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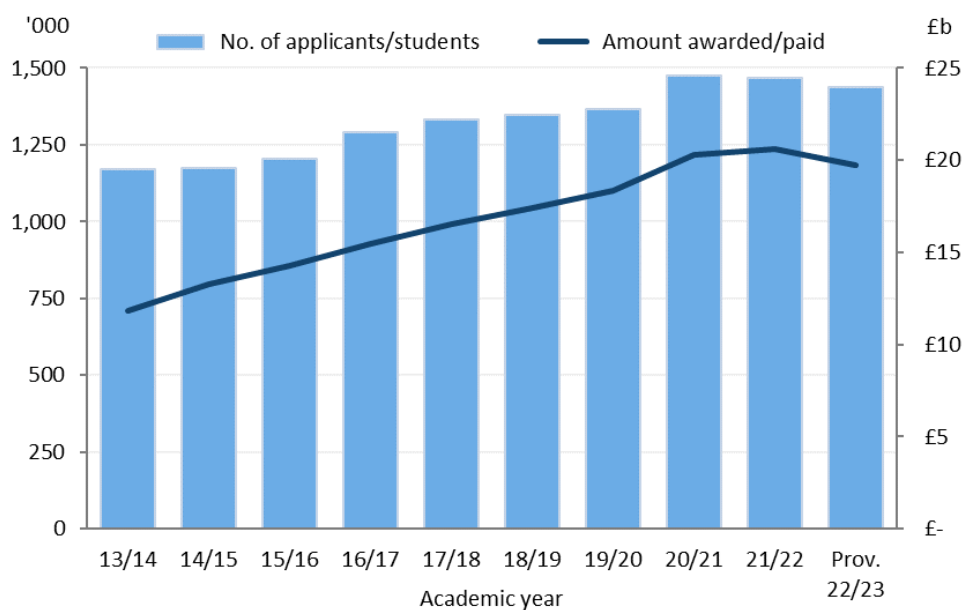
Theme: Children, Education  
and Skills

# Student Support for Higher Education in England 2023: 2022/23 full year and 2023/24 early in year

## 4.3% decrease in higher education student support in academic year 2022/23, at £19.7 billion

Figure 1: Number of students domiciled in England and EU (outside UK) receiving higher education support and amount awarded/paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of applicants/students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount awarded/paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 2**

**Download the data for Figure 1** (ODS, 6KB)

Figure 1 shows that 1.17 million full-time, part-time and postgraduate applicants/students were awarded/paid student finance in academic year 2013/14. This increased slowly up until 2016/17 when a more significant increase was reported (up 7.1%) to reach 1.29 million. This can be predominantly attributed to the introduction of the Postgraduate Masters Loan, which encouraged a further 62,300 borrowers.

Annual increases then slowed, averaging 1.9% over the subsequent three academic years until 2020/21 when a 7.8% increase was reported, and numbers reached 1.47 million. This was likely a result of the perceived reduced employment opportunity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, encouraging new students to pursue higher education and current students

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to continue their education. This was made up of a 6.7% increase in the number of undergraduates and a significant 22.8% increase in the number of postgraduates receiving funding.

In academic year 2021/22, the number awarded/paid remained relatively constant (down 0.3%) as figures normalised against an outlying year. The provisional position for the most recent year (2022/23) indicates a 2.3% decrease down to 1.44 million. This is made up of a 1.2% decrease in the number of undergraduates and a 15.1% decrease in the number of postgraduates receiving funding.

*Figure 1* also shows that the total amount awarded/paid in student support across full-time, part-time and postgraduate students in academic year 2013/14 was £11.8 billion. Following a 12.0% increase in the following year increases slowed, down to 5.4% by 2019/20.

In 2020/21 the amount increased by a significant 10.7% to reach £20.3 billion (made up of a 10.0% increase in undergraduate funding and a notable 28.4% increase in postgraduate funding). As mentioned previously, this was likely a result of the perceived reduced employment opportunity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, encouraging new students to pursue higher education and current students to continue their education.

In academic year 2021/22, a small increase of 1.4% was reported as figures normalised against an outlying year bringing the total awarded/paid up to £20.6 billion. The provisional position for 2022/23 indicates a potential first decrease against the previous year (of 4.3%, down to £19.7 billion).

It should be noted, however that the provisional figure for the 2021/22 academic year of £19.8 billion (published in the **2022 edition** of this publication) indicated a potential decrease of 2.6% in the amount awarded/paid against the previous year. However, the finalised figure was 4.1% higher than the provisional figure, meaning that the final position for 2021/22 was 1.4% higher in comparison to 2020/21.

The average full-time Maintenance Loan paid to an England-domiciled student in 2013/14 was £3,890 increasing to £4,050 by 2015/16. Due to the discontinuation of Maintenance Grants to new students in academic year 2016/17 the average loan borrowed increased by a considerable 18.8% to £4,810. Notable increases were reported in the subsequent two years, owing to the growing percentage of borrowers who were no longer eligible for the grant.

Increases have since slowed to 2.8% by 2021/22 peaking the average at £7,280. The provisional position for academic year 2022/23 is 2.3% lower (at £7,130) - this is potentially the first reported decrease.

For more information on **Maintenance Loans** please refer to the relevant section later in this publication.

The average full-time Tuition Fee Loan paid on behalf of an England-domiciled student in 2013/14 was £6,140. Following a significant 21.8% increase in the following year (up to £7,480), increases have since slowed to average 1.7% until 2020/21. Academic year 2021/22 reported the first decrease in the average paid out, down 1.0% to £8,620. The provisional position for academic year 2022/23 indicates a potential further reduction of 4.5%, down to £8,230.

For more information on **Tuition Fee Loans** please refer to the relevant section later in this publication.

Provisional 2022/23 figures will be finalised in the 2024 release of this publication.

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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. Figures are shown for the ten academic years up to and including 2022/23. Section 7 gives a high-level early indication of academic year 2023/24 figures, along with emerging trends of any new policy products. The publication covers applicants and students domiciled in England taking a designated higher education (HE) course at a university or further education (FE) college in the UK, as well as EU (outside UK) applicants and students taking a designated course in England.

## Accessibility

**Public Sector Accessibility Regulations** mean that all public sector organisations have a legal duty to make their websites accessible for everyone, including those with disabilities. As part of SLC's ongoing commitment to improving accessibility of our websites and content, we've made changes to the way we publish our statistics.

The changes in this publication mainly affect the way we provide visual information. This includes:

- including descriptive information of the full time-series for each graph within the main body of the statistics publication.
- providing data used to form each graph in accessible/downloadable tables.
- changing the way we present charts and graphs to be more accessible, including changes to colour, labels and legends.

We create our statistics publications in a way that helps to ensure that the department's statistical outputs are accessible, while continuing to meet the statistical needs of our users.

## 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 Student Loans Company for students studying in higher education between academic years 2013/14 and 2022/23, along with an early view of academic year 2023/24. 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

### Changes within this publication

With ten academic years' worth of data displayed in the 2023 version of this publication, some tables are becoming too large to view on one screen or print on a single page. As a result, the main data tables (except for Table 4B and 5B) have been restructured. The tables have been divided each into separate sections below one another i.e., the number of applicants/students, followed by the amount awarded/paid, then the average paid.

The changes make these tables easier to read and align them with the tables within our '**Student Loans for Higher Education**' publication series.

## Payments vs. awards

The main aim of this publication is to measure payments to student support recipients funded by England over the course of each academic year. This is effectively what is paid regarding Maintenance Loans, Tuition Fee Loans, postgraduate loans, and Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

Awards differ from payments as they refer to the amount which will be paid if the applicant's attendance is confirmed 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). Payments within the most recent academic year, 2022/23, are provisional. Although most payments/awards are captured by this point, the figures are finalised a year later and updated in the following years' publication.

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 2023/24) is provided in the early-in-year section of the accompanying excel tables (Tables 7A to 7C (ii)). The number of payments/awards made will change markedly between this point and the end of the academic year as current students will receive further payments and additional students apply for student support. There are data reporting limitations regarding 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., Adult Dependant Grant and Travel Grant etc. are reported as awards.

