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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**24+ ADVANCED LEARNING LOANS PAID IN ENGLAND,
ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/14, AUGUST TO JULY INCLUSIVE**

INTRODUCTION

This statistical first release presents figures on the 24+ Advanced Learning Loans paid to Further Education Providers on behalf of Further Education learners. It covers the payments made in the academic year 2013/14 i.e. August 2013 to July 2014 inclusive.

KEY POINTS

The number of learners with Advanced Learning Loans paid to their Further Education Learning Provider in the period August 2013 to July 2014 inclusive was 55,900.

The amount paid in the period was £115.8 million.

The average amount paid per learner is £2,070. This final quarter of the academic year has shown the expected increase in the average amount paid per learner as the monthly instalments are paid for continuing courses.

52,100 (93%) of the learners are UK domiciled and 3,800 (7%) are EU(non-UK) domiciled.

Alongside publication of the *Skills Funding Statement* on 10 February 2014 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) laid regulations to remove Apprenticeships from loan funding and make them eligible for funding via the Adult Skills Budget from 7 March 2014.

The original number of learners with Advanced Learning Loans paid for Apprenticeships was 431 with loan payments of approximately £458,000 (See Table 2 in the 26 June 2014 publication for details). All but £51,000 had been reversed by the end of the year (0.04% of the total reported in Table 1).

Table 1 : 24+ Advanced Learning Loans Paid to Further Education Learning Providers on behalf of Learners in England

**Academic year 2013/14
August to July inclusive**

Key Points

- In the twelve months of academic year 2013/14, Further Education Learning Providers were paid 24+ Advanced Learning Loans on behalf of 55,900 learners which amounted to £115.8m.

| Entry Cohort | Domicile of Learner | Number of Learners (000's) | Amount Paid (£m) | Average Amount Paid (£) |
|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | 2013/14 (as at 31/07/14) | 2013/14 (as at 31/07/14) | 2013/14 (as at 31/07/14) |
| 2013/14 | UK | 52.1 | 107.4 | 2,060 |
| | EU (Outside UK) | 3.8 | 8.3 | 2,180 |
| Total | | 55.9 | 115.8 | 2,070 |

The Entry Cohort is the academic year in which the Learner's Learning Aim begins. The Learning Aim may continue into a following academic year which is why there are loans that can be paid in academic years after the Entry Cohort year. The average loan paid in a subsequent year is likely to be lower than in the entry year because the Learning Aim may not run right till the end of that subsequent year.

NOTES FOR USERS

Learners who started a course on or after 1 August 2013 may qualify for a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan. These loans help learners to pay the fees charged by colleges and training organisations. Most learners aged 24 and over, studying at Level 3 or Level 4 and Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships, will qualify for these new loans from the Government. Household income isn't taken into account and there is no credit check. None of the loans become due for repayment until April 2016. In tax year 2016-17 learners don't have to pay anything back until their income is over £21,000 a year.

To qualify learners must be:

- aged 24 or over on the first day of their course (there is no upper age limit) and starting their course on or after 1 August 2013
- living in the UK on the first day of their course and have lived in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for three years immediately before this unless they meet one of the exceptions such as being an EU national as detailed in the 'Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – Learners' page of the Student Finance England website. See: http://www.sfenland.slc.co.uk/media/474817/24_faq_v2.pdf
- studying with a college or training organisation in England approved for public funding
- enrolling on an eligible course at Level 3 and Level 4 (which includes A levels, Access to HE Diplomas and other Diplomas and Certificates). These loans do not cover Degrees or other forms of Higher Education (HE).

The amount learners can receive depends on their course, the fees charged by the college or training organisation and maximum amounts set by the Government. Student Finance England will assess a learner for the lower of the fee charged, the amount requested or the maximum funding amount set by the government. The minimum loan amount is £300. Learners can take out a loan for the maximum amount to cover their fee or they can pay all or part of the fee themselves. The fee for the course is set by the college or training organisation.

