



Skills Funding
Agency

Maximum Loan Amounts for Advanced Learner Loans Designated Qualifications 2016 to 2017

Version 1

This document sets out the methodology for establishing maximum amounts for Advanced Learner Loans designated qualifications. It also confirms the maximum amounts for the funding year 2016 to 2017.

February 2016

Of interest to providers and employers delivering provision funded by learners through
Advanced Learner Loans

Introduction

1. The Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, acting through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), designates the qualifications eligible for funding with Advanced Learner Loans (Loans). A designated qualification is one that has been through the SFA's nomination process and meets the criteria detailed in **Advanced Learner Loans Prospectus 2015 to 2016 and 2016 to 2017: Designating Qualifications.**
2. This document describes the methodology for establishing maximum Loan amounts for designated qualifications. It confirms what the maximum Loan amounts are for all designated qualifications, where learners start these qualifications between 1 August 2016 to 31 July 2017 (inclusive). These maximum Loan amounts will apply for the full duration of a designated qualification, including if it extends into the 2017 to 2018 funding year or beyond.
3. The maximum Loan amounts set out in this document will not change throughout the funding year.

Designated qualifications

4. The types of further education qualifications designated by the SFA include the following:
 - AS-levels and A-levels (up to a maximum of four full A-levels)
 - Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) Access to HE Diplomas
 - vocational qualifications and technical and professional qualifications that are part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) at Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6

Maximum Loan Amounts

Establishing the maximum Loan amount

5. There is a single set of maximum Loan amounts for all designated qualifications, no matter how you deliver these qualifications. If we set a maximum Loan amount for a qualification in the funding year 2015 to 2016, this maximum amount will remain the same in 2016 to 2017. For more information on how the maximum Loan amounts were set in the funding year 2015 to 2016, please refer to **Funding Rates for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans designated qualifications 2015 to 2016.**

6. We use a 'matrix' (table) to set maximum Loan amounts. The matrix contains two criteria to decide the appropriate amount for each qualification:
 - a. The size and type of the qualification.
 - b. The programme weighting for the qualification.

7. Note the following exceptions where we set the maximum Loan amounts as a matter of policy:
 - GCE AS-levels
 - GCE A-levels
 - Access to HE Diplomas
 - five specialist dance and drama diplomas

8. The same policy exceptions apply in the funding year 2015 to 2016 as they do in 2016 to 2017 and have the same maximum amounts.

Size and type of the qualification

9. We used the qualification's credit value to define the size of the qualifications to help set the maximum Loan amount in the funding year 2015 to 2016. If this was not available, we used regulated guided learning hours (GLH) from Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications.

10. Where we did not set the maximum Loan amount in the funding year 2015 to 2016, we used Ofqual's Register of Regulated Qualifications to define the size of the qualifications by their regulated GLH. Where we do not have GLH we will use regulated total qualification time (TQT).
11. Designated qualifications must be a minimum of 150 GLH. In exceptional circumstances, we may consider qualifications that are 130 to 149 GLH. For further information, please refer to **Advanced Learner Loans Prospectus 2015 to 2016 and 2016 to 2017: Designating Qualifications.**

Programme weightings

12. Programme weightings recognise the relative costs of providing training in different sectors and subjects and are included within maximum Loan amounts.
13. To set programme weightings, we refer to the sector subject area (SSA) detailed in the annex to this document. We have also set a limited number of exceptions. The awarding organisation decides the SSA for all qualifications as part of the accreditation or regulation process. For further information, please refer to Ofqual's **Register of Regulated Qualifications** and the **Quality Assurance Agency** website.

The Matrix

14. The 'matrix' in Table 1 shows the maximum Loan amounts for designated qualifications in 2016 to 2017. The 'Qualification size (in credits)' column is for those qualifications that we set a maximum Loan amount for in the funding year 2015 to 2016. It is for information only; we do not use it in the funding year 2016 to 2017.
15. The rows represent the size of the qualification (in GLH or TQT) or type of qualification (AS-level, A-level or Access to HE Diplomas). The GLH bandings are the same as in the funding year 2015 to 2016.
16. The columns represent programme weighting category, associated with the SSAs and described in the annex to this document.

Table 1: Maximum Loan Amounts.

Qualification size (in GLH/TQT) or type	Qualification size (in credits)	Maximum Loan amount according to programme weighting				
		A - Base	B - Low	C - Medium	D - High	E - Specialist
130 to 196	13 to 24	£724	£811	£941	£1,159	£1,246
197 to 292	25 to 36	£1,265	£1,417	£1,645	£2,025	£2,176
293 to 388	37 to 48	£1,987	£2,225	£2,583	£3,179	£3,417
389 to 580	49 to 72	£2,573	£2,882	£3,345	£4,117	£4,425
581 to 1060	73 to 132	£4,170	£4,670	£5,421	£6,671	£7,172
1061 or more	133 or more	£6,602	£7,395	£8,583	£10,564	£11,356
GCE AS-level		£724	£811	£941	£1,159	£1,246
GCE A-level		£1,987	£2,225	£2,583	£3,179	£3,417
Access to Higher Education Diploma		£3,022	£3,384	£3,928	£4,835	£5,197

17. Five dance and drama diplomas (two at Level 5 and three at Level 6) have bespoke maximum Loan amounts, which are set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Maximum Loan Amounts for Specialist Dance and Drama Diplomas.