## Executive summary - 2022/23 full year and 2023/24 early in year

For more detail, please click on the individual headline:

- 4.3% decrease in **higher education student support** in academic year 2022/23, at £19.7 billion
- Number of **full-time Maintenance Loans** paid remains relatively consistent to the previous year, at 1.15 million
- In 2022/23, as the last Maintenance Grant-eligible students conclude their courses, the % of full-time **maintenance support attributable to grants** falls below 0.1%
- Provisional figures indicate a potential 1.1% decrease in the number of **Tuition Fees Loans** paid on behalf of **full-time** students
- Continued decrease in the number of **Tuition Fee Loans** paid on behalf of **EU (outside UK) students**, due to the change in policy in 2021/22
- 6.1% decrease in the number of **Tuition Fee Loans** paid on behalf of **part-time** students
- **Tuition Fee Loan** take-up for **accelerated degrees** continues to increase
- 6.3% of all full-time loan borrowers took only a **Tuition Fee Loan and opted out of Maintenance Loan support** – consistent with the previous two years
- 16.7% decrease in the number of **Postgraduate Master's Loans** issued in 2022/23
- Provisional figures for 2022/23 indicate a potential first, yet small decline in the take-up of **Postgraduate Doctoral Loans**
- Finalised figures confirm a 5.9% increase in the number of full-time students claiming **Disabled Students' Allowance** in academic year 2021/22
- 20.3% increase in the amount claimed in **Childcare Grant**, reaching £244.1 million in 2022/23
- By end-October 2023, a total of 1.17 million undergraduates and postgraduates have been awarded/paid a total of £4.81 billion for **academic year 2023/24**
- Early look at **academic year 2023/24** shows a continued decline in the number of **EU (outside UK)** students paid, due to the funding-policy change in 2021/22
- Early figures indicate a potential 4.5% reduction in the number of **new students** receiving student finance in **academic year 2023/24**

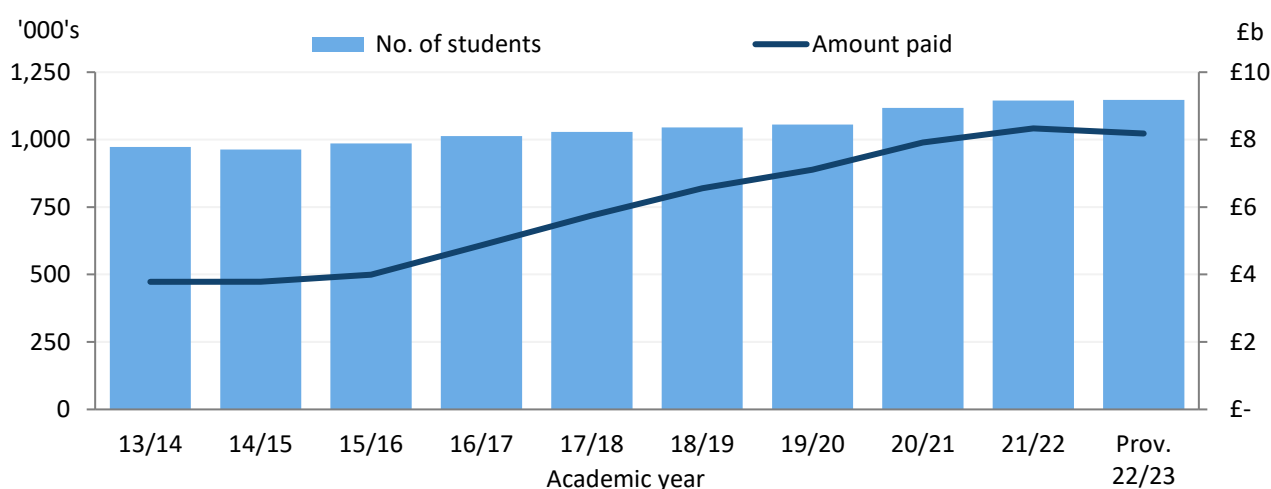
## Undergraduate Maintenance Loans

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 or part-time basis. The amount awarded is dependent on household income.

### Number of full-time Maintenance Loans paid for academic year 2022/23 remains relatively consistent to the previous year, at 1.15 million

Figure 2: Number of students domiciled in England receiving higher education full-time Maintenance Loans and amount paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 3A (i)**

[Download the data for Figure 2 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Figure 2 shows the number of full-time students in receipt of a Maintenance Loan in academic year 2013/14 was 0.97 million. Following a small 1.0% decrease in the subsequent year, numbers have gradually increased year-on-year, most significantly in 2020/21 (by 5.9%) to reach 1.15 million in 2022/23.

This provisional position for academic year 2022/23 indicates very little movement in the number of borrowers compared to the previous year (up 0.2%) with an increase of just 2,400 borrowers (vs. a 27,700 increase in the previous year/up 2.5%).

£3.8 billion was paid out in the form of Maintenance Loans in 2013/14. This remained below £4.0 billion through academic year 2015/16. From 2016/17 new students were no longer eligible for Maintenance Grants and in turn the maximum Maintenance Loan available was increased significantly (by 42.9% to £8,200). This resulted in a 21.9% increase in the total paid out, to £4.9 billion in the first year of this new policy.

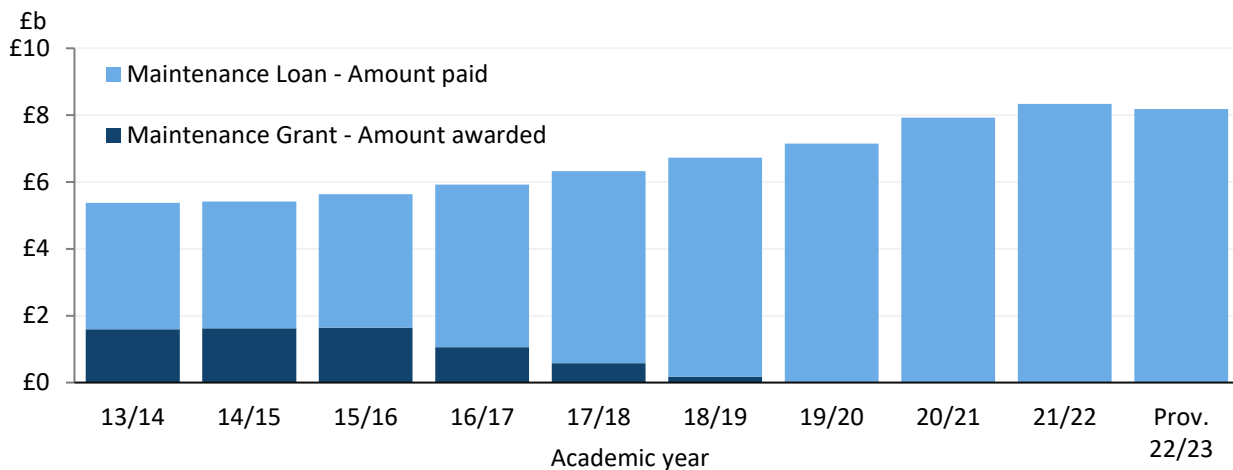
In subsequent academic years, increases slowed (down to 5.3% in 2021/22) due to the lessening percentage of borrowers who remained eligible for a Maintenance Grant (and therefore the lower maximum Maintenance Loan). For more information on maximum loans and grants available, please refer to **Table 1A**.

The total amount paid out peaked at £8.3 billion in 2021/22 before reporting the first potential decrease in the most recent year, down 1.8% to a provisional figure of £8.2 billion. It should be noted, however that the provisional figure for the 2021/22 academic year (published in the **2022 edition** of this publication) of £8.0 billion was 4.2% lower than the finalised figure of £8.3 billion published in this year's publication.

## In 2022/23, as the last Maintenance Grant-eligible students conclude their courses, the % of full-time maintenance support attributable to grants falls below 0.1%

Figure 3: Total amount paid/awarded in full-time maintenance support to higher education students

The legend follows the same order as the stacks in the columns.



Source: **Table 3A and Table 4A**

[Download the data for Figure 3 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Figure 3 displays the total amount of maintenance support paid to full-time students, split into Maintenance Loans and Maintenance Grants.

In contrast to the **previously discussed** trend in Maintenance Loans, Figure 3 shows the total amount awarded in Maintenance Grants totalled £1.6 billion in 2013/14, reducing year-on-year to just £1.4 million by academic year 2022/23.

The first significant decrease was reported in 2016/17 (down by 35.7%) due to the discontinuation of the grant to new students.

