

SDR 199/2011

27 October 2011

Assembly Learning Grants Awarded to Welsh Domiciled Students in Further Education, 2010/11

This Statistical First Release presents information on the number of Assembly Learning Grants (ALGs) awarded in 2010/11 to Further Education (FE) students, as at the end of July 2011. The release is based on data provided by the Student Loans Company (SLC) and is correct as at 18 August 2011. Statistics on ALGs for Higher Education (HE) students are published separately by SLC.

The ALG FE is an income-assessed grant that was introduced to encourage people aged 19 or over and living in Wales to continue with their education. Students can receive payments of up to £1,500 if they are in full-time education or up to £750 if they are in part-time education.

Key results:

There was an increase in the number of successful applications in 2010/11 compared with 2009/10 and previous years. This resulted in £7.7 million being paid out in ALGs to FE students in 2010/11, compared to the £7.0 million that was paid out in 2009/10.

- In total, 8,665 students in FE applied for an ALG in 2010/11, an increase of 6 per cent compared with 8,170 in 2009/10.
- 7,330 (85 per cent) of applications received were successful, an increase of 12 per cent compared with 6,550 in 2009/10.
- 6,260 (85 per cent) of successful applications were from full-time students, an increase of 12 per cent compared with 5,575 in 2009/10.
- 615 (8 per cent) of successful applications were from part-time students, an increase of 10 per cent compared with 560 in 2009/10¹.
- 5,120 (82 per cent) of successful full-time applications were from students with a residual income of £5,895 or less, and were therefore awarded the full £1,500.
- 535 (86 per cent) of successful part-time applications were from students with a residual income of £5,895 or less, and were therefore awarded the full £750.
- 2,640 (42 per cent) of successful full-time applications and 125 (20 per cent) of successful part-time applications were from students aged 21 or under.

¹ 455 (7 per cent) of successful applications were from students where the mode of study was 'unknown'. [See Notes section 5.5]

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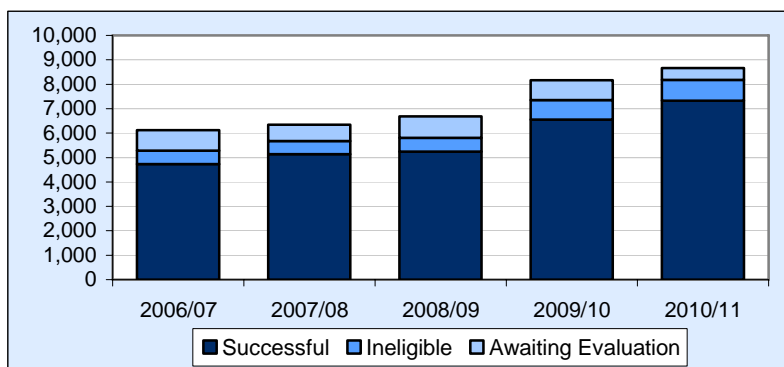
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Chart 1: Applications for ALG FE by application workstage

