

SLC SP05/2019

21 November 2019

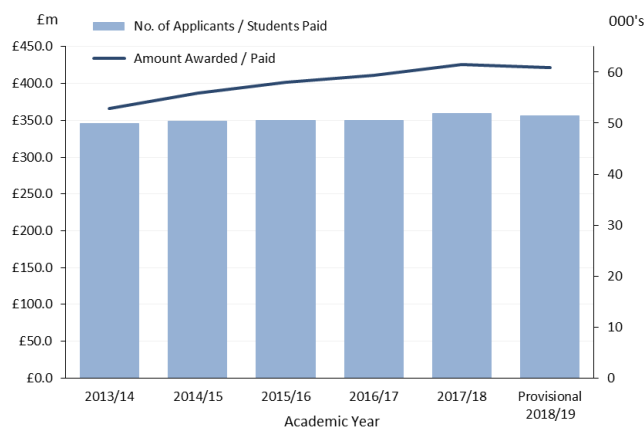
Coverage: Northern Ireland

Theme: Children, Education  
and Skills

## Student Support for Higher Education in Northern Ireland 2019: 2018/19 Full Year and 2019/20 Early In Year

### Higher Education Student Support remains constant in Academic Year 2018/19 at £422 million.

Figure 1: Number of students domiciled in Northern Ireland and EU (Outside UK) receiving Higher Education Support and Amount Awarded / Paid



The total amount paid out / awarded in student support across Full Time, Part Time and Postgraduate students has reached £421.9 million. This is an overall average of £8,200 to each student.

The total amount paid / awarded is down 1.0% from £426.2 million in Academic Year 2017/18.

The number of students has remained stable decreasing by less than 1.0% from 51,900 students in 2017/18 to 51,400 in 2018/19.

Whilst decreases can be seen within Undergraduate funding, students taking out Postgraduate loans increased 22.4% to 2,600 students from 2,100 in Academic Year 2017/18.

Academic Year 2018/19 was the second year of availability for the Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan resulting in anticipated increased popularity. In 2018/19 £10.1 million was paid out in Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loans, up 10.5% from 2017/18 in which £9.1 million was paid out.

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## Introduction

This statistics publication presents figures and observations on the student support awarded to applicants and paid to students or their Higher Education Provider. Payment figures are shown for the six academic years up to and including 2018/19. Section 7 gives an early indication of emerging trends of new policy products for Academic Year 2019/20.

The publication covers applicants and students domiciled in Northern Ireland taking a designated Higher Education (HE) course at a University, Further Education (FE) College or Alternative Provider in the UK, as well as EU (Outside UK) applicants and students taking a designated course in Northern Ireland.

## What can you use these statistics for?

These statistics can be used as a reference to the number of students awarded / paid and the amount awarded / paid out by the Students Loans Company for students studying in Higher Education between Academic Years 2013/14 and 2018/19.

The data used in this publication is from Student Loans Company's administrative systems. These systems only hold information on students who have applied for and / or receive funding. Due to this, these statistics cannot be used to analyse trends or to draw conclusions regarding the full UK student population.

## Things you need to know

### Payments Vs. Awards

The main aim of this publication is to measure payments to student support recipients funded by Northern Ireland over the course of each academic year. This is effectively what is paid in regards to Maintenance Loans, Tuition Fee Loans, Postgraduate Loans and Disabled Students Allowance (DSA).

Awards differ from payments as they refer to the decision on how much will be paid if the applicant is present for study for the full academic year. As payments refer to the actual amounts received by students, they can be lower if the student is not in attendance for the full academic year, if the applicant does not attend at all, or if they do not draw down the full amount which was awarded (e.g. they drop out mid-year). For all new types of support an early indication of what has been paid / awarded two months into the latest academic year, in this publication, 2019/20 is provided in Section 7 of the Tables. The number of payments / awards made will change markedly between this point and the end of the academic year as additional students apply for student support.

There are data reporting limitations in regard to separating out grant product payments by individual product. For this reason the breakdowns of spend allocations of Maintenance Grants and other targeted support products e.g. Child Care Grant etc. are reported as awards.

### Roundings, Totals and Averages

All student numbers and amounts have been rounded to the nearest 100 and £100,000 unless specified otherwise. Some totals and averages are calculated from un-rounded numbers.

# Overview of Full Time Undergraduate Student Funding Package Academic Year 2018/19

Figure 2: Maximum rates of Maintenance Grant, full year Maintenance Loan and Tuition Fee Loans available to Full Time Undergraduate students domiciled in Northern Ireland

Academic Year	Rates	Maximum Maintenance Grant (cash terms)	Maximum amount of Maintenance Loan (cash terms) [7]	Overall Maximum Support for Maintenance (cash terms) [5]	Maximum Tuition Fee (cash terms)
2018/19 (2006/07 Arrangement) [4]	Elsewhere	3,475	4,840	6,428	4,160
	London	3,475	6,780	8,368	4,160
	Home	3,475	3,750	5,338	4,160