Since 2017/18 decreases escalated due to the ever-decreasing proportion of full-time borrowers who remained eligible (only those who were/are in continuing study since pre-2016/17).

Due to the discontinuation of the Maintenance Grant, the % of maintenance support attributed to grants has decreased from 29.6% in academic year 2013/14, to virtually zero in 2022/23 as the last eligible grant students have reached the end of their courses.



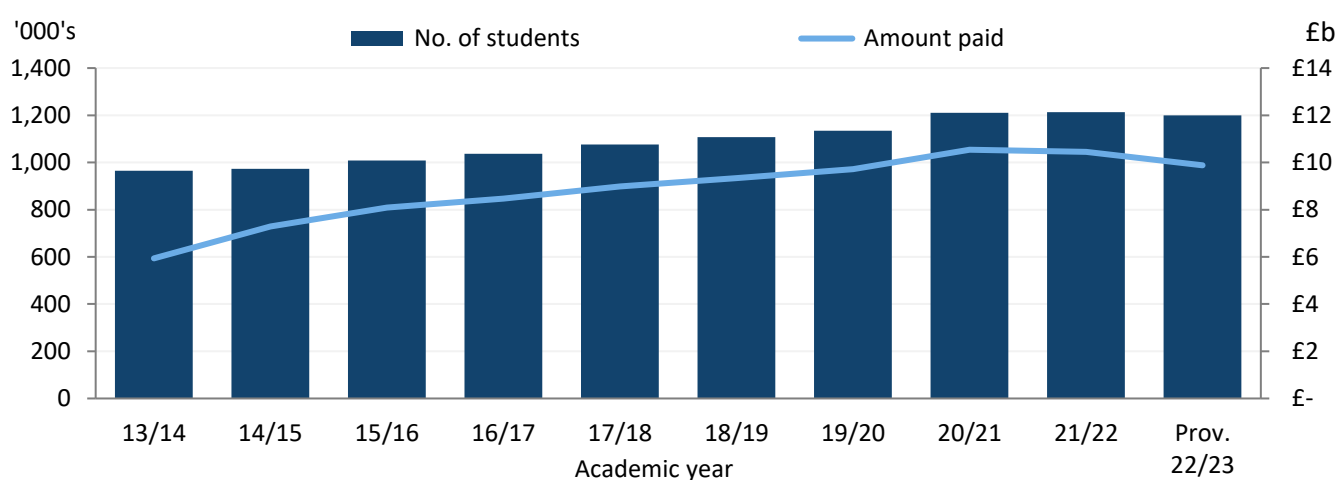
## Undergraduate Tuition Fee Loans

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.

### Provisional figures indicate a potential 1.1% decrease in the number of Tuition Fees Loans paid on behalf of full-time students in academic year 2022/23

Figure 4: Number of Tuition Fee Loans paid on behalf of full-time England and EU (outside UK) domiciled students and amount paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 3B (i)**

[Download the data for Figure 4 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Figure 4 shows the number of Tuition Fee Loans paid out on behalf of full-time students in 2013/14 was 0.97 million. This number increased by an average of 2.7% each year up until academic year 2019/20, reaching 1.13 million borrowers.

2020/21 recorded the most significant increase (of 6.6%) up to 1.21 million. In 2021/22 the number of Tuition Fee Loans paid remained relatively constant, with a very small increase of 0.3% in comparison to the previous year.

The provisional number of loans paid for academic year 2022/23 is 1.20 million, 1.1% less than the finalised figure for 2021/22 (down 13,600). This is potentially the first recorded decrease in regard to the number of loans paid, however it should be noted that as the most recent year's Tuition Fee Loan figures are marked as 'provisional' within this publication, they are subject to potential change.

This provisional decrease is made up of a 0.1% increase in loans paid on behalf of England-domiciled students (+ 1,100) offset by a 35.0% decrease in loans paid on behalf of EU (outside UK) students (- 14,700).

In academic year 2013/14, £5.9 billion was paid out on behalf of full-time students in the form of Tuition Fee Loans. The most significant increase was noted in the following year (up 22.8%) owing to the

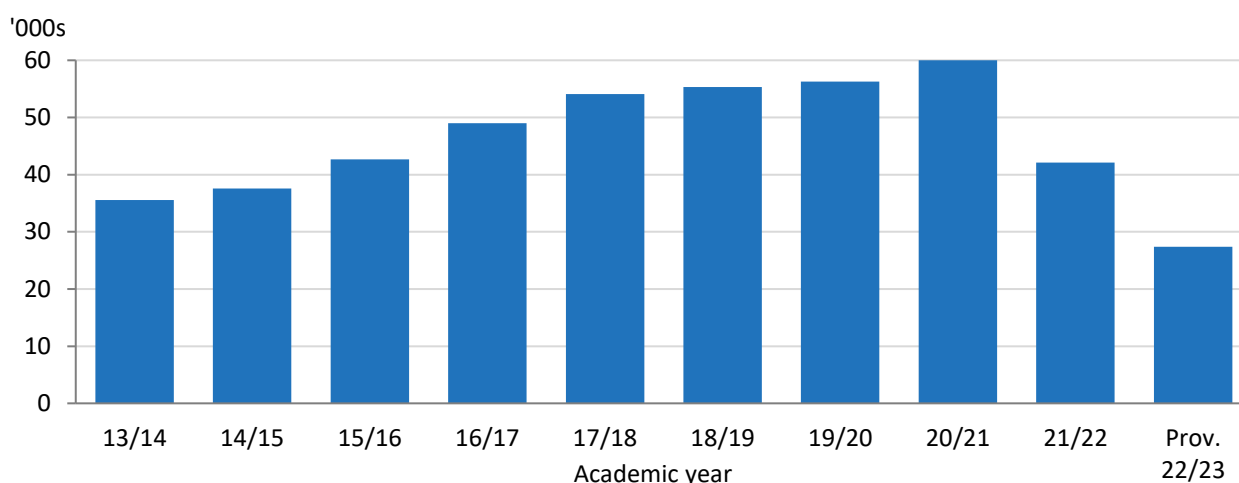
decreasing proportion of pre-2012/13 students whose tuition fees were capped at £3,375 (in 2012/13 this was increased to £9,000). By 2020/21 the amount paid reached £10.5 billion.

Academic year 2021/22 saw the first decrease in the amount paid, albeit by just 0.8%. The provisional amount paid out for the 2022/23 academic year indicates a further decrease, at 5.5% lower than the finalised position for 2021/22 (at £9.9 billion).

However it should be noted that the provisional figure for the 2021/22 academic year (published in the **2022 edition** of this publication) of £10.1 billion was 4.0% lower than the finalised figure published in this year's publication.

## Continued decrease in the number of Tuition Fee Loans paid on behalf of EU (outside UK) students, due to the change in policy in 2021/22

Figure 5: Number of Tuition Fee Loans paid on behalf of full-time EU (outside UK) domiciled students



Source: **Table 3B (i)**

[Download the data for Figure 5 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

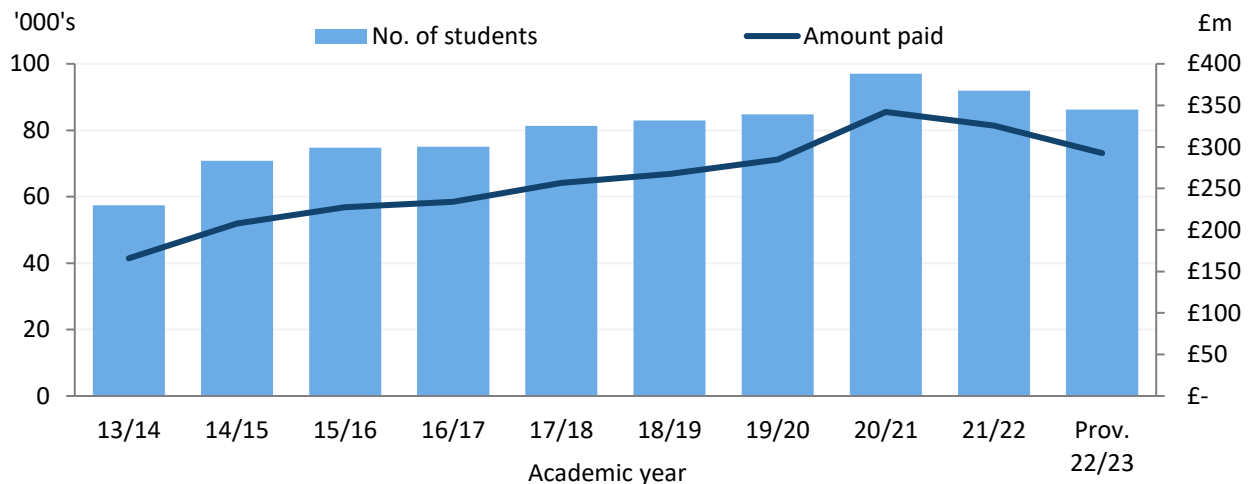
Figure 5 shows that in 2013/14, Tuition Fee Loans were paid on behalf of 35,500 EU (outside UK) domiciled students, increasing year-on-year to peak in 2020/21 at 60,000.