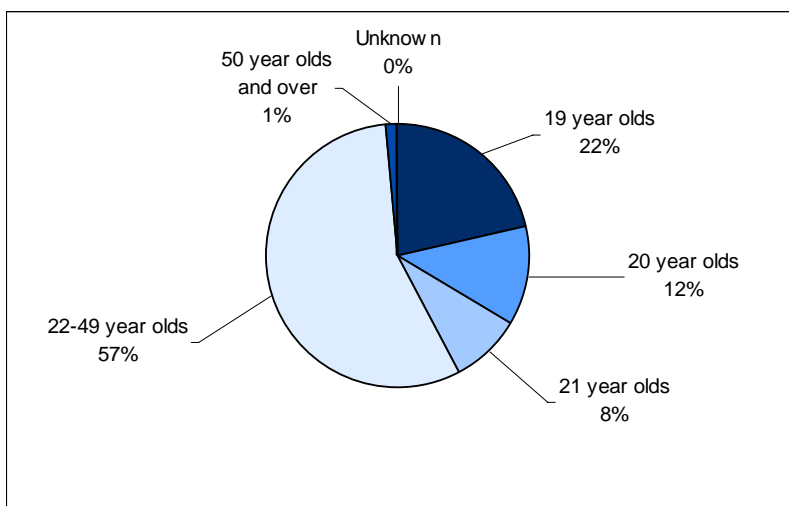


Source: Student Loans Company

In 2010/11 there were 8,665 applications for an ALG FE, a rise of 6 per cent compared with the previous academic year, following increases each year since 2006/07. The number of successful applications rose to 7,330, a 12 per cent increase compared with the previous year. [See table 2]

This continued rise in ALG FE applications should be considered in the context of declining learner numbers. Figures on post-16 learning for 2009/10¹ indicate a continuation of the gradual decline in total learner numbers seen since 2005/06, driven by a decline in part-time learners aged 19 and over.

Chart 2: Successful full-time applications by age, 2010/11

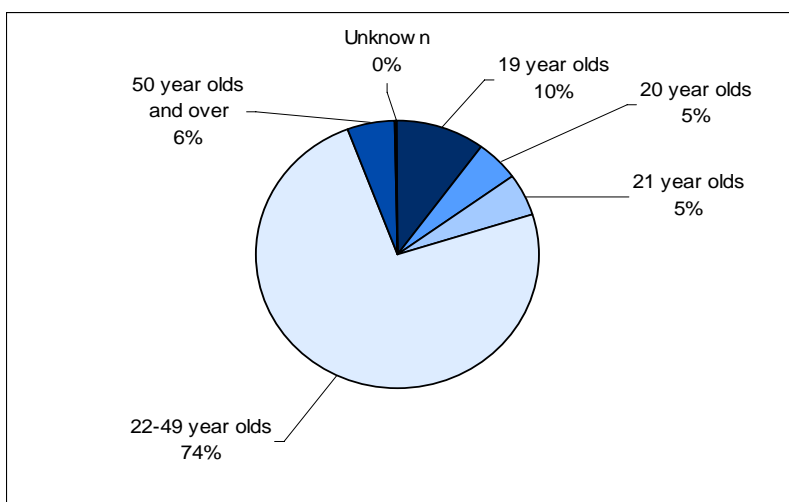


Source: Student Loans Company

In 2010/11, 6,260 (85 per cent) of successful applications were from full-time students, an increase of 12 per cent compared with 5,575 in 2009/10.

1,360 (22 per cent) of the successful full-time applications were from 19 year olds, 750 (12 per cent) were from 20 year olds, 525 (8 per cent) were from 21 year olds, 3,525 (56 per cent) were from applicants aged between 22 and 49, and 90 (1 per cent) were from applicants aged 50 and over. Applicants whose age was 'unknown' made up the remaining number of applications. [See table 4]