Student Finance England will pay the loan to the college or training organisation once they have confirmed attendance on the course. Attendance is confirmed initially two weeks after learners commence their course and on a quarterly basis thereafter. Payments are made monthly until the learner completes their course. Liability incurs on a monthly basis, therefore if a learner leaves their course, they are no longer liable for future loan payments.

Learners can have up to a maximum of four 24+ Advanced Learning Loans. They can only take out one loan at a time for non A Level courses. For A Levels it's different. Learners can apply for up to four loans to cover the costs of the A Level Programme (this includes A Levels, AS and A2 qualifications). If learners are studying for more than one A Level at the same time, they can apply for up to four loans at the same time – one for each A Level. They can also get three more loans for non A Level courses at different times.

If learners are undertaking an Access to HE Diploma and then go on to complete an HE course, the outstanding balance of their 24+ Advanced Learning Loan will be written off. To qualify for this write off they must have fully completed both courses. Learners do not need to take out a loan for the HE course. However, it must be eligible for funding by Student Finance England. The HE course does not have to relate to the Access to HE course learners complete.

RECENT POLICY CHANGES

It became clear to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) from application and starts data that 24+ Advanced Learning Loans were not the preferred funding route for employers or prospective Apprentices who are aged 24 and above studying at Level 3 and above. Alongside publication of the *Skills Funding Statement* on 10 February 2014 BIS laid regulations to remove Apprenticeships from loan funding and make them eligible for funding via the Adult Skills Budget from 7 March 2014.

RELATED PUBLISHED FIGURES

Since 13 June 2013 the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) has been publishing monthly data showing the cumulative number of applications submitted for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education#advanced-learning-loans> It presents data relating to applications received for Further Education provision funded through 24+ Advanced Learning Loans. The data used to produce the publication are sourced from the Student Loans Company (SLC) application database, and cover applications received since the launch of the programme on 8 April 2013. The data refer to received applications (including those unprocessed), and therefore will be higher than the actual number of learners on a course with a 24+ Advanced Learning Loans in the same period.

BIS publishes a statistical series for Learner participation, outcomes and level of highest qualification held in Further Education. See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learner-participation-outcomes-and-level-of-highest-qualification-held>. The latest publication for academic year 2013/14 published on 16 October 2014 includes data on the number of learners with a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan, reported through the Individualised Learner Record for the period August 2013 to July 2014.

The 24+ Advanced Learning Loans Paid data published by SLC cover the same period as the BIS Learner data. However, it only shows payments made between August 2013 and July 2014, whilst the ILR captures learners on a course with a 24+ Advanced Learning Loan that started during this period including some where the first scheduled payment date is beyond the end of July 2014.

SLC publishes an annual statistical series for [Student Loans Debt and Repayment for England](#). From the end of financial year onwards that series includes 24+ Advanced Learning Loans as well as the pre-existing Higher Education student loans. It provides statistics on what happens to the debt after payment (addition of interest, repayments, cancellations etc.).

DATA SOURCES, METHODS, STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

This publication uses data from a single source: administrative data from the SLC Customer Ledger Account Servicing System (CLASS). For details of the administrative sources see the published [Statement of administrative sources](#) published on the SLC website.

SLC has published the [Quality Guidelines](#) that it follows. As per those guidelines a Quality Plan is produced for each publication. The Quality Plan stipulates two stages of Quality Assurance. Data is extracted from the administrative systems by Data Mining Analysts who work with that data day in and day out. The extract is peer reviewed using a standard Quality Assurance checklist. The statistical tables created using that data are quality assured using the Statistical Quality guidelines. Quality Assurance focuses on credibility of trends and relationship to policy maxima etc.

The data source for the Payments data is the loan account and financial transactions in the CLASS database. This is the same source that is used for Government Administration financial accounting and, hence, is subject to rigorous reconciliation with daily reports, monthly reports and a year-end audit.