Academic year 2020/21 was named as the final year in which new EU students (without a **'settled or pre-settled' status**) would be eligible for Tuition Fee support. As a result, in 2021/22 the first decrease was reported (down 29.8% to 42,100). The provisional position for academic year 2022/23 indicates a potential further decrease of 35.0%, down to 27,400.

## 6.1% decrease in the number of Tuition Fee Loans paid on behalf of part-time students in 2022/23

Figure 6: Number of students domiciled in England and EU (outside UK) receiving part-time Tuition Fee Loans and amount paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 5A**

[Download the data for Figure 6 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Figure 6 shows that 57,400 Tuition Fee Loans were paid on behalf of part-time students in academic year 2013/14, increasing to 84,800 by 2019/20. In academic year 2020/21 a notable 14.5% increase was reported, predominantly as a result of an additional 10,000 entrants enrolled in Open University courses, potentially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic affecting some employment sectors.

Following this increase, figures normalised resulting in an overall reduction of 5.3% (down to 91,900) in the following year. The provisional figure for the 2022/23 academic year shows a further decrease of 6.1% (down to 86,300). However, it should be noted that as the most recent year's Tuition Fee Loan figures are marked as 'provisional' within this publication, they are subject to potential change. This potential decrease is made up of a 5.8% reduction in England-domiciled students and a 18.2% fall in EU (outside UK) domiciled students.

£165.8 million was paid out in Tuition Fee Loans on behalf of part-time students in academic year 2013/14, increasing to peak at £342.0 million by 2020/21 (which was a notable 20.1% increase on 2019/20). Following the trend in the number of loans paid, a first decrease was reported in 2021/22 (of 4.8% down to £325.8 million).

The provisional amount paid out for the 2022/23 academic year indicates a potential further decrease, of 10.2% against the finalised position for 2021/22 (at £292.6 million). This reduction is made up of a 9.8% decrease in the amount paid out on behalf of England-domiciled students, and a 23.8% decrease in respect of loans paid out on behalf of EU (outside UK) domiciled students.

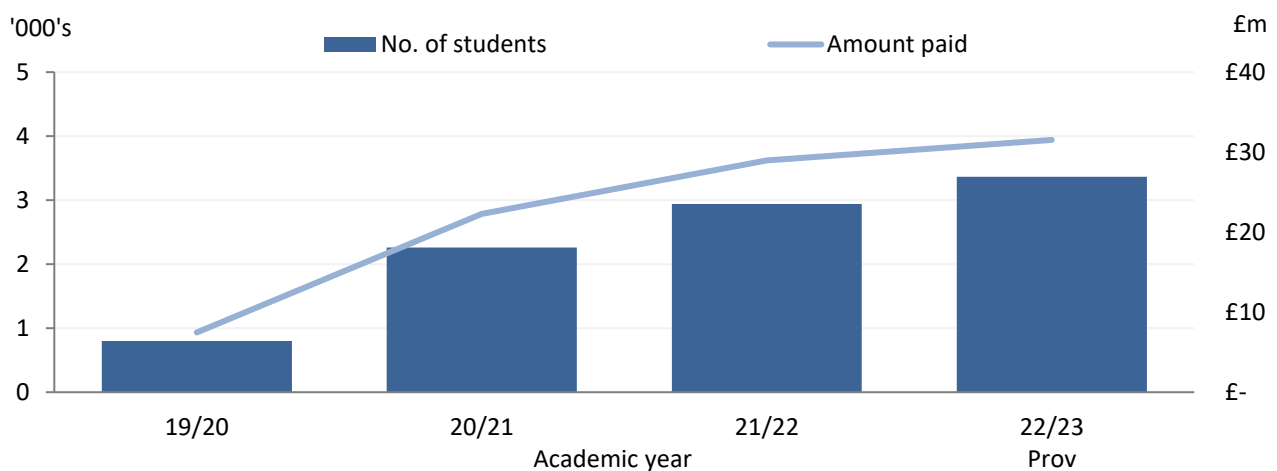
Again, it should be noted that the provisional figure for the 2021/22 academic year (published in the **2022 edition** of this publication) of £299.7 million was 8.7% lower than the finalised figure published in this year's publication.

## Tuition Fee Loan take-up for accelerated degrees continues to increase in academic year 2022/23

Accelerated degrees are full-time courses taught in a time period of at least one year less than the length of the equivalent standard course. To qualify these courses must lead to an honours, ordinary or integrated master's degree. For courses that meet the eligibility to be classed as accelerated degrees, higher education providers can now charge 20% extra on the maximum standard fee for that course whereas previously they could only charge the same as the equivalent standard course.

Figure 7: Number of students domiciled in England and EU (outside UK) receiving Tuition Fee Loans for accelerated study and amount paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 3B (iii)**

[Download the data for Figure 7 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Figure 7 demonstrates that in their first year of availability, 800 Tuition Fee Loans were paid out on behalf of students enrolled in accelerated study. Typically for a new student support type, there was a significant increase in take-up in the second year (up 181.7%) to 2,300. In 2021/22 a smaller, yet still notable increase of 30.1% was reported.

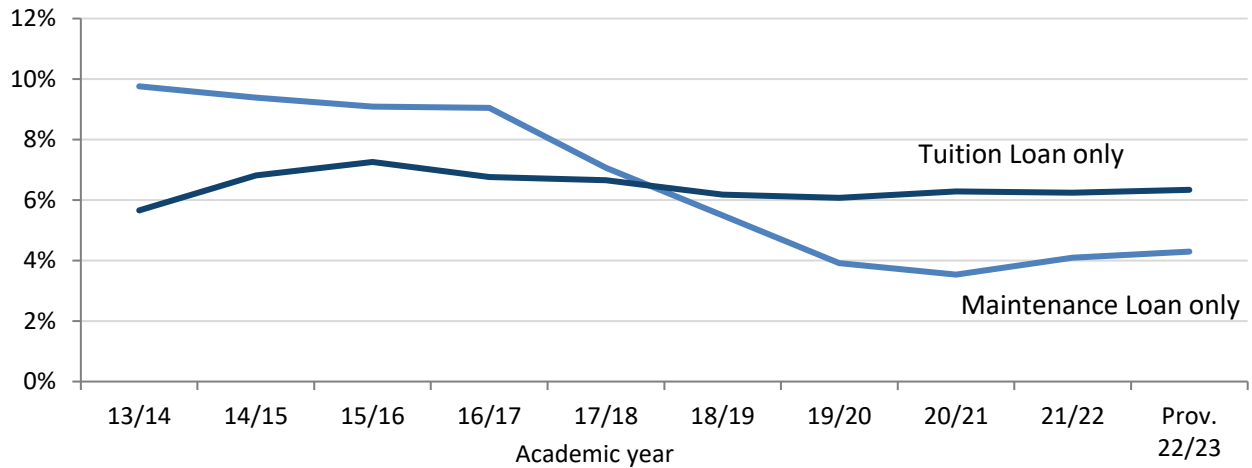
The provisional figure for academic year 2022/23 shows a further increase of 14.5% to reach 3,400.

The amount paid out has followed a very similar trend. In the first year of accelerated degree funding, a total of £7.5 million was paid out, increasing to £22.3 million in 2020/21 (up 198.5%). Subsequent increases slowed to 30.0% in 2021/22, then up 8.8% in academic year 2022/23, bringing the provisional total to £31.5 million.

As a percentage of the total number of full-time undergraduates taking full-time Tuition Fee Loans in 2022/23, those studying on accelerated degrees made up 0.3%.