Chart 3: Successful part-time applications by age, 2010/11



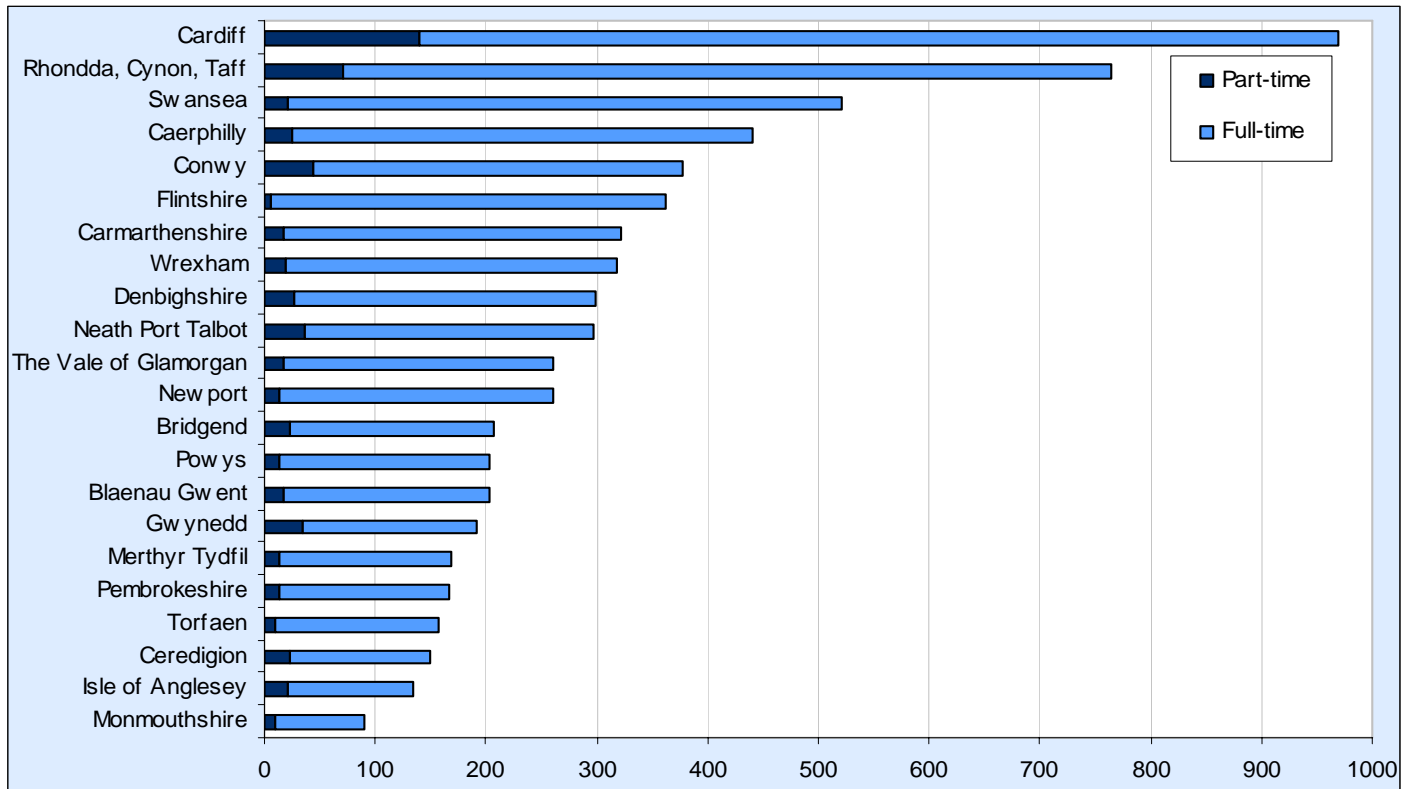
Source: Student Loans Company

In 2010/11, 615 (8 per cent) of successful applications were from part-time students; an increase of 10 per cent compared with 560 in 2009/10.

65 (10 per cent) of the successful full-time applications were from 19 year olds, 30 (5 per cent) were from 20 year olds, 30 (5 per cent) were from 21 year olds, 455 (74 per cent) were from applicants aged between 22 and 49, and 35 (6 per cent) were from applicants aged 50 and over. Applicants whose age was 'unknown' made up the remaining number of applications. [See table 4]

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/post16education2011/110427/?lang=en> and <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/post16education2011/1109221/?lang=en>

Chart 4: Successful applications by local authority and mode of study, 2010/11



Source: Student Loans Company

The number of successful applications by local authority, where mode of study is known, ranged from 90 in Monmouthshire to 970 in Cardiff. Cardiff accounted for 13 per cent of all full-time successful applications and 23 per cent of all part-time successful applications. [See table 5]

