

SDR 179/2014

23 October 2014

Assembly Learning Grants awarded to Welsh domiciled students in further education, 2013/14

This Statistical First Release presents information on the number of Assembly Learning Grants (ALGs) awarded in 2013/14 to Further Education (FE) students, as at the end of July 2014. The release is based on data provided by the Student Loans Company (SLC) and is correct as at 7 October 2014. 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 a slight decrease in the number of successful applications in 2013/14 compared with 2012/13. This resulted in £8.0 million being paid out in ALGs to FE students in 2013/14, compared to the £8.2 million that was paid out in 2012/13.

- In total, 8,630 students in FE applied for an ALG in 2013/14, a decrease of 1 per cent on 2012/13. Of these, 7,515 applications were successful, similar to the previous year [Chart 1, Table 1].
- The breakdown of successful applications across full-time and part-time students was also similar to recent years. 6,540 (87 per cent) of successful applications were from full-time students and 900 (12 per cent) of successful applications were from part-time students [Chart 2, Table 1].
- Successful applications* equate to 87 per cent of applications received. This proportion has increased steadily from 79 per cent in 2008/09. The proportion of successful applications from full-time students remains very high at around 97 per cent, with the corresponding figure for part-time students at 88 per cent [Chart 2, Table 1].
- 5,235 (80 per cent) of successful full-time applications and 745 (83 per cent) of successful part-time applications were from students with a residual income of £6,120 or less, and were therefore awarded the full grant amounts of £1,500 and £750 respectively. These proportions have changed little since 2008/09; however the residual income bands have changed over time (see Notes section 1.2) [Chart 5].
- 2,925 (45 per cent) of successful full-time applications and 165 (19 per cent) of successful part-time applications were from students aged 21 or under [Chart 3, Chart 4, Table 2].

* 80 (1 per cent) of successful applications were from students where the mode of study was 'unknown' (see Notes section 5.5).

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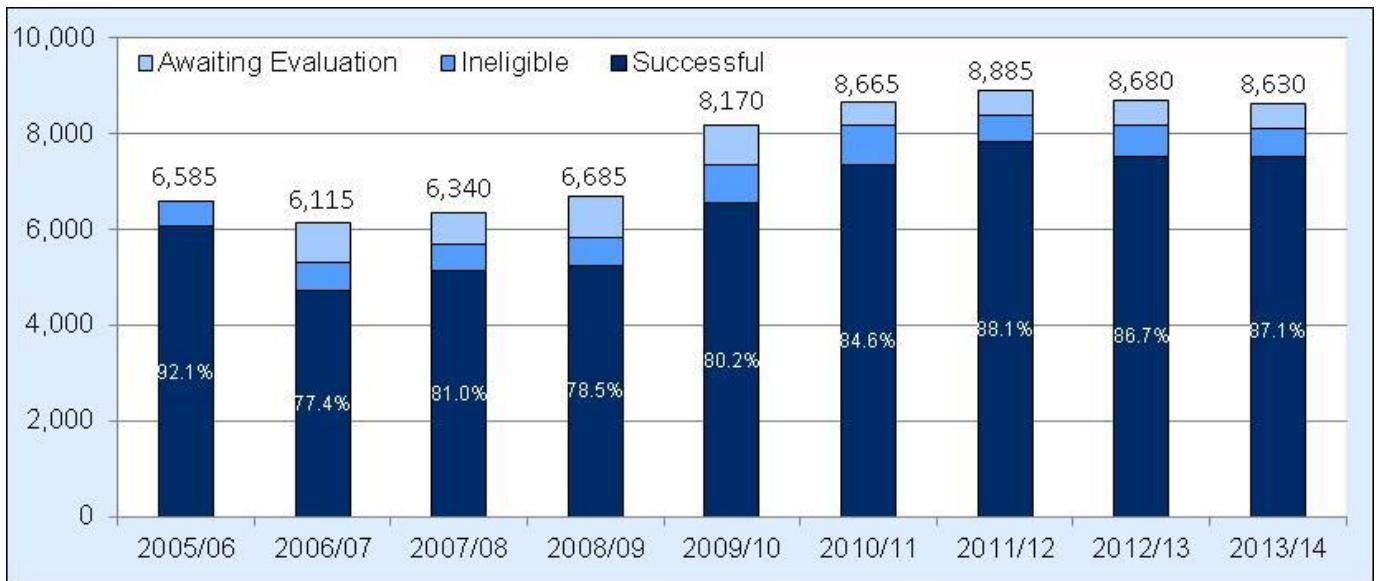
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ALG FE Applications by Workstage and Mode of Study