## 6.3% of all full-time loan borrowers took only a Tuition Fee Loan and opted out of Maintenance Loan support – consistent with the previous two years

Figure 8: Maintenance Loan only borrowers and Tuition Fee Loan only borrowers as % of all loan borrowers



Source: **Table 3D**

[Download the data for Figure 8 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Figure 8 shows that as a percentage of all full-time borrowers, those opting to take out a Maintenance Loan without taking a Tuition Fee equated to 9.8% 2013/14. This subset reduced gradually to 9.0% by 2016/17 and then began to fall at a more increased rate, down to just 3.5% in 2020/21.

Since this point, the trend has reversed to increase year-on-year reaching a provisional figure for 2022/23 of 4.3%.

Figure 8 also indicates as a percentage of all full-time borrowers, those opting to take out a Tuition Fee Loan without taking a Maintenance Loan formed 5.7% in 2013/14. This subset increased to peak at 7.3% by 2015/16.

From this point until 2019/20, the percentage reduced year-on-year; down to 6.1%. The proportion of these borrowers has since remained relatively constant, averaging at 6.3%.

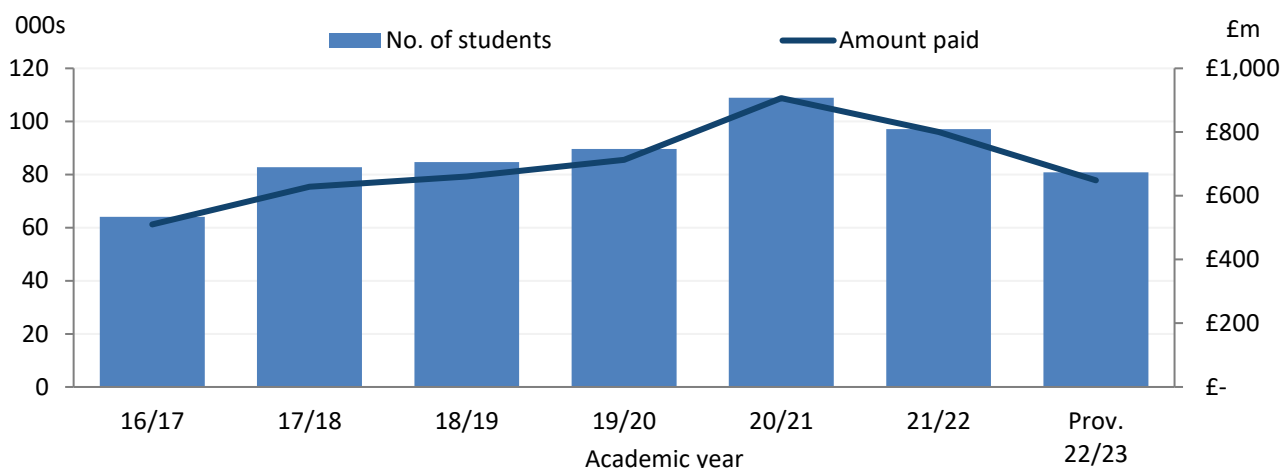
## Postgraduate loans

A Postgraduate Master's and Doctoral 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.

### 16.7% decrease in the number of Postgraduate Master's Loans issued in 2022/23

Figure 9: Number of students domiciled in England and EU (outside UK) receiving Postgraduate Master's Loans and amount paid.

The columns in this chart depict the number of students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 6A (i)**

[Download the data for Figure 9 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Figure 9 demonstrates that in the first year of availability, 64,100 postgraduates received a Postgraduate Master's Loan. Typically, in the second year numbers notably increased (up 29.2%). In the subsequent two years, increases slowed to an average of 4.1% to reach 89,700 by 2019/20.

Academic year 2020/21 saw a far more significant increase (up 21.5%) to reach 108,900. This could be attributed to the perceived reduced employment opportunities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, either encouraging undergraduates to continue to postgraduate level or non-students to return to study.

In 2021/22, it was unsurprising to note a reduction in comparison to the previous year as figures normalised following an outlying increase (down 10.9% to 97,100). However, the provisional figure for 2022/23 shows a further potential reduction of 16.7%, down to 80,800. This provisional position is made up of a 17.4% decrease in the number of England-domiciled students who were paid a Postgraduate Master's Loan (down 16,000) and a 4.3% decrease in EU (outside UK) domiciled students (down 200).

Mirroring the trend in borrower numbers, in the first year of the Postgraduate Master's Loan, a total of £510.1 million was paid to eligible students, increasing by a considerable 23.3% in the second year. Increases then slowed over the two subsequent years (averaging 6.4%) to reach £712.3 million by 2019/20.

In academic year 2020/21, potentially as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the amount paid out increased

by a significant 27.3% (to reach £906.5 million). Figures then nominalised in the following year falling by 11.8%.

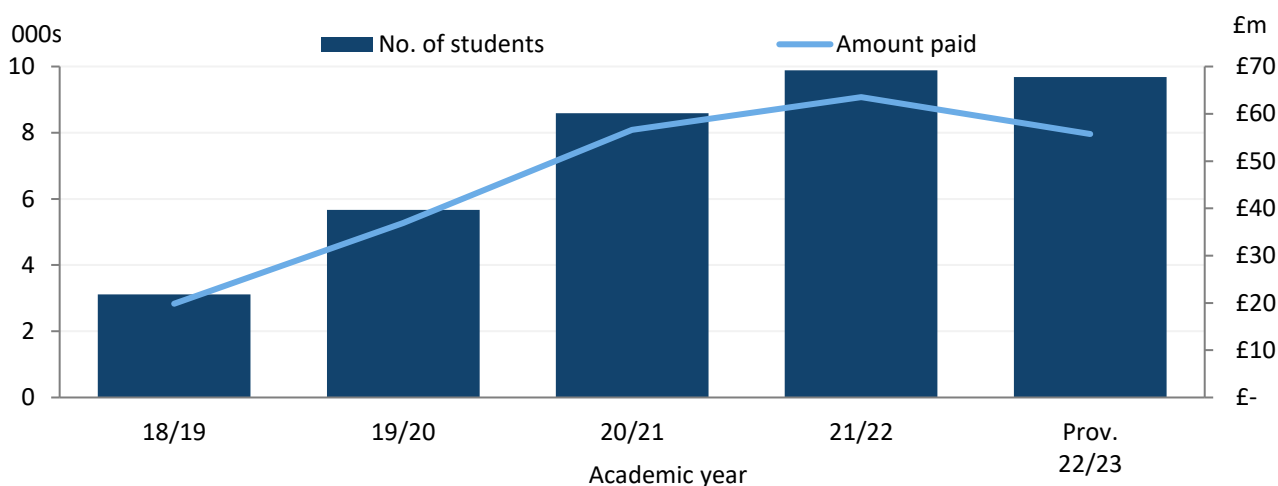
The provisional figure for 2022/23 shows a further reduction of 19.0%, down to £648.1 million. This is made up of a 19.9% decrease in the amount paid out to England-domiciled students (- £150.4 million) and a 2.8% decrease in EU (outside UK) domiciled students (- £1.2 million).

Due to later course start dates, postgraduate figures are marked as ‘provisional’ in the most recent academic year and are therefore subject to change. The provisional figure for the 2021/22 academic year (published in the **2022 edition** of this publication) of £769.2 million was 4.0% lower than the finalised figure of £799.7 million published in this year’s publication.

## Provisional figures for 2022/23 indicate a potential first, yet small decline in the take-up of Postgraduate Doctoral Loans

Figure 10: Number of students domiciled in England and EU (outside UK) receiving Postgraduate Doctoral Loans and amount paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 6A (ii)**

[Download the data for Figure 10 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

In academic year 2018/19, Postgraduate Doctoral Loans were made available to both eligible Wales and EU (outside UK)-domiciled students who commenced an eligible doctoral degree course.

Students can apply for the loan amount they will require for the entire duration of their course (up to a maximum of £27,892 in academic year 2022/23) whilst also providing an estimate of the number of years over which they will study (this can be changed at any time). Each academic year’s instalment is capped at a maximum rate (at £11,570 for 2022/23 applicants).

Figure 10 indicates that in the first year of availability 3,100 postgraduates received a doctoral loan.

In the second year, numbers considerably increased (up 81.9%) followed by a further significant increase in 2020/21 (of 51.6%) reaching 8,600. These levels of increase are characteristic for a new student support-type.