The local authority with the highest proportion of successful applications being from full-time students was Flintshire, with 99 per cent, and the local authority with the lowest proportion was Isle of Anglesey with 84 per cent. [See table 5]

Table 1: Successful applications by residual income and mode of study, 2010/11 (a) 

	Number (b)		Per cent		Amount Paid (£000s) (c)		
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Total (d)
£0 to £5,895	5,120	535	82	86	6,699	328	7,028
£5,896 to £11,790	705	55	11	9	454	20	474
£11,791 to £17,700	435	30	7	5	169	8	177
Total	6,260	615	100	100	7,323	355	7,679

Source: Student Loans Company

- (a) As at 31 July 2011.
- (b) Includes successful applications where no payment has been made.
- (c) Includes payments to other applications (classified as 'successful' at time of payment).
- (d) Includes a payment made to a successful application whose mode of study was "Unknown".

Table 1 shows that an overall total of £7.7 million was paid out in ALGs to FE students in 2010/11, an increase of 10 per cent compared to the £7.0 million that was paid out in 2009/10.

5,120 (82 per cent) of successful full-time applications and 535 (86 per cent) of successful part-time applications were from students with a residual income of £5,895 or less, and were therefore awarded the full grant of £1,500 and £750 respectively. This is an increase of 13 per cent for full-time and 12 per cent for part-time, compared with 4,545 and 475 respectively in 2009/10.

There were 6,400 applications for financial assistance from full-time students, of which 6,260 (98 per cent) were successful. Similarly, there were 785 applications from part-time students, of which 615 (79 per cent) were successful. [See table 2]

17 per cent of successful part-time applications were from students attending 'Other Learning Centres' in Wales (which include Community Colleges and Community Education Centres). [See table 3]

Table 2: Applications by outcome and mode of study

Academic Year (a)	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Full-time				
Successful applications	4,540	4,545	5,575	6,260
Ineligible	95	105	75	130
Awaiting Evaluation	10	20	15	10
Total	4,650	4,670	5,665	6,400
Part-time				
Successful applications	520	475	560	615
Ineligible	145	160	205	165
Awaiting evaluation	*	*	0	*
Total	665	640	765	785
Unknown				
Successful applications	75	225	415	455
Ineligible	295	295	525	555
Awaiting evaluation	650	855	800	470
Total	1,025	1,380	1,740	1,480
All Successful applications	5,135	5,250	6,550	7,330
All Applications	6,340	6,685	8,170	8,665

Source: Student Loans Company

(a) 2007/08 figures as at 27 July 2008, 2008/09 figures as at 31 July 2009, 2009/10 figures as at 31 July 2010, and 2010/11 figures as at 31 July 2011.

Table 3: Successful applications by institution and mode of study (a)(b)

Per cent

	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Welsh Institutions	99	97	100	99	99	99	99	98
<i>of which</i>								
FE Institutions (c)	97	92	98	86	98	85	97	79
HE Institutions	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2
Other Learning Centres	1	4	-	11	1	13	1	17
English Institutions	1	3	-	1	1	1	1	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Student Loans Company

(a) A '-' denotes a percentage less than 0.5 (but not zero).

(b) 2007/08 figures as at 27 July 2008, 2008/09 figures as at 31 July 2009, 2009/10 figures as at 31 July 2010, and 2010/11 figures as at 31 July 2011.

(c) Includes students on courses at the Workers Educational Association (WEA) and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

Table 4: Successful applications by age and mode of study (a)

	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10		2010/11	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
19 years	905	45	930	25	1,215	50	1,360	65
20 years	465	25	510	35	645	35	750	30
21 years	340	25	325	20	465	30	525	30
22 - 49 years	2,720	390	2,680	360	3,140	405	3,525	455
50 years or older	110	35	100	35	105	35	90	35
Unknown	*	*	0	0	*	*	*	*
Total	4,540	520	4,545	475	5,575	560	6,260	615

Source: Student Loans Company

(a) 2007/08 figures as at 27 July 2008, 2008/09 figures as at 31 July 2009, 2009/10 figures as at 31 July 2010, and 2010/11 figures as at 31 August 2011.