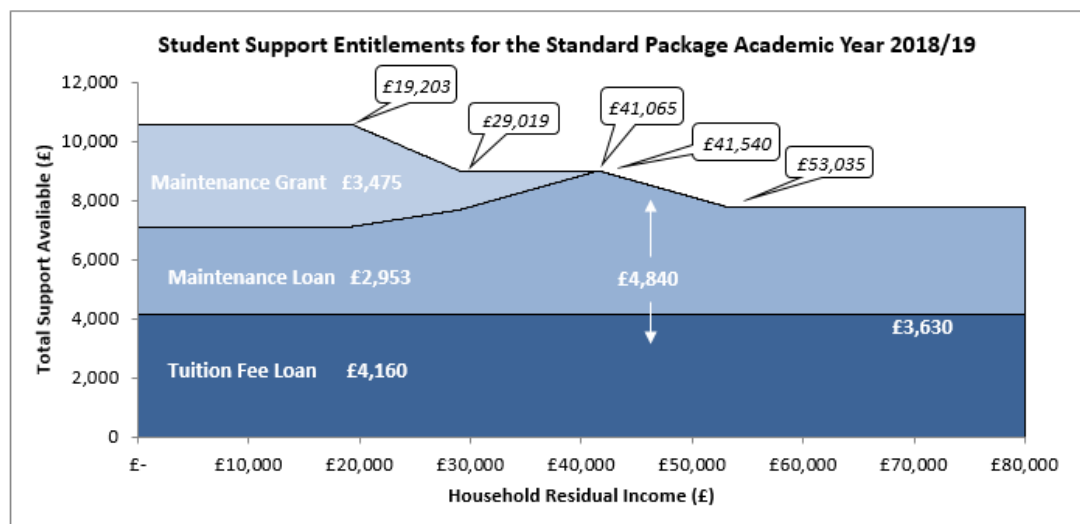
The Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland) / Student Loans Company SLC

Figure 3: Student Support available to Full Time students domiciled in Northern Ireland

For new students entering in 2018/19, living away from home and attending an institution outside London i.e. 'Elsewhere' rate.

Household Residual Income	Maximum Maintenance Grant Available	Maximum Amount of Maintenance Loan Available	Maximum Tuition Fee Loan Available
Up to and including £19,203	£3,475	£2,953	£4,160
Between £19,204 and £29,019 [8]	£3,475 to £1,318	£2,953 to £3,522	£4,160
Between £29,020 and £41,065 [9]	£1,318 to £50	£3,522 to £4,790	£4,160
Between £41,066 and £41,540 [10]	£ nil	£4,840	£4,160
Between £41,541 to £53,035	£ nil	£4,840 to £3,630	£4,160
Over £53,035	£ nil	£3,630	£4,160

The Department for the Economy (Northern Ireland)



Footnotes	
[5]	The amount of Maintenance Loan available is reduced by £1 for every £1 of Maintenance Grant received up to a maximum of £1,887. The maximum amount of support available is therefore lower than the sum of the maximum Maintenance Loan and the maximum Maintenance Grant.
[7]	Based on the 'Elsewhere' rate of loan
[8]	Reduced by £1 for every £4.55 of income above £19,203.
[9]	Reduced by £1 for every £9.50 of income above £29,019.
[10]	A student whose income exceeds £41,065 will not be eligible for any grant.

Details of the amounts of loans and grants available to students are publicly available on the [Student Finance NI](#) website.

## Undergraduate Maintenance Loans

An Undergraduate Maintenance Loan is funding to help with day-to-day costs, such as rent or food, whilst studying. These loans are available to those studying an eligible Undergraduate, Initial Teacher Training or Postgraduate Certificate of Education course, at an eligible Higher Education Provider on a Full Time basis. The amount awarded is dependent on household income.

### Full Time Maintenance Loans stable with gradual decreases since 2016/17

Figure 4: Number of students domiciled in Northern Ireland receiving Full Time Maintenance Loans

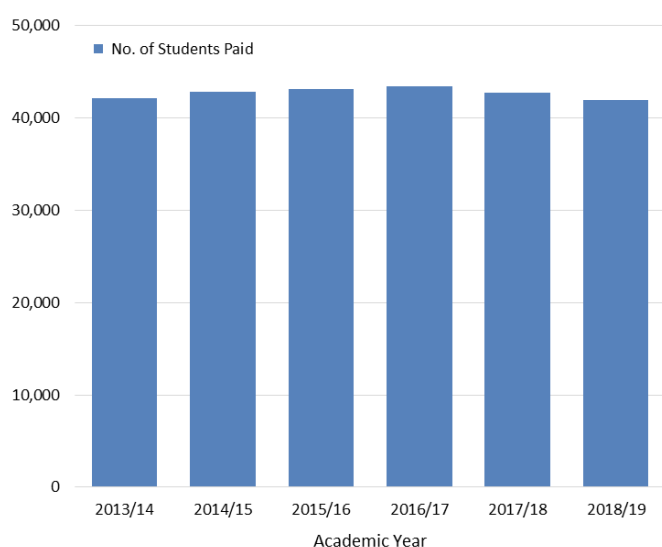
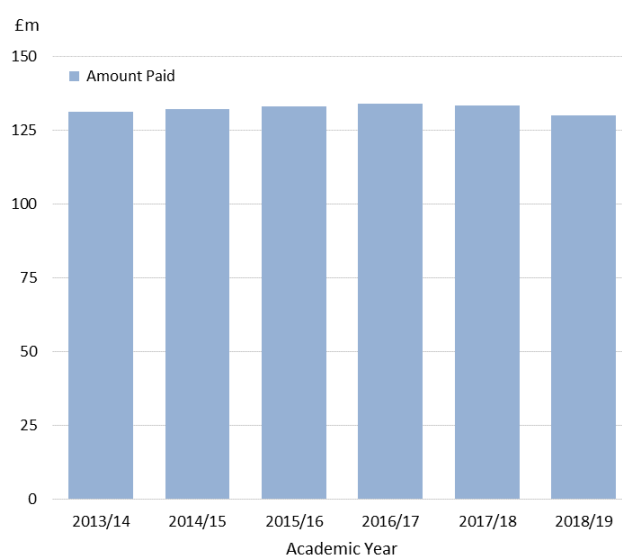