In academic year 2021/22, numbers continued to increase yet at a slower rate (up 15.1%).

The provisional figure for academic year 2022/23 shows the potential first, yet small reduction of 2.1%, down to 9,700. This provisional position is made up of a 1.9% decrease in the number of England-domiciled students (down 200) and a 5.1% decrease in EU (outside UK) domiciled students (down 20).

Due to later course start dates, postgraduate figures are marked as 'provisional' in the most recent academic year and are therefore subject to change. The provisional figure for the 2021/22 academic year (published in the **2022 edition** of this publication) of 9,700 borrowers was 2.4% lower than the finalised figure of 9,900, published in this year's publication.

Mirroring the trend in doctoral loan numbers, a total of £19.8 million was paid to eligible students in 2018/19. The amount paid out increased considerably in the subsequent two years (up by 86.1% and 53.4% respectively) to reach £56.6 million. In 2021/22, the total amount paid out continued to increase yet at a slower rate (up 12.2%).

The provisional figure for 2022/23 shows the first potential reduction of 12.3%, down to £55.7 million. This provisional position is made up of a 12.1% decrease in England-domiciled students (down £7.3 million) and a 16.0% decrease in EU (outside UK) domiciled students (down £0.5 million).

This potential decline in the amount paid out is more significant than the fall in the number of borrowers. This is driven by a 9.4% reduction in the provisional average loan borrowed (down from £6,400 to £5,800). This could be attributed to Doctoral students opting to take higher amounts of their maximum annual rate in the first years of their Doctoral course, and lesser amounts in subsequent years of their course

Also for context, the provisional figure for the 2021/22 academic year (published in the **2022 edition** of this publication) of £56.5 million was 12.5% lower than the finalised figure of £63.5 million published in this year's publication. Therefore the 2022/23 provisional figure is subject to change.



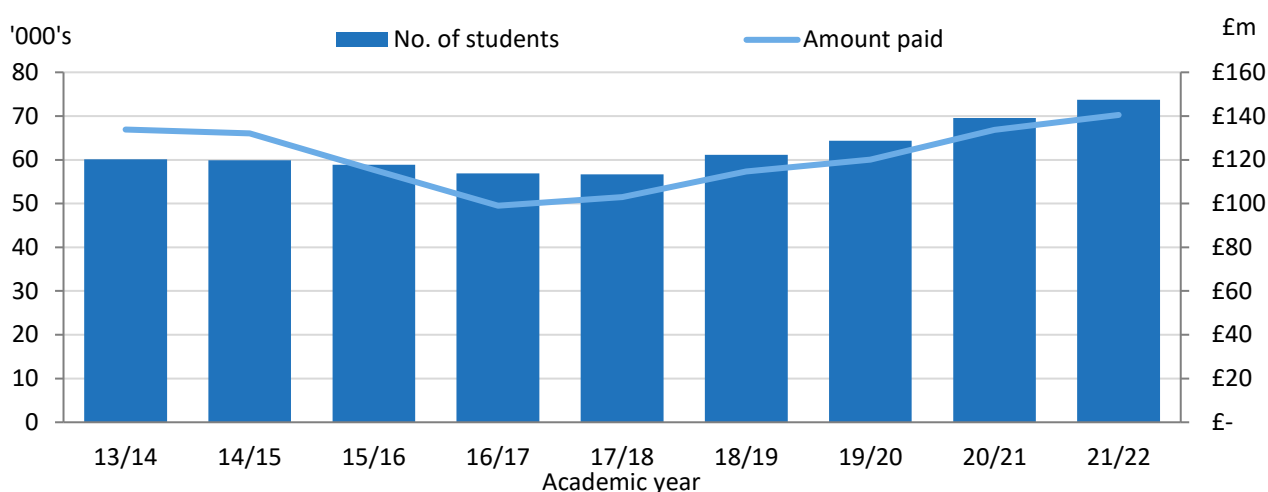
## Disabled Students' Allowance

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) is an additional part of the student finance package and helps pay for extra costs a student might incur in higher education as a direct result of their disability. This includes long-term health conditions, mental health difficulties, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or dyspraxia etc. The allowance is non repayable and does not depend on household income. The individual's condition must meet the definition of a disability under the Equality Act 2010. Generally, Disabled Students' Allowance is 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.

### Finalised figures confirm a 5.9% increase in the number of full-time students claiming Disabled Students' Allowance in academic year 2021/22

Figure 11: Number of full-time students claiming Disabled Students' Allowance and amount paid (data effective one year later)

The columns in this chart depict the number of students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 4B**

[Download the data for Figure 11 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

The vast majority of DSA is paid to suppliers once the Student Loans Company receive the invoices for equipment or services. As invoices continue to be received well after the end of the academic year, we capture a more finalised position by quoting figures an academic year later than much of this publication.

Figure 11 demonstrates that the total number of full-time students in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance in academic year 2013/14 was 60,100. Numbers reduced slightly over the subsequent four years down to 56,700, potentially as a result of a policy change from 2015/16 whereby students were required to make a £200 contribution towards the costs of a DSA-funded computer, then a further policy change in 2016/17 whereby responsibility for providing less specialist non-medical help moved from DSA to higher education providers under their Equality Act 2010 responsibilities. In 2018/19 this trend reversed, and the number of claimants increased by 7.8% to 61,200. Increases have continued year-on-year to peak at 73,700 in 2021/22, a 5.9% increase on the previous year.

The amount claimed has followed a similar, yet a slightly more exaggerated trend. In academic year 2013/14 £133.9 million was paid out in Disabled Students' Allowance. This reduced to £99.0 million by 2016/17 likely affected by the aforementioned policy changes. Academic year 2017/18 saw the beginning of year-on-year increases, the most significant in 2018/19 and 2020/21 (both up by 11.3%). The total amount paid out for 2021/22 was £140.5 million, a 5.1% increase on the previous year

As at 31 August 2023, a total of £139.4 million has been paid for academic year 2022/23 - this is a 9.0% increase on the £127.8 million paid by the same point for 2021/22.

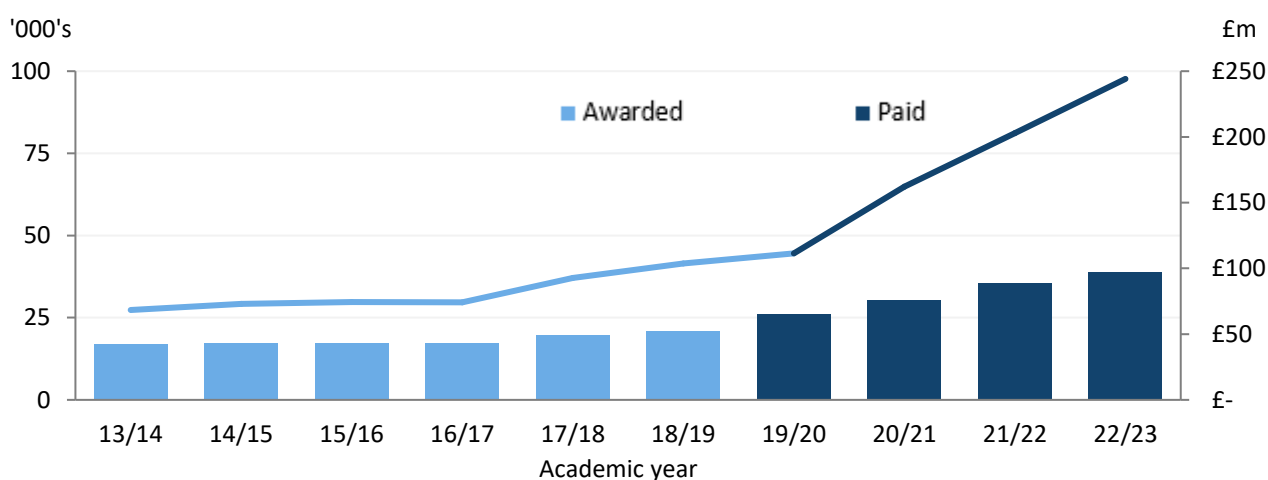
## Childcare Grant

Childcare Grants are available to students to assist with the costs for childcare while they attend university or college. The allowance is based on the household income and the students' own circumstances. Please note that payments/awards shown are those made in the academic year and do not necessarily relate to costs incurred within that academic year.