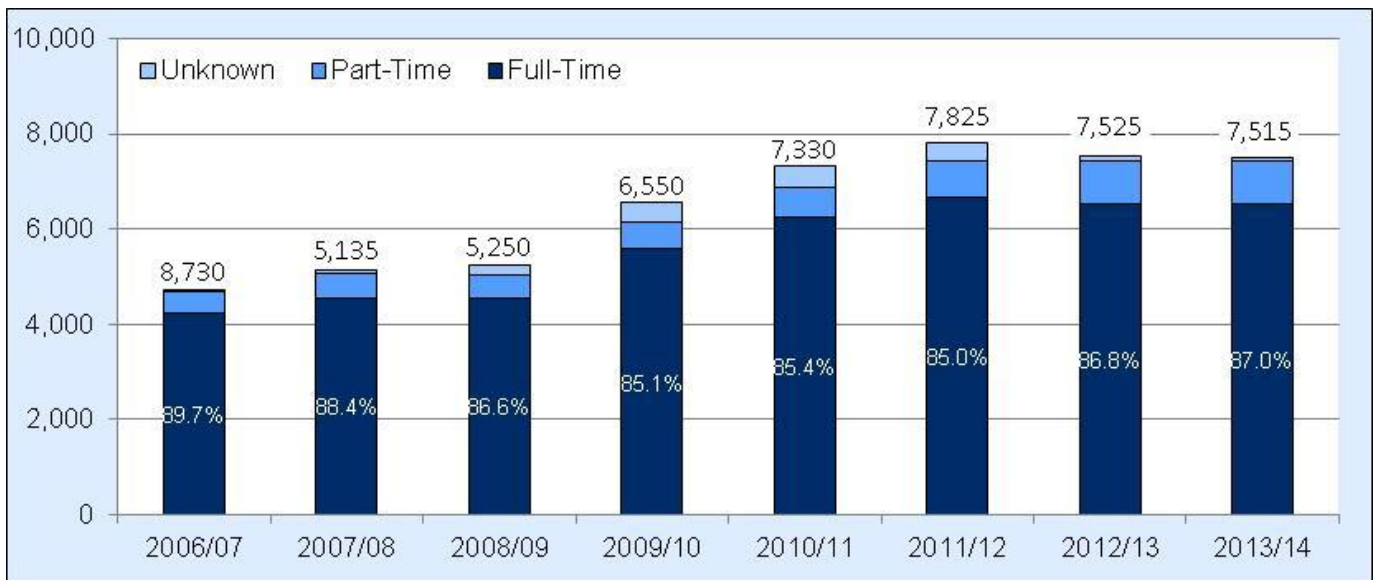
Chart 1: Applications for ALG FE by Application Workstage, 2013/14



Source: Student Loans Company

In 2013/14 there were 8,630 applications for an ALG FE, a decrease of 1 per cent on the previous academic year. The number of successful applications was 7,515, similar to the previous year [see Table 1].

Chart 2: Successful Applications by Mode of Study, 2013/14



Source: Student Loans Company

In 2013/14, 6,540 (87 per cent) of successful applications were from full-time students, similar to 2012/13. 900 (12 per cent) of successful applications were from part-time students, a 1 per cent decrease on 2012/13 [see Table 1].