Figure 5: Amount Paid out in Full Time Maintenance Loans for students domiciled in Northern Ireland



Overall, the number of Full Time students in receipt of Maintenance Loans has remained relatively stable since Academic Year 2013/14.

Following an accumulative increase until Academic Year 2016/17, numbers have marginally decreased over the last two academic years. In Academic Year 2018/19 the number of students taking a Maintenance Loan decreased by 1.9% to 41,900 in comparison the previous year.

In line with the number of borrowers, outlay has also decreased over the last two academic years. Payments also peaked in 2016/17 at £134.2 million, reducing by 0.6% in 2017/18, then a further 2.5% in Academic Year 2018/19 to £130.1 million.

The % proportion of those attending Public Providers and Alternative providers has remained consistent throughout the six academic years shown. Each year, 99.6% of Maintenance Loan borrowers attended a Public Provider.

Decreases in the number of Full Time Maintenance Loans are in line with the overall gradual decrease shown for Full Time Northern Ireland student funding.

## Small but increasing number of Full Time Undergraduate students not taking out Maintenance Loans

Figure 6: Full Time Estimated Eligible Population and students in receipt of Full Time Maintenance Loans in Northern Ireland

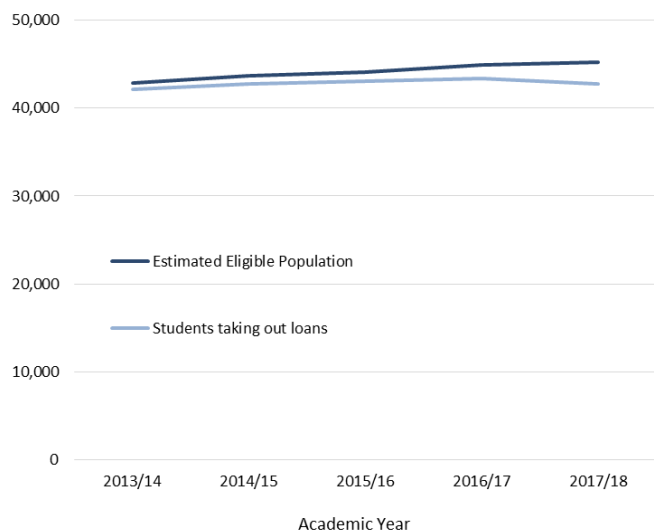
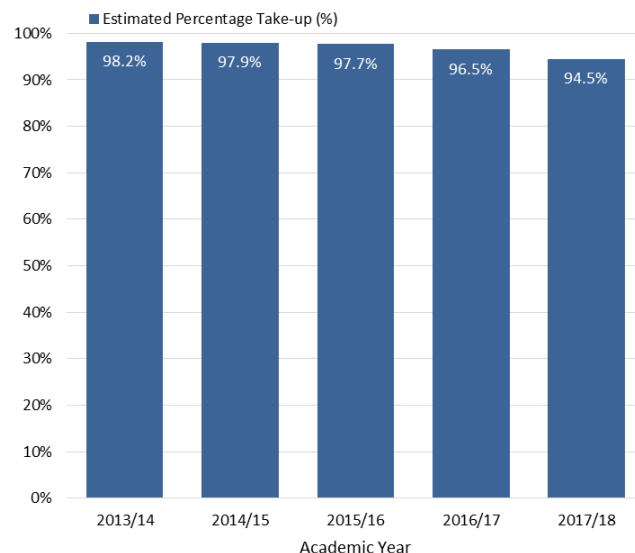


Figure 7: Estimated Percentage Take-Up of Full Time Maintenance Loans in Northern Ireland



The 'Estimated Eligible Population' figures indicate the numbers of students that are eligible to apply for student finance, including those who do not apply. These figures are supplied by the Department for Economy (DFE). The take-up rate is the rate of which the Eligible Population chooses to apply for a Maintenance Loan.

The number of Full Time students taking a Maintenance Loan started to gradually decrease in Academic Year 2017/18, by contrast the estimated eligible population continue to increase.

In 2017/18, out of the 45,200 students who would have been eligible to receive a Maintenance Loan 42,700 students actually received a Maintenance Loan payment (94.5%).

