services which includes advice and assistance about a legal problem, but does not include representation or advocacy in proceedings. It is usually the first point of civil legal advice and covers help via telephone, face-to-face and not for profit centres.
Mediation	Family mediation allows a neutral mediator help the parties to reach a mutually acceptable compromise while conciliation gives the mediator the power to suggest grounds for compromise. Those in mediation may have also required Legal Help in the first instance and after mediation may result in Civil Representation in court.
Civil Representation	Civil Representation is representation by solicitors and barristers for civil cases, which could go to court. Many legal help cases will extend to civil representation with full investigations undertaken or in court representation given although it is possible enter straight into civil representation.
Appeals	Covers the appeals decisions against Civil Representation decisions, appeals against the decision to award legal aid and exceptional case funding applications and outcomes.
Barrister Payments	Covers the annual barrister payments dataset with a row for each advocate and payments made via LAA and the CPS

Crime Lower: there are five main categories within this scheme:

category	description
Pre-charge suspects	<p>Anyone in England and Wales interviewed by the police or attending a police station can receive advice funded by legal aid either via the telephone or by a solicitor in attendance with the suspect. This includes advice on rights and options pre-charge, relating to pre-charge; or applications to extend detention.</p> <p>The LAA has limited control over the volume of police station claims. Increases or reductions in the number of police officers may change the number of arrests, charges and cautions.</p>
Charged defendants	<p>Legal aid providers carry out work at magistrates' courts in relation to people accused of or charged with criminal offences; this includes solicitor preparation for appearance or trial and representation within the magistrates' court, often by a solicitor advocate or junior barrister.</p>
Representation at Magistrates' court	<p>Legal aid providers carry out work at magistrates' courts in relation to people accused of or charged with criminal offences; this includes representation within the magistrates' court, often by a solicitor advocate or junior barrister.</p> <p>Figures include Court duty solicitor sessions</p>
Prison law	<p>This is advice for prisoners relating to their treatment or discipline in prison (e.g. parole hearings) and their progression through the prison system.</p>
Legal Aid grants	<p>The figures for the number of applications and volume of those granted legal aid in the lower courts</p>

sub_categories: The variables

sub_cat1, sub_cat2 and **sub_cat3** provide extra detail regarding the type of case, and are specific to the preceding category.

sub_cat4, 5 and **sub_cat6** are not applicable to this scheme.

count: This provides the sum of distinct cases in each quarter based on the sub_cat3, except where stated; i.e. Court duty solicitor sessions where the number of claims is provided. Please note that if a case spans over multiple months it will count more than once, e.g. if a case spans over April and May and is billed in both months, it will contribute a count of 2 to the total number of cases, although this only affects a small proportion of cases.

value: This provides the sum of the value of claims within the category. This value includes VAT.

Crime Higher: there are five main categories within this scheme:

category	description
Advocate Graduated Fee Scheme	The fee scheme which governs fees paid to advocates (barristers or solicitor advocates) who represent clients in criminal proceedings in the Crown Court, other than in cases which have been classified as very high cost (Criminal) cases.
Litigator Graduated Fee Scheme	The fee scheme which governs fees paid to solicitors who represent clients in criminal proceedings in the Crown Court, other than in cases which have been classified as Very High Cost (Criminal) Cases.
High Cost Crime	The Complex Crime Unit manages all Very High Cost Cases under a criminal legal aid contract and this provides the volume, expenditure,
Higher Courts	The volume and associated expenditure within the Crown Court for Proceeds of crime and escapes from the graduated fee schemes and the same for the Court of appeal, senior court costs office and supreme court
Legal Aid Grants in higher courts	The figures for the number of applications and volume of those granted legal aid in the Crown Court

sub_categories: The variables

sub_cat1, sub_cat2 and sub_cat3 provide extra detail regarding the type of case, and are specific to the preceding category. Including offence type, type of case (trial, guilty plea etc)

count: This provides the sum of cases closed in each quarter

value: This provides the sum of the value of claims within the category. This value includes VAT.

Legal Help: there are two main categories within this scheme:

category	description
Matters started	This is the number of new starts within this scheme, it covers new starts from solicitors, Not for Profit organisations (NFPs), specialist telephone advice service, and previously Community Legal Advice Centres (CLAC).
Other work starts	This is the number of work starts for Housing possession court duty scheme and Telephone operator service.
Matters completed	This is the number of reported matters completed, this covers completions from solicitors, Not for Profit organisations (NFPs), telephone advice service and previously Community Legal Advice Centres (CLAC).
Other work completed	This is the number of determinations completed by the specialist telephone advice service.

sub_categories: The variables

sub_cat1 outlines the type of provider. The current status of the provider at the time of the report being run is used to classify all of the provider's cases, albeit of the status of the provider when the case was actually undertaken.

sub_cat2, and **sub_cat3** provide detail regarding the category of law.

sub_cat4 is only applicable to matters completed and other work completed (solicitors, NfPs and specialist telephone advice service) and provides information on outcomes.

sub_cat5 and 6 are not applicable to this scheme

count: This provides the number of cases in each quarter.

value: This provides the sum of the value of claims within the category. This value includes VAT. This is only available in matters completed (solicitors and NfPs and from 2010-11 specialist telephone advice service).