Table 1: Applications by Outcome and Mode of Study (a)(b)

Academic Year	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Full-Time					
Successful	5,575	6,260	6,655	6,535	6,540
Ineligible	75	130	100	185	160
Awaiting Evaluation	15	10	5	20	10
Total	5,665	6,400	6,760	6,740	6,710
Part-time (c)					
Successful	560	615	775	910	900
Ineligible	205	165	105	150	120
Awaiting evaluation	0	*	0	5	0
Total	765	785	880	1,065	1,020
Unknown					
Successful	415	455	395	80	80
Ineligible	525	555	330	310	290
Awaiting evaluation	800	470	520	485	535
Total	1,740	1,480	1,245	875	900
All Successful applications	6,550	7,330	7,825	7,525	7,515
All Applications	8,170	8,665	8,885	8,680	8,630

(a) All figures at as 31 July

Source: Student Loans Company

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

There were 6,710 applications for financial assistance from full-time students, of which 6,540 (97 per cent) were successful. Similarly, there were 1,020 applications from part-time students, of which 900 (88 per cent) were successful.

Applications by Age

Chart 3: Successful Full-Time Applications by Age, 2013/14

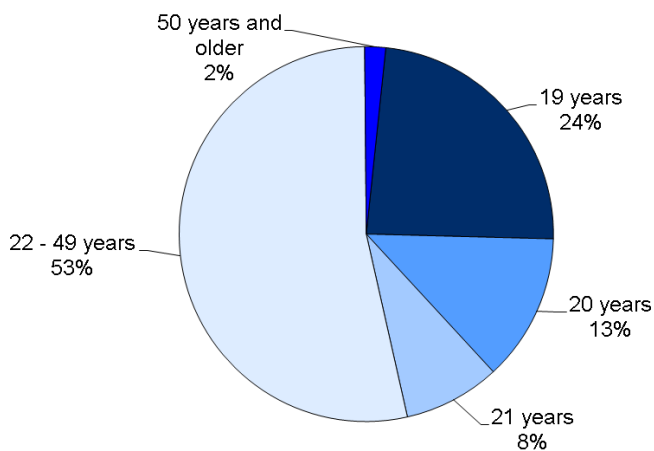
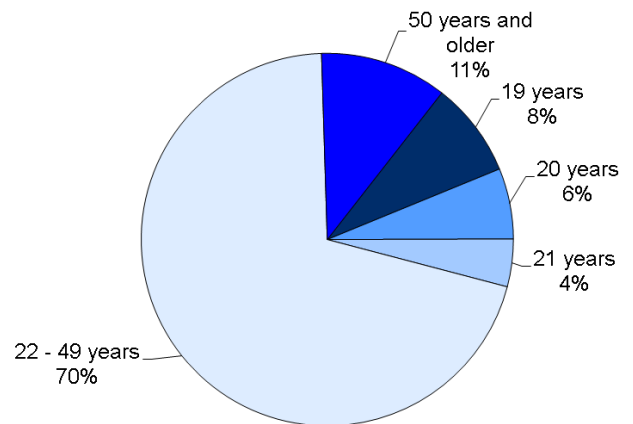


Chart 4: Successful Part-Time Applications by Age, 2013/14



1,550 (24 per cent) of the successful full-time applications were from 19 year olds, 830 (13 per cent) were from 20 year olds, 545 (8 per cent) were from 21 year olds, 3,490 (53 per cent) were from applicants aged between 22 and 49, and 120 (2 per cent) were from applicants aged 50 and over.

75 (8 per cent) of the successful part-time applications were from 19 year olds, 55 (6 per cent) were from 20 year olds, 35 (4 per cent) were from 21 year olds, 630 (70 per cent) were from applicants aged between 22 and 49, and 100 (11 per cent) were from applicants aged 50 and over. Applicants whose age was 'unknown' made up the remaining number of successful part-time applications [see Table 2].