Although both the Estimated Eligible Population and the students receiving Maintenance Loans both increased until Academic Year 2016/17, the estimated take-up rate for Maintenance Loans has in fact been decreasing since 2013/14.

Academic Year 2013/14 saw a take-up percentage of 98.2% which has steadily decreased to 94.5% in 2017/18.

Due to the data availability, the 2018/19 figures will be presented in our next publication in November 2020.

## Undergraduate Tuition Fee Loans

An Undergraduate Tuition Fee Loan covers the cost of the tuition fees charged by the university or college. These loans are available to those studying an eligible Undergraduate, Initial Teacher Training or Postgraduate Certificate of Education course, at an eligible Higher Education Provider on a Full or Part Time basis. Tuition Fee Loans are not dependent on household income.

### Amount paid out in Full Time Tuition Fee Loans continues to increase despite gradual decreases in the number of students taking these loans

Figure 8: Number of students domiciled in Northern Ireland and EU (Outside UK) receiving Full Time Tuition Fee Loans and Amount Paid

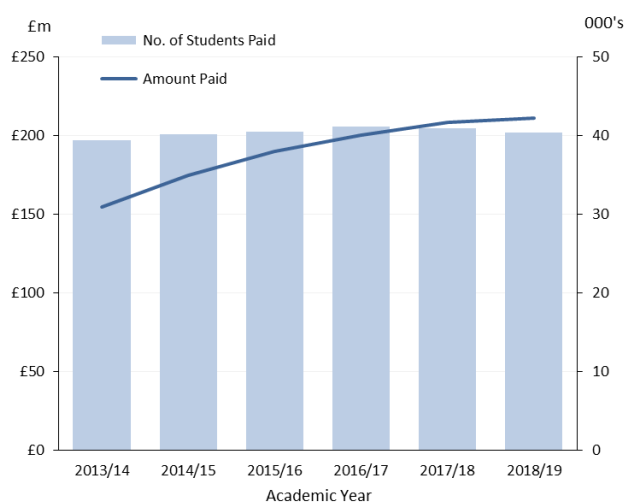
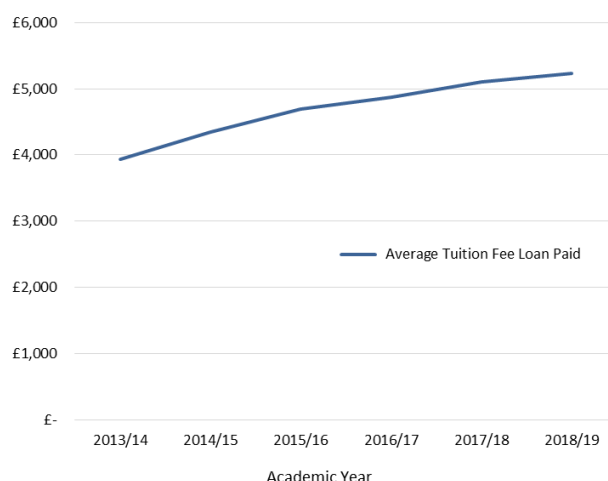


Figure 9: Average Amount Paid in Full Time Tuition Fee Loans to students domiciled in Northern Ireland and EU (Outside UK)



In line with the overall trend seen within Undergraduate student funding in Northern Ireland in Academic Year 2018/19, the number of students taking a Tuition Fee Loan has slightly decreased.

2018/19 saw a 1.2% decrease in the number of students to 40,400 from 40,900. This was also a decrease of 1.8% from 2016/17 when student numbers taking tuition fee loans were at their highest. This decrease in students is not evident in EU (Outside UK) numbers which have remained stable. This can therefore be attributed to students domiciled in Northern Ireland.

In contrast to the decrease in student numbers, the amount paid out in Full Time Tuition Fee Loans has continued to increase with a 1.2% increase on 2017/18 and 5.4% on 2016/17. Academic Year 2018/19 saw the total paid in Full Time Tuition Fee Loans rise to £211.3 million. This increase in payments is as a result of the rising average amount being paid out to students due to higher tuition fee costs.

The average Tuition Fee Loan in Academic Year 2013/14 was £3,930. This has continued to increase to reach £5,230 in 2018/19.

## Increase in number of students studying outside Northern Ireland taking Full Time Loans slows in 2018/19

Figure 10: Number of students domiciled in Northern Ireland taking Full Time Tuition Fee Loans by Country of Study