(b) A '*' denotes a number less than 5 (but not zero).

Table 5: Successful applications by Local Authority and mode of study (a)



	2007/08		2008/09		2009/10 (b)		2010/11 (b)	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Isle of Anglesey	90	20	75	20	90	25	115	20
Gwynedd	150	35	145	30	160	40	155	35
Conwy	240	35	240	20	315	30	335	45
Denbighshire	215	15	215	15	260	30	270	25
Flintshire	180	10	245	*	290	10	360	5
Wrexham	190	15	235	15	260	10	300	20
Powys	120	15	145	15	175	15	190	15
Ceredigion	125	*	110	10	120	20	125	25
Pembrokeshire	130	*	125	*	155	*	155	15
Carmarthenshire	190	25	220	20	310	20	305	15
Swansea	295	40	330	40	380	25	500	20
Neath Port Talbot	215	45	195	35	235	40	260	35
Bridgend	140	20	140	10	165	15	185	25
The Vale of Glamorgan	150	25	165	15	205	15	245	20
Cardiff	715	55	610	75	665	115	830	140
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	410	30	445	30	615	60	695	70
Merthyr Tydfil	115	30	105	15	145	15	155	15
Caerphilly	350	30	320	35	400	20	415	25
Blaenau Gwent	170	35	155	35	175	25	185	15
Torfaen	125	*	115	*	130	*	150	10
Monmouthshire	55	15	55	*	75	10	80	10
Newport	170	*	160	10	225	10	245	15
Wales	4,540	515	4,545	475	5,575	560	6,260	615

Source: Student Loans Company

- (a) 2007/08 figures as at 27 July 2008, 2008/09 figures as at 31 July 2009, 2009/10 figures as at 31 July 2010, and 2010/11 figures as at 31 July 2011.
- (b) For the 2009/10 and 2010/11 full-time total, also included are some (less than 10) applications where Local Authority is in England or unknown.

Annex 1: Notes

1. Context

1.1 Policy/operational context

ALGs were introduced by the Welsh Government from the academic year 2002/03 to provide extra money for students who might otherwise experience financial difficulty when undertaking post compulsory or higher education undergraduate courses. The grant was available to full and part-time undergraduate students who started their courses in 2002/03 who were domiciled in Wales and studying at a publicly-funded college in the UK. For part-time students their course had to amount to at least 30 credits to be eligible.

The 2002/03 scheme only included students studying at Further Education Institutions or Higher Education Institutions. From 2003/04 the scheme was extended to include students at all learning centres (e.g. schools) providing Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) or Local Education Authority (LEA) facilitated courses. From 2006/07 responsibility for the administration of applications of ALGs for students at Further Education Institutions was transferred from Local Authorities (LAs) to the SLC.

Further information on Assembly Learning Grants can be found at www.studentfinancewales.co.uk.

1.2 Assembly Learning Grant eligibility criteria

The grant is available to eligible students studying in Wales or elsewhere in the UK. For a grant to be awarded both the student and course criteria must be satisfied. For 2010/11 ALG scheme the student and course criteria included the following:

Student criteria

1. **Residence:** To be eligible for a grant the first condition is that a student must be ordinarily resident in Wales on the first day of the first academic year of the course. The second condition is that the student must have been ordinarily resident, for the three years prior to that date, in either (a) the UK or (b) the European Economic Area (EEA), depending on nationality status.
2. **Age:** Aged 19 or over at the start of the academic year for further education courses. There are no age criteria for higher education courses.

Course criteria

Further Education: The course is supported through DfES (or equivalent) which requires regular attendance at a Further Education Institution or Other Learning Centre and involves at least 275 taught hours in each academic year.