### 20.3% increase in the amount claimed in Childcare Grant, reaching £244.1 million in 2022/23

Figure 12: Number of Childcare Grant awards/payments made and amount awarded/paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount paid against the right-hand axis. The legend follows the same order as the columns, switching from 'awards' to 'payments' at academic year 2019/20.



Source: **Table 4C (i)(ii)**

[Download the data for Figure 12 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Prior to academic year 2019/20, Childcare Grant was reported as 'awards' based on the number of students applying and the student's submitted financial estimates for the year. These were then finalised a year later, in the subsequent publication. During this period, Childcare Grant was paid directly to the student based on their estimations and their grant account would be balanced once actual paid amounts were verified.

For academic year 2019/20, Childcare Grant payments changed to being paid to childcare providers directly, via a third-party system based on actual costs incurred. This was done in partnership with a third-party partner, the Childcare Grant Payment Service (CCGPS). *Figure 12* highlights this change in time-series.

In academic year 2013/14, 16,700 students were awarded Childcare Grant. By 2018/19, this had increased to 20,900. In the first year of the new policy, there was a significant 24.4% increase in the number of students claiming Childcare Grant. This has increased steadily year-on year to peak at 38,700 in 2022/23 (a 9.3% increase on the previous year).

In 2013/14, a total of £68.4 million was awarded to students in the form of Childcare Grant. By 2018/19, this had increased to £103.8 million. Since this point, the amount paid out to childcare providers has increased significantly, to peak at £244.1 million in 2022/23 (a 20.3% increase on the previous year).

For more information regarding awards versus payments, please refer to our **Things you need to know** section.

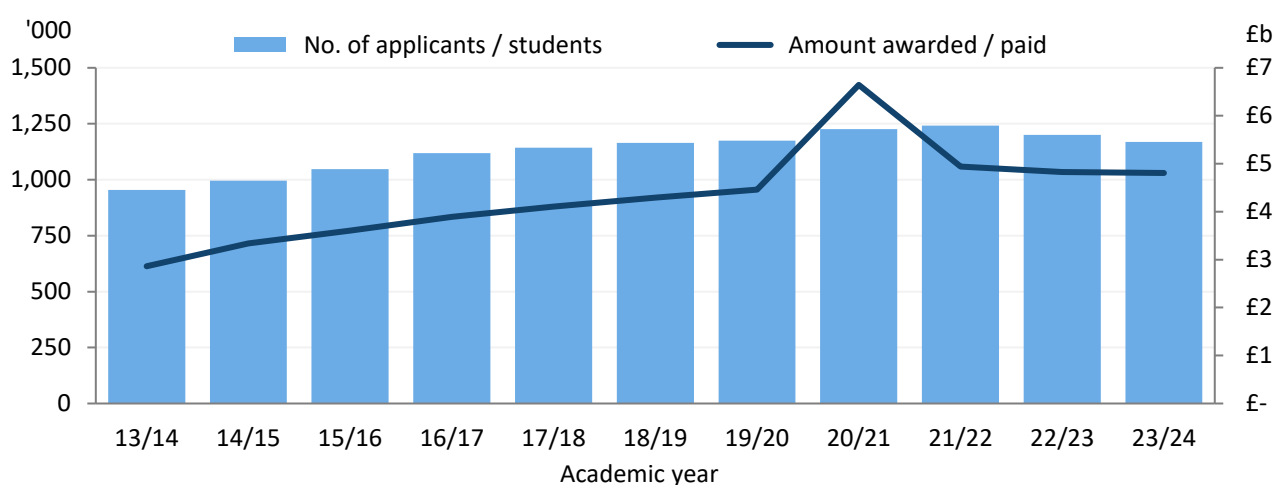
## Early in year overview – academic year 2023/24

Table 7C (i) shows an early view of academic year 2023/24 at effective date 31 October 2023. This would be approximately two months into a typical academic year. These figures will be near-finalised in Table 2 of the next update of this publication, due to be released in November 2024.

### By end-October 2023, a total of 1.17 million undergraduates and postgraduates have been awarded/paid a total of £4.81 billion for academic year 2023/24

Figure 13. Early-in-year: Number of students domiciled in England and EU (outside UK) receiving higher education support and amount awarded/paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of applicants/students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount awarded/paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: Table 7C (i)

[Download the data for Figure 13 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

Figure 13 shows that by end-October in the 2013/14 academic year, a total of 954,100 undergraduates and postgraduates had been awarded/paid student support. This early position increased steadily over the subsequent six years to reach 1.17 million by 2019/20. The total amount awarded/paid by this early point of the same academic years followed a very similar trend, growing from £2.86 billion in 2013/14 to £4.46 billion by 2019/20.

As at end-October 2020, a total of £6.64 billion had been awarded/paid to 1.23 million students for the 2020/21 academic year. Despite a 4.4% increase in the number of students awarded/paid, the amount awarded/paid was 49.0% higher than at the same point in the previous year. This significant increase was predominantly attributed to an **early second instalment** of undergraduate tuition fee payments made to higher education providers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (two payments made in October 2020, instead of the typical schedule of one instalment paid in October and one in the following February). For further detail, please refer to our **Additional Information section**.

Figures normalised in the following year with the amount awarded/paid reducing to £4.94 billion. Omitting the previous outlying year, the amount awarded/paid shows a steady increase between 2019/20 and 2021/22, in line with previous annual increases.

The early-look at academic year 2022/23 indicated the first reported decrease in both the number awarded/paid and the amount awarded/paid (down 3.3% and 2.4% respectively).

As at 31 October 2023, a total of 1.17 million applicants/students have been paid for academic year 2023/24. This continued the downward trend beginning in the previous year (by a further 2.7%). The amount awarded/paid however has remained relatively constant, at £4.81 billion (down by 0.3%).

Of this, £4.61 billion has been awarded/paid so far to 1.10 million undergraduate students. The number awarded/paid is 2.6% below the end-October position in the previous year (29,000 fewer) yet the amount awarded/paid has remained relatively stable (down 0.3% / £12.8 million).

Full-time undergraduate numbers have reduced by 2.0% down to 1.06 million (21,700 less) and part-time undergraduate numbers have reduced by a more notable 14.7%, to 42,000 (down by 7,200).

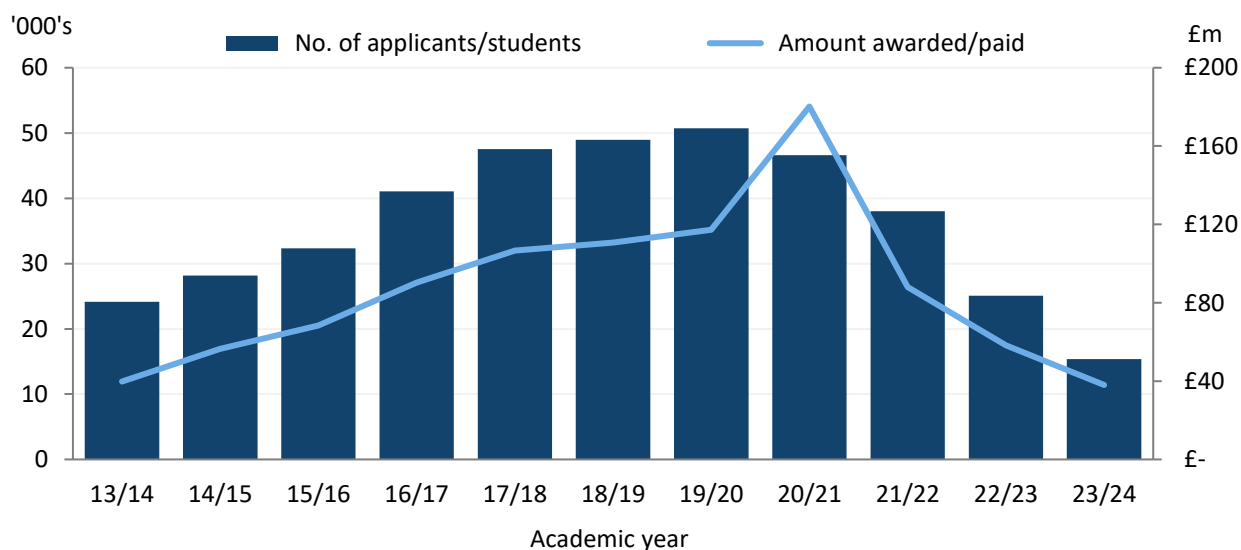
This early look at the 2023/24 academic year also indicates a total of £198.8 million has been paid to 66,000 postgraduate students so far. In comparison to the same point in 2022/23, this is a 4.7% decrease in the number of postgraduates paid (down by 3,300) and a 1.8% decrease in the amount paid out (£3.64 million less).