Mediation: there are three main categories within this scheme:

category	description
Mediation assessments	This is the number of assessments
Mediation starts	The number of full mediation starts after the assessment
Mediation outcomes	The outcome of the mediation

sub_categories: The variables

sub_cat1 outlines the type of assessment or mediation.

sub_cat2 provides the outcome of the mediations

sub_cat3 the overall agreement status reached

sub_cat4 to 6 are not used in this scheme

count: This provides the number in each quarter.

value: This provides the sum of the value of assessments completed and outcomes of mediations within the category. This value includes VAT.

Civil Representation: there are four main categories within this scheme:

category	description
Civil Representation applications received	Volume of applications received
Civil Representation Granted	Volume of applications that received a certificate of representation including those granted under emergency provisions
Civil Representation Closed - cost met by LAA	The volumes and expenditure for those receiving Civil Representation with all costs met by LAA
Civil Representation Closed - cost met by opponent	The volumes and expenditure for those receiving Civil Representation with costs met by the opponent.

sub_categories: The variables

sub_cat1 and **sub_cat2** provide extra detail regarding the type of case, and are specific to the preceding category.

sub_cat3 provides a flag for those cases deemed high cost (over £25k).

sub_cat4 and **sub_cat5** provide further information on the outcome of representation and the benefit received by the client

sub_cat6 provides a flag for those cases dealt with under Judicial Review and for those cases that have provided evidence to support their application covering child abuse or domestic violence.

count: This provides the workload number

value: This provides the sum of the value of claims within the category. This value includes VAT.

Appeals: there are three main categories within this scheme:

category	description
Appeals against representation provided	Provides volumes regarding appeals against decisions made to award legal aid representation
Civil Representation appeals	Provides volumes regarding appeal decisions whether financial or legal appeals against certification rulings
Exceptional Case Funding	Covers timeliness and volumes of applications received in respect of exceptional case funding.

sub_categories: The variables

sub_cat1-5 provide extra detail regarding the type of case and

sub_cat6 is not applicable.

count: This provides the sum of work completed in each quarter or financial year where appropriate.

value: This only applies to exceptional case funding category and provides length in **days** that the decision took and not any associated payments as per other schemes.

Barrister Payments: this is standalone CSV released annually

category	description
Barrister payments	Provides payments provided to each barrister for a financial year covering their payments from LAA and CPS

Further categories: The variables

Year	Either 2012-13 or 2013-14
agfs fee scheme	Amount of payments under the LAA advocate graduated fee scheme
cps	Amount of payments under CPS fee scheme
mags	Payment made for magistrates' court work in LAA
vhcc direct	Payment made directly to advocates for high cost cases
vhcc non-panel	Payments made via solicitor firms for high cost cases that are then provided to named advocate
civil	Payment made for civil work under LAA scheme
total	Total of all payments made
vhcc total non-panel payments)	Total of all high cost case payments made (direct and non-panel payments)
band	The grouping of total payment into £50k payment bands

The following variables only exist for 2013-14

cpsvat	VAT amount paid under CPS scheme
laacrimevat	VAT amount paid under all LAA schemes except civil and high cost case paid under non-panel
laacivilvat	VAT amount paid for LAA civil scheme
disbursements payments	Disbursements paid under AGFS and direct VHCC payments

Diversity CSV:

Only available annually

The diversity data-set provided covers all of the areas of legal aid. This CSV has been specifically developed to support the chapter “Clients of legal aid” in the “Legal Aid Statistics in England and Wales”. It is meant to provide users with information on the diversity of our clients only, it should not be used to look at the workload of the LAA. The age, gender, ethnicity and disability of the client has been provided in the broad categories of crime lower, crime higher, legal help and civil representation. Please see notes below on the specific areas covered.

Data where there is no reported diversity information on the client are excluded from the dataset. The user should note that the number of cases that result from some breakdowns may be quite small. Where the value is actually less than 3, the value is given as 0, to protect the confidentiality of those involved in the claim, order, warrant or repossession. For this reason, the national total number of cases, etc from these data-sets may not match the total shown in the main tables although the differences are generally small.

Crime lower:

Crime Lower data are taken from the Contracted Work and Admin (CWA) system and supported with information from the Means Assessment Admin Tool (MAAT) giving information on the granting of legal aid.

Gender, ethnicity and disability information are collected from the CWA system and reflect all clients in Crime Lower except those from the CDS direct telephone advice scheme. The data from this scheme are taken from a different system and demographic information on these clients are not available. The information on age is reported from MAAT and covers only the subset of clients who are means tested.

As information is sourced from two different systems it is not possible to combine the information. Therefore care must be taken when looking at the diversity of Crime Lower clients as there is an overlap in the way the data is displayed.

Crime Higher:

Crime Higher data are taken from the Means Assessment Admin Tool (MAAT) giving information on the granting of legal aid. Gender, ethnicity and disability and age are reported from MAAT and covers only the subset of clients who are means tested.

Legal help:

Diversity information is only provided on solicitor and NfP clients of Legal help. The information of these two providers are reported from the CWA system and can be broken down by age, gender, ethnicity and disability.

Civil Representation:

Civil Representation data are taken from the Corporate information store (CIS) giving information on the certificates granted for representation in the Civil area. Gender, ethnicity and disability and age are reported from CIS.