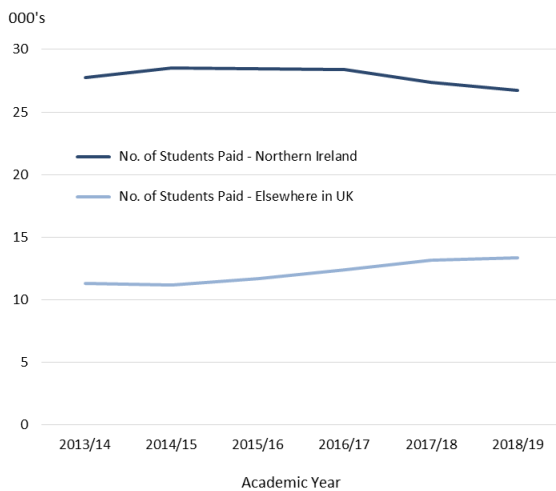
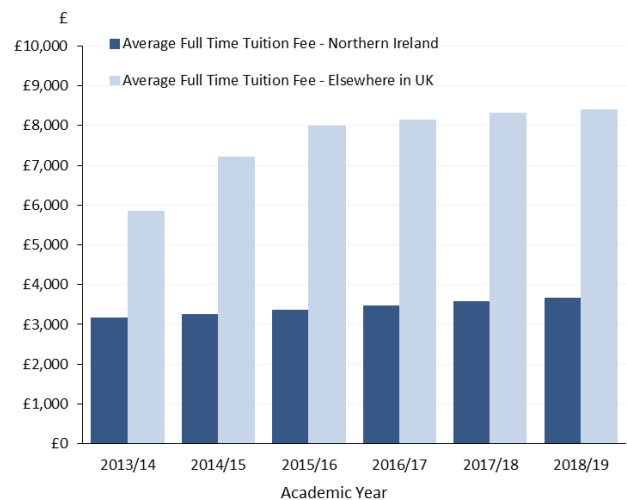


Figure 11: Average Full Time Tuition Fee Loan Amounts for students domiciled in Northern Ireland by Country of Study



The subset of Northern Ireland domiciled students opting to take a Tuition Fee Loan to study in other parts of the UK continued to increase in Academic Year 2018/19. In comparison to 2017/18, this number has increased by just 1.0%, to 13,300 yet since 2013/14 this is an overall increase of 18.1% (an additional 2,000 students).

Northern Ireland domiciled students studying elsewhere in the UK now account for one third of those taking Full Time Tuition Fee Loans funded by Student Finance Northern Ireland.

This number is increasing despite that the average Full Time Tuition Fee Loan is more than double in other parts of the UK. In Academic Year 2018/19, the average Loan for study paid out elsewhere in the UK was £8,400 compared to £3,660 for those choosing to study within Northern Ireland.

These higher tuition fee charges have resulted in the total amount paid to Providers elsewhere in the UK being in excess of half the total loaned (53.3%). £112.0 million of the £210.0 million paid out on behalf Northern Ireland domiciled students, were to Providers in England, Wales and Scotland.



## Part Time Tuition Fee Loan numbers increase in second year following introduction in 2017/18

Figure 12: Number of students domiciled in Northern Ireland & EU (Outside UK) receiving Part Time Tuition Fee Loans

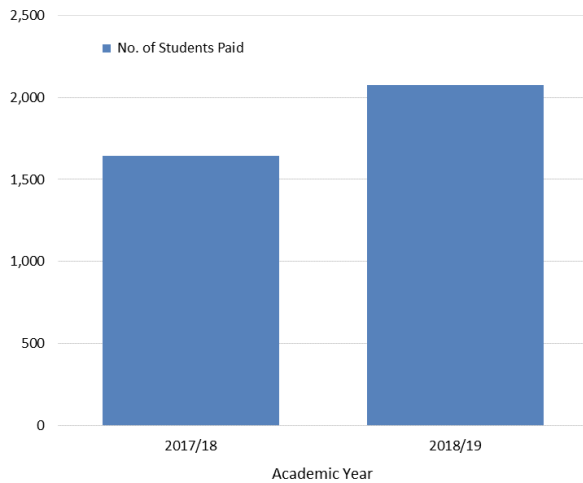
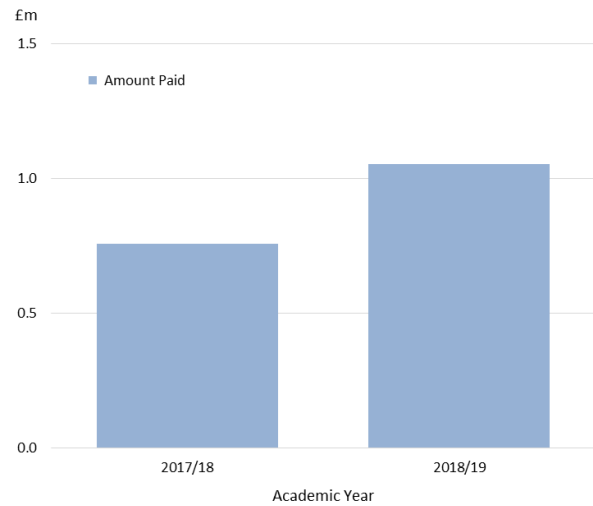


Figure 13: Amount Paid in Part Time Tuition Fees for students domiciled in Northern Ireland and EU (Outside UK)



Part Time Tuition Fee Loans, introduced in Academic Year 2017/18, are a non-income assessed loan in which a maximum of £3,120 (for Academic Year 2018/19) can be taken. This is offered alongside the income assessed Part Time Course Grant to cover the costs of eligible Part Time courses. Similar to Full Time Tuition Fee Loans, this is paid directly to the Provider.