Assembly Learning Grant available to students in Further Education

Support available	Who is eligible?	Administered by:
<i>Further Education Institutions – Full-time students:</i>		
£1,500 Assembly Learning Grant	Full-time students aged 19 or over on the first day of the academic year 2010/11.	SLC
<i>Further Education Institutions – Part-time students:</i>		
£750 Assembly Learning Grant	Part-time students aged 19 or over on the first day of the academic year 2010/11. The amount paid relates to the number of terms in the students' course.	SLC

Calculation of level of award in 2010/11 is based on the residual household income of the student or student's family. Residual household income is calculated by taking gross income (before tax and National Insurance) and deducting certain allowances.

For all FE students, where a student is on an eligible course, awards are calculated on the following basis:

Value of Assembly Learning Grant, by mode of study and residual income 2010/11

Further Education	Residual household income			
	Between £0 - £5,895	Between £5,896 - £11,790	Between £11,791 - £17,700	£17,701 or over
Cumulative contact hours in the academic year 2010/11				
275 – 499	£750	£450	£300	Nil
500 or more	£1,500	£750	£450	Nil

The residual income bands for 2009/10 were the same as those for 2010/11. For 2008/09 the residual income bands were £0-£5,745, £5,746-£11,490, £11,491-£17,250 and £17,251 or over.

2. Data source

ALG FE applications and payments are administered by the Student Loans Company (SLC). Data held on ALG FE students is entered by SLC staff onto an administrative database for the purpose of assessing and paying ALG to students. This data is also stored in a management information data warehouse for the purpose of management reporting, operational performance reporting, audit of processes, statistics, future policy planning and forecasting. Further details of SLC's administrative sources will be published on [SLC's web page](#) later this year. Processes and systems which enable customer and application assessment data to be held electronically are subject to periodic audit and integrity checks. SLC Internal Audit ensure that the processes governing data entry and application assessment are adhered to. Data integrity validation rules are used to identify and correct errors in data. Management Information extracted from SLC systems are subject to quality assurances prior to distribution.

The data in this release were collected via the SLC management information system and were extracted on 18 August 2011. All information is based on applications received by 31 July 2011.

Prior to the academic year 2006/07 data on applications for ALG by Welsh domiciled students at FE was collected from Local Authorities. From 2006/07 all data on students at Further Education institutions have been obtained from the Student Loans Company (SLC).

Further information including numbers of ALGs awarded by Local Education Authority can be found on the [StatsWales](#) website.

3. Definitions

3.1 Students who have withdrawn

The data represented in this release on successful applications refer to applicants who have been approved for an ALG during the course of the academic year. Students who have withdrawn from their course are not removed from the analysis. Furthermore, figures on successful applications represent the total value of the approved ALG and have not been adjusted for unpaid or recovered instalments.

4. Rounding strategy

Figures in this release have been rounded to the nearest 5. Due to rounding, the sums of some rows or columns may not add to the total figure given. Numbers less than 5, but not zero, are represented by '*'. A '-' denotes a percentage less than 0.5 (but not zero).

5. Key Quality Information

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 that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. This section provides a summary of information on this output against five dimensions of quality: Relevance, Accuracy, Timeliness and Punctuality, Accessibility and Clarity, and Comparability.

5.1 Relevance

The statistics are used both within and outside the Welsh Government to monitor educational trends and as a baseline for further analysis of the underlying data. Some of the key users are:

- Ministers and the Members Research Service in the National Assembly for Wales;
- Officials in the Welsh Government;
- Other government departments;
- Further Education Institutions, Work-Based Learning providers, schools and local authorities;
- Wales Audit Office;
- Students, researchers, academics and universities;
- Individual citizens, private companies, and the media.

These statistics are used in a variety of ways. Some examples of these are:

- general background and research;
- inclusions in reports, articles and briefings;
- advice to Ministers;
- to inform and monitor the education policy development and decision-making process in Wales;
- to forecast future expenditure of student support schemes in Wales.