Learning Aim Reference	Qualification	Level	Maximum Loan Amount
60009457	Diploma in Professional Acting	Level 5	£7,395
60009470	Diploma in Professional Dance	Level 5	£14,790
60009482	Diploma in Professional Musical Theatre	Level 6	£22,185
60009731	Diploma in Professional Dance	Level 6	£22,185
60009743	Diploma in Professional Acting	Level 6	£22,185

Annex

Sector subject areas by programme weighting categories

Sector subject area	Sector subject area	Programme weighting
1	Health, public services and care	B – Low
1.1	Medicine and dentistry	B – Low
1.2	Nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine	B – Low
1.3	Health and social care	B – Low
1.4	Public services	A – Base
1.5	Child development and well being	B – Low
2	Science and mathematics	A – Base
2.1	Science	B – Low
2.2	Mathematics and statistics	A – Base
3	Agriculture, horticulture and animal care	B – Low
3.1	Agriculture	E – Specialist
3.2	Horticulture and forestry	E – Specialist
3.3	Animal care and veterinary science	E – Specialist
3.4	Environmental conservation	B – Low
4	Engineering and manufacturing technologies	C – Medium
4.1	Engineering	C – Medium
4.2	Manufacturing technologies	C – Medium
4.3	Transportation operations and maintenance	C – Medium
5	Construction, planning and the built environment	C – Medium
5.1	Architecture	C – Medium
5.2	Building and construction	C – Medium
5.3	Urban, rural and regional planning	C – Medium
6	Information and communication technology	A – Base
6.2	ICT for users	B – Low (Level 3 and over)
7	Retail and commercial enterprise	A – Base
7.1	Retailing and wholesaling	A – Base
7.2	Warehousing and distribution	A – Base
7.3	Service enterprises	B – Low
7.4	Hospitality and catering	C – Medium
8	Leisure, travel and tourism	A – Base
8.1	Sport, leisure and recreation	B – Low
8.2	Travel and tourism	A – Base
9	Arts, media and publishing	A – Base
9.1	Performing arts	B – Low
9.2	Crafts, creative arts and design	C – Medium
9.3	Media and communication	B – Low
9.4	Publishing and information services	A – Base

Sector subject area	Sector subject area	Programme weighting
10	History, philosophy and theology	A – Base
10.1	History	A – Base
10.2	Archaeology and archaeological sciences	B – Low
10.3	Philosophy	A – Base
10.4	Theology and religious studies	A – Base
11	Social sciences	A – Base
11.1	Geography	B – Low
11.2	Sociology and social policy	A – Base
11.3	Politics	A – Base
11.4	Economics	A – Base
11.5	Anthropology	A – Base
12	Languages, literature and culture	A – Base
12.1	Languages, literature and culture of the British Isles	A – Base
12.2	Other languages, literature and culture	A – Base
12.3	Linguistics	A – Base
13	Education and training	B – Low
13.1	Teaching and lecturing	B – Low
13.2	Direct learning support	B – Low
14	Preparation for life and work	A – Base
14.1	Foundations for learning and life	A – Base
14.2	Preparation for work	A – Base
15	Business, administration and law	A – Base
15.1	Accounting and finance	A – Base
15.2	Administration	A – Base
15.3	Business management	A – Base
15.4	Marketing and sales	A – Base
15.5	Law and legal services	A – Base

The following is a list of exceptions to the sector subject areas and programme weightings shown above:

1. Waste management and recycling in SSA 1.4 weighted at B – Low.
2. Hair and beauty in SSA 7.3 weighted at C – Medium.
3. Music technology in SSA 9.1 weighted at D – High.
4. Music practitioners in SSA 9.1 weighted at E – Specialist.

Glossary

Designated Qualification	A qualification that the SFA's nomination process has designated as in-scope for Loans.
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Guided learning – the activity of the learner in being taught or instructed by – otherwise participating in education or training under the Immediate Guidance or Supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education and training. For these purposes, the activity of 'participating in education and training' includes assessment by the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training. This is detailed in Ofqual's <u>General Conditions of Recognition</u> (September 2015).
Ofqual	Office of Qualifications and Examination Regulation.
Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)	The independent body entrusted with monitoring, and advising on, standards and quality in UK higher education. The QAA is responsible for the recognition scheme, which is the regulatory framework through which Access to HE courses are regulated and recognised.
Regulated Qualifications	Qualifications that an Ofqual-regulated awarding organisation offer are part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	Notional hours representing an estimate of the total amount of time expected to be required for a learner to demonstrate the achievement of the level of

attainment necessary for the award of a qualification.

TQT is comprised of two elements:

1. Guided Learning.
2. An estimate of the number of hours a learner will spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by, but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of, a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education and training.

This is detailed in Ofqual's **General Conditions of Recognition** (September 2015).



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