In 2018/19 there was an increase of 430 students accessing Part Time Tuition Fee Loans funded by Student Finance Northern Ireland from 1,650 students in 2017/18 to 2,080 students. This resulted in an increase of total payments from £800,000 to £1.1 million in Academic Year 2018/19.

This second year uplift in both the number of loans paid, and the total amount paid out is an anticipated trend for new products as they increase in popularity.

## Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan

A Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan is funding to help with course and living costs whilst studying an eligible Postgraduate level course. They are paid directly to the student and are not based on their income or the income of their household. Students studying either a Postgraduate Certificate of Education or an Initial Teacher Training course are not eligible for Postgraduate funding, they can alternatively apply for Undergraduate finance.

### Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan numbers increase in second year following introduction in 2017/18

Figure 14: Number of students domiciled in Northern Ireland & EU (Outside UK) receiving Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loans

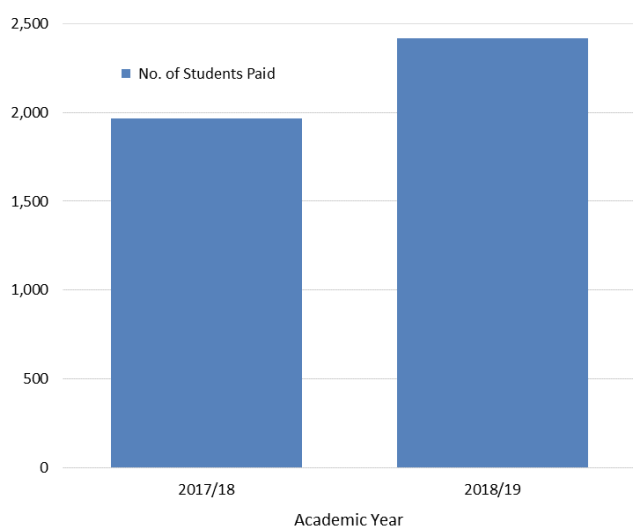
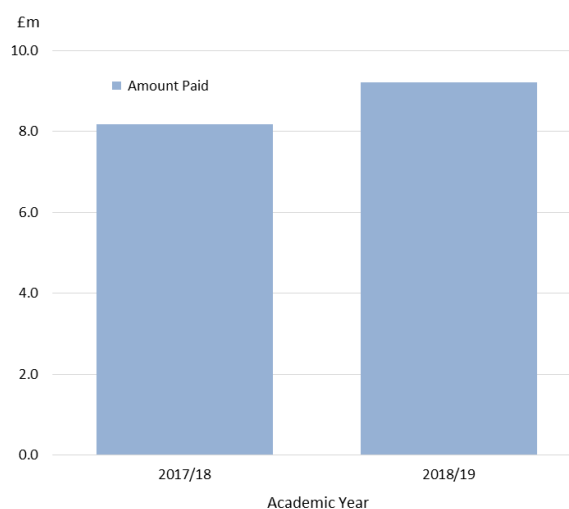


Figure 15: Amount Paid in Postgraduate Tuition Fees for students domiciled in Northern Ireland and EU (Outside UK)



Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loans, introduced in Academic Year 2017/18, have shown an increase in both the number of students paid and total amount paid out in 2018/19. As evident with Part Time Tuition Fee Loans, it is typical for new products to show this uplift in their second year as they gain in popularity.

The number of students in receipt of Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loans increased 23.2% to 2,400 with payments increasing by 12.6% to from £8.2 million to £9.2 million.

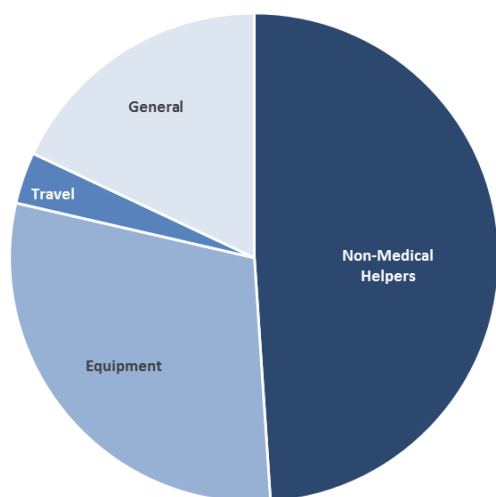
The number of EU (Outside UK) Postgraduate students have increased by 40 to 110 in Academic Year 2018/19. In turn, the amount paid out has increased by £150,000 to £0.5 million.

## Disabled Students Allowance

Disabled Students Allowances help pay for extra costs a student might incur as a direct result of their disability. This also includes long-term health conditions such as mental-health illnesses, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia etc. The individuals' condition must meet the definition of a disability under the Equality Act 2010. Disabled Students' Allowance does not usually have to be repaid, unless the student leaves their course early.

### Half of Undergraduate Disabled Students Allowance spend attributed to Non-Medical Helpers in Academic Year 2017/18

Figure 16: Amount Paid in Full & Part Time Disabled Students Allowance by Category - Academic Year 2017/18



'Non-Medical Helpers' Allowance is one of the four categories of Disabled Student Allowance (DSA). It is used to help pay for support workers such as British Sign Language interpreters, mobility trainers etc. Helpers can provide course-specific assistance with library support, typists, readers etc.