5.2 Accuracy

Statisticians within the Welsh Government review the data and query any anomalies with the Student Loans Company before tables are published. The figures in this release reflect the final position as at the end of the 2010/11 academic year (31 July 2011), and are correct as at 18 August 2011.

5.3 Timeliness and Punctuality

This release has met the previously announced date of publication.

5.4 Accessibility and Clarity

This statistical release is pre-announced and then published on the Statistics section of the Welsh Government website. It is accompanied by more detailed tables on StatsWales, a free to use service that allows visitors to view, manipulate, create and download data.

5.5 Comparability

When the ALG was introduced for Further Education institutions, the grant was available to students aged 18 and over at the start of the academic year. From 2006/07, the student eligibility criterion for ALGs for Further Education institutions was changed to students aged 19 and over at the start of the academic year due to the extension of Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) to include 18 year olds. As a result, figures on applications and awards for students at Further Education institutions for years from 2006/07 onwards will be lower than for previous years and are not directly comparable. Further information on EMAs was published in September in the statistical first release '[Education Maintenance Allowances Awarded in Wales, 2010/11](#)'.

The breakdown provided in Table 3 of this release is based on the learning centre details entered by the student on their application form. From 2006/07 the ALG (FE) application form only requested the details of the learning centre at which the student would be attending. Prior to 2006/07 the application form requested details of the learning centre providing the course and, where applicable, details of the learning centre to which the course was franchised out. As a result, prior to 2006/07 there may have been some inconsistency across Local Authorities (LAs) regarding which learning centre they provided information for on the ALG data collection form.

2010/11 FE data includes approximately 480 applications which, as at the 31 July 2011, were deemed to be awaiting evaluation. These are applications which are incomplete, missing either information from the application or supporting evidence. In 2009/10, this figure was around 815. In 2008/09 this figure was around 875 applications. In 2007/08 and 2006/07, this figure was around 665 and 825 applications respectively. In 2005/06 around 70 applicants were deemed to be awaiting evaluation. Due to the transfer of administration of the ALG (FE) from LAs to the SLC in 2006/07 it is possible that in the past

applications with missing information or evidence were treated differently, with some LAs cancelling an application after a certain period of time.

Data provided by the SLC on applications for ALGs from students at Further Education institutions showed approximately 455 successful applications in 2010/11 where the mode of study was 'unknown' and are included in Table 2 (and within the 'Total Amount Paid' column of Table 1) but are excluded in other tables showing figures by mode of study. Data also showed a few successful applications (less than 10 in 2010/11) where the mode of study was 'below threshold of taught hours'. These have been included in the 'part-time' group.

The data in this release presents information on applications by mode of study for students in Further Education. Previous releases have included information on Assembly Learning Grants awarded to students entering Higher Education prior to 2006/07. This data was collected from each Welsh Local Authority. Following the introduction of the new £2,700 (£5,000 in 2010/11) Assembly Learning Grant in 2006/07, very few applications for ALGs from Higher Education students have been processed by LAs and the numbers will continue to decrease in future years. Therefore it was decided before the 2007/08 publication, to discontinue the provisional data collection in line with the National Assembly protocol on Managing Respondent Load adopted in 2002 as part of the National Statistics Code of Practice. See below for information on ALG HE.

6. Further Information

Further detailed information on ALG FE applications (similar to Table 5 of this Release) can be found in [StatsWales table 001996](#).

Further information about the ALG FE scheme can be found at www.studentfinancewales.co.uk.

Information on ALG HE is published by the Student Loans Company in the SFR 'Student Support for Higher Education in Wales'. The latest publication, for academic year 2010/11, can be found at www.slc.co.uk/statistics.

Information on Educational Maintenance Allowances (for younger FE learners) was published in September in the statistical first release '[Education Maintenance Allowances Awarded in Wales, 2010/11](#)'.