Due to the later start-dates of postgraduate courses in comparison to undergraduate courses, an enhanced picture of the academic year 2023/24 will not be evident until much later and will feature in *Table 2* and *Table 6* of the 2024 version of this publication. For context, when comparing the early-view figures for the 2022/23 academic year (shown in *Table 7C (i)*) to the near-finalised figures for the same academic year (shown in *Table 2*), it is evident that the number of postgraduates awarded/paid increased by 35%, compared to 19% in undergraduate numbers.

## Early look at academic year 2023/24 shows a continued decline in the number of EU (outside UK) students paid, due to the funding-policy change in 2021/22

Figure 14. Early-in-year: Number of students domiciled in EU (outside UK) receiving higher education support and amount awarded/paid

The columns in this chart depict the number of applicants/students against the left-hand axis, and the line illustrates the amount awarded/paid against the right-hand axis.



Source: **Table 7C (i)**

**Download the data for Figure 14** (ODS, 6KB)

Figure 14 shows the number of EU (outside UK) undergraduate and postgraduate students paid by end-October for academic year 2013/14 was 24,100. This increased year-on-year to peak at 50,700 in 2019/20.

The amount paid out, over the same period of time increased from £39.7 million to £117.3 million.

An early look at 2020/21 reported the first decrease in the number of EU (outside UK) students paid, down 8.2% to 46,600. This can be attributed to factors as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic e.g. travel-limitations and later recruitment by higher education providers. However, due to the previously mentioned **early second instalment** of undergraduate tuition fees payments made to higher education providers, the amount paid out by this point in academic year 2020/21 was 53.6% higher than in the previous year.

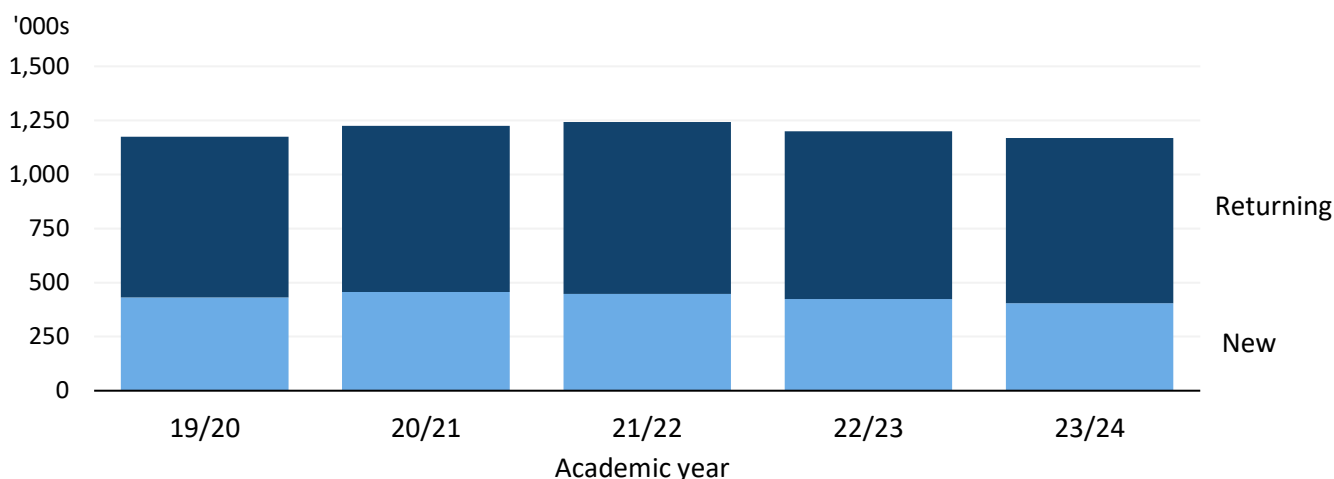
In academic year 2021/22, new EU (outside UK) students in England (without a **'settled' or 'pre-settled status'**) were no longer eligible for tuition fee funding. This resulted in notable decreases, with the number of students paid reducing by 18.4% and the amount paid falling by a significant 51.2% (this also owing to figures normalising against an outlying year). Figures continued to decrease in 2022/23, down by a further 34.1% to 25,100 students paid, and a further reduction in the amount paid out, by 33.8% down to £58.3 million.

As at end-October 2023, 15,400 EU (outside UK) undergraduate and postgraduate students have been paid student support for academic year 2023/24. This is a further decrease of 38.7% compared to the previous year. A total of £38.0 million has been paid out so far for the 2023/24 academic year. This is 34.8% less than paid out by the same point for 2022/23.

These figures will continue to decline due to the policy change. Figures from academic year 2021/22 onwards will only include continuing students.

## Early figures indicate a potential 4.5% reduction in the number of new students receiving student finance in academic year 2023/24

Figure 15: Early-in-year: Number of new and returning students domiciled in England and EU (outside UK) awarded/paid student support



Source: **Table 7C (ii)**

[Download the data for Figure 15 \(ODS, 6KB\)](#)

'New' students are defined as those who have not previously received student support from the Student Loans Company (SLC). 'Returning' students are defined as those who have.

Figure 15 indicates that the number of 'new' students awarded/paid student support by the end-October position for academic year 2019/20 was 431,400. This increased to 456,000 (up 5.7%) by the same point in the following year. Since then, numbers have declined, by 1.7% in 2021/22 and a further 5.4% in 2022/23 down to 423,600.

As at end-October 2023, the number of 'new' students awarded/paid so far for academic year 2023/24 has decreased by a further 4.5%, down to 404,500.

The trend in 'returning' students follows a similar pattern yet includes a much larger proportion of students. The number of 'returning' students who had been awarded/paid student support by end-October in academic year 2019/20 was 742,900. This increased by 3.6% the following year, and by a further 3.2% in 2021/22, reaching 793,900. 2022/23 reported a decline in 'returning' students, down 2.2% to 776,600.

At end-October 2023, the number of 'returning' students awarded/paid so far for academic year 2023/24 has decreased by a further 1.7%, down to 763,500.

As a proportion of all awarded/paid students at this early point in the academic year, 'new' students have decreased from 36.7% in 2019/20 down to 34.6% by 2023/24 whereas 'returning' students have increased from 63.3% to 65.4% over the same period.

## Additional Information

### Available student financial support

Details on student support available in academic year 2022/23 and 2023/24 can be found on [gov.uk](#).

### Factors affecting early in year figures academic year 2020/21

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Education and devolved administrations of Wales and Northern Ireland requested that the Student Loans Company revised the schedule of undergraduate tuition fee payments to higher education providers for the 2020/21 academic year. This revision enabled providers to access the second instalment of tuition fee payments early (two paid in October 2020, instead of first paid October 2020 and second in February 2021), while ensuring that students were not impacted by the change. This is evident on Table 7C (i) and (ii). The normal schedule resumed in academic year 2021/22.

These early in year figures for academic year 2020/21 may also have been affected by the Ofqual standardisation of grades, allowing students whose exams were cancelled in the summer of 2020 to receive calculated grades enabling them to progress to further study. For more information please refer to [gov.uk](#).

### Definitions

For definitions of terms used in our publication, please refer to our [Definitions](#) page.

### Data Sources

This publication uses data from SLC's administrative systems. For details of the administrative data sources used in our publications please refer to our [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. Please refer to our [Quality Guidelines](#) for further information.

### Related Statistics Publications

Student Loans Company publish statistics on higher education funding for 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 Support for Higher Education](#).

In December 2020, owing to the significant public interest, SLC took the decision to publish data on the withdrawal notifications it receives from higher education providers (HEPs) in order to contribute towards an understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic may be impacting students. Due to ongoing interest, SLC continues to publish this series. These publications are housed within our [Other Statistics](#) section of [gov.uk](#).

SLC also publish statistics on the repayment of student loans for higher education in the series 'Student Loans in England'. The **latest release** of this series, covering tax year 2022-23 was published on 15 June 2023.

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 August 2023 covering academic session 2022/23.

## 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 several improvements. For more information, please refer to our **National Statistics** page.