This category accounted for 48.9% of the overall Full Time and Part Time DSA spend in Academic Year 2017/18. Claims amounted to £2.0 million of the total £4.0 million paid out.

The total count of claimants receiving any category of Full or Part Time Disabled Student Allowance for Academic Year 2017/18 was 24.3% higher than the 1,870 reported in 2013/14. The only category to have decreased in the number of claimants is 'Travel', indicating a small decrease of 30 to 80.

As of the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019, a total of £3.7 million has been paid for Academic 2018/19 for both Full and Part time students. This is 4.4% lower than at the same point in 2017/18.

Generally Disabled Students Allowances (DSA) are paid direct to the providers of equipment and services covered by the allowance although students may receive some funding paid directly to them, depending on their circumstances.

The vast majority is paid to suppliers once the Student Loans Company receive the invoices for equipment or services. Invoices continue to be received well after the end of the academic year which is why we quote figures a year later. Also, the majority of DSA applications are received after the term starts as many students do not become aware that they are entitled to support until they have started their course.

Students are able to apply for more than one category of DSA.

## Summary of Policy Changes – Academic Year 2018/19

- **Full Time Tuition Fee Loan** – In Academic Year 2018/19, new Full Time students studying at a Provider in Northern Ireland could be charged up to £4,160 in tuition fees (increase on Academic Year 2017/18). Eligible students were able to apply for a maximum non means-tested fee loan of this amount. For new Full Time students studying at a Provider elsewhere in the UK, the maximum amount was £9,250 (no change to 2017/18).
- **Full Time Maintenance Loan** – Increase on 2017/18. The maximum loan for living costs for students living away from home and studying outside London was increased to £4,840, for students living away from home and studying in London to £6,780 and for students living at home to £3,750.
- **Part Time Tuition Fee Loan** - Increase on 2017/18. Part Time students were eligible to apply for a non-means tested fee loan of up to £3,120.
- **Part Time Course Fee Grant** - No change from 2017/18. Part-time students were eligible for a grant of up to £265 for books, travel and other expenditure relating to their course.
- **Disabled Students Allowance** – No change from AY 2017/18.
  - For Full Time Undergraduate students, Non-Medical Helper Allowance remained at £20,938, the Specialist Equipment Allowance at £5,266, and the allowance for other disability related expenditure (General Allowance) at £1,759.
  - For Part Time Undergraduate students, the Non-Medical Helper Allowance remained at £15,703, the Specialist Equipment Allowance at £5,266 and the allowance for other disability related expenditure (General Allowance) at £1,319.
  - The maximum Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) for those on Postgraduate courses remained at £10,469.
- **Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan** - No change from AY 2017/18. Maximum loans for new students starting Postgraduate Master's courses remained at £5,500 per course.

Changes in policy occurring in previous years can be found on our [statistics page](#).

## Summary of Support Available – Academic Year 2019/20

- **Full Time Tuition Fee Loan** – In Academic Year 2019/20, loans were available to new Full Time students studying at a Northern Ireland Provider increased to £4,260. For those studying at a Provider elsewhere in the UK, the maximum loan was maintained at £9,250.
- **Full Time Maintenance Loan** – The maximum loan for living costs for students living away from home and studying outside London was increased to £4,840, for students living away from home and studying in London to £6,780 and for students living at home to £3,750.
- **Part Time Tuition Fee Loan** - In Academic Year 2019/20, Part Time students were eligible to apply for a non-means tested fee loan of up to £3,206.25.
- **Part Time Course Fee Grant** - No change from 2018/19. In Academic Year 2019/20 Part Time students were eligible for a grant of up to £265 for books, travel and other expenditure relating to their course.
- **Disabled Students Allowance** – No change from AY 2018/19.
  - For Full Time Undergraduate students, Non-Medical Helper Allowance remained at £20,938, the Specialist Equipment Allowance at £5,266, and the allowance for other disability related expenditure (General Allowance) at £1,759.
  - For Part Time Undergraduate students, the Non-Medical Helper Allowance remained at £15,703, the Specialist Equipment Allowance at £5,266 and the allowance for other disability related expenditure (General Allowance) at £1,319.
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- **Postgraduate Tuition Fee Loan** – No change from 2018/19. Maximum loans for new students starting Postgraduate Master's courses remained at £5,500 per course.

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## Definitions

Term	Definition
Alternative Provider	An Alternative Provider is any provider of higher education courses which is not in direct receipt of recurrent funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (OfS) or from equivalent bodies in the Devolved Administrations; or does not receive direct recurrent public funding (for example, from a local authority, or from the Secretary of State for Education); and is not a further education college. Only providers with courses designated for student support are included in the statistics.
Applicant	This is a person applying for student support. Not all applicants take up a place. Applicants become students once they take up a place and the SLC has received a confirmation of their attendance.
Award	If an applicant for student finance is assessed as meeting the eligibility criteria as stipulated within the student finance regulations then they will be awarded student support. Awards will be paid on condition that the applicant subsequently attends the Higher Education Provider at which point they will be considered a student and payments will be released according to the payment schedule for the support types awarded.
Country of Study	The country in which the Higher Education (HE) Provider is located and where which the applicant intends to / is studying at.
Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)	Disabled Students Allowances help pay for extra costs a student might incur as a direct result of their disability. This also includes long-term health conditions such as mental-health illnesses, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia etc.
Domiciled	The country in which the applicant would normally reside in the three years prior to the start of the course. This publication covers those students domiciled in Northern Ireland who study anywhere in the UK and EU (Outside UK) students studying in Northern Ireland.
Entry Cohort	Grouping of applicants according to the Education (Student Support) Regulations against which the applicant was assessed for support. Student finance applicants are generally covered by transitional protection which means they continue to be assessed against the regulations in place for their first year of study, but this is not always the case.
Estimated Eligible Population	The numbers of students that are eligible to apply for student finance including those who do not apply. Figures for the estimated eligible population are supplied by the Department for the Economy (DfE NI). DfE use data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and other sources with the closest approximation of eligibility criteria available from those sources.
Final Figures	The final position refers to statistics in a steady state. Final figures are not expected to change significantly and should represent the final outcome.
Full Time	This refers to the mode of study for which student support is being paid, primarily to undergraduate students. For the purposes of this publication, the full time data also includes part time and flexible ITT students who started their courses before 2010/11, as these students were also eligible for full time student support. Students starting the same courses after 2010/11 are not included.

Full Year Maintenance Loan	The amount of Maintenance Loan available to students varies between those studying in their final year and those studying in an earlier year of their course. Students in their final year will be entitled to a reduced amount to reflect the reduced length of time in attendance at their university over which maintenance support is required.
Higher Education Provider	For the purpose of this publication it is an organisation designated for student support and can include Universities which receive the bulk of their funding from public sources, Further Education Colleges, and Alternative Providers.
Household Residual Income	This is the income associated with the household where the applicant normally resides. It comprises of the taxable earned and unearned incomes of the applicant or those of the applicants parents' minus any allowable deductions.
Level of Support	Identifies if the applicant was awarded the full level of means tested grant, the partial level or no grant at all.
Maintenance Loan Rate	Applicants are entitled to a different amount of Maintenance Loans depending on their term-time residence. Rates differ for applicants living at home, in London or elsewhere (excluding London).
Other Targeted Support	These are grants and allowances provided to students meeting specific circumstances. Targeted support includes Travel Grant, Parental Learning Allowance, Childcare Grant and Adult Dependants Grant.
Provider Type	See either 'Public Provider' or 'Alternative Provider'
Provisional Figures	These are figures based on the status at either end-August or end-October (Section 7: Early In Year Data - Student Counts & New Policy). End-August is used as this reflects the end of the academic year for the majority of Providers. However, due to the Alternative Provider subset being subject to movement due to later course start dates, these are noted as provisional and then finalised at the end of the following academic year. Section 7 of the publication provides a look at emerging trends two months into the academic year. These figures are not revised.
Public Provider	A Public Provider is any provider of higher education courses which is in direct receipt of recurrent funding from OfS or from equivalent bodies in the Devolved Administrations; or in receipt of direct recurrent public funding (for example, from a local authority, or from the Secretary of State for Education); or is a further education college. Only providers with courses designated for student support are included in the statistics.
Student	For the purpose of this publication, an applicant for student support becomes a student once the Student Loans Company has received confirmation that the person is attending a course with a Higher Education Provider. Not all applicants take up a place.
Student Support Available	This is the arrangement available at the time of the application for support. It includes the range of support available, the eligibility rules and the income thresholds.
Take-up Rate	The rate of which the Eligible Population chooses to apply for a Maintenance Loan.

## Additional Information

### Data Sources

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

### Data Quality

Student Loans Company 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.

### Related Statistics Publications

Student Loans Company publish statistics on Higher Education Funding for England and Wales as part of the same series this publication belongs to. These are published at the same time as part of the series [Student Support for Higher Education](#).

Student Loans Company also publish statistics on the repayment of Student Loans for higher education in the series Student Loans in Northern Ireland. The [latest release](#) of this series was published on the 13 June 2019 covering Tax Year 2018-19.

The Student Awards Agency for Scotland 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 in 29 October 2019 covering Academic Session 2018/19.

### 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 (publications for England, Wales & Northern Ireland) was awarded National Statistics status in October 2011 following a [full assessment](#) against their Code of Practice. Since the assessments by the Office for Statistics Regulation we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made a number of improvements including the following:

- Supplementary tables added giving payments breakdown by HE Provider within Provider Type - England only
- Part Time and Postgraduate DSA added – All domiciles
- Additional tables added to show DSA payments breakdown by Type – All domiciles
- Postgraduate Loans added – England and Wales
- Methodology for calculating take-up % for Alternative Providers refined – England only
- Sections restructured, bringing Loans more to the fore and clearly separating out Full Time Undergraduate, Part Time Undergraduate and Postgraduate students. The 'Early In Year' focus changed to actual students and amounts paid rather, than applications and amounts awarded
- Introduced cross-country comparison of average Maintenance Loan paid