Table 2: Successful Applications by Age and Mode of Study (a)(b)

	2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
19 years	1,215	50	1,360	65	1,490	50	1,505	75	1,550	75
20 years	645	35	750	30	805	45	840	50	830	55
21 years	465	30	525	30	555	40	550	50	545	35
22 to 49 years	3,140	405	3,525	455	3,595	565	3,520	640	3,490	630
50 years and over	105	35	90	35	115	60	115	95	120	100
Unknown	*	*	*	*	90	15	*	0	5	*
Total	5,575	560	6,260	615	6,655	775	6,535	910	6,540	900

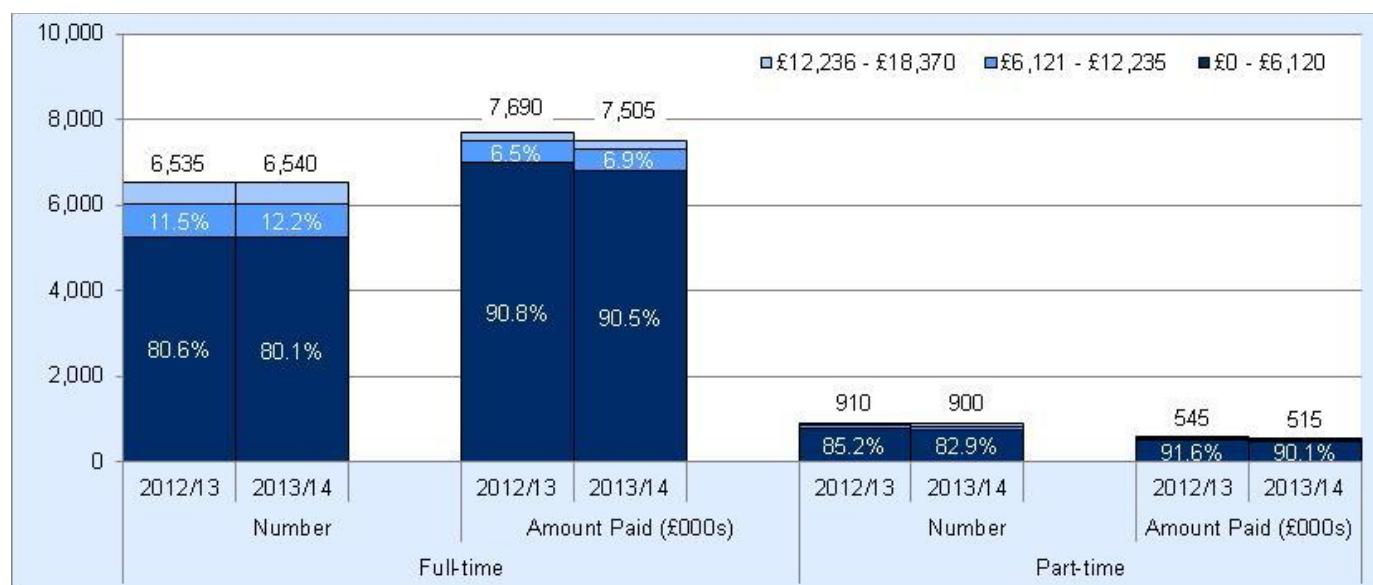
(a) All figures as at 31 July

Source: Student Loans Company

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

Applications and Amount Paid by Household Income

Chart 5: Successful Applications and Amount Paid by Household Income, 2013/14



Source: Student Loans Company

An overall total of £8.0 million was paid out in ALGs to FE students in 2013/14, a decrease of 3 per cent on the £8.2 million that was paid out in 2012/13.

5,235 (80 per cent) of successful full-time applications and 745 (83 per cent) of successful part-time applications were from students with a residual income of £6,120 or less, and were therefore awarded the full grant of £1,500 and £750 respectively.

Successful Applications by Type of Institution

Table 3: Successful Applications by Institution 2013/14

	2009/10		2010/11		2011/12		2012/13		2013/14	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Welsh Institutions	5,540	555	6,200	605	6,610	765	6,480	905	6,480	895
<i>of which (per cent)</i>										
FE Institutions (c)	98%	85%	97%	79%	98%	75%	96%	73%	98%	70%
HE Institutions	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	-	1%	-
Other Learning Centres	1%	13%	1%	17%	-	24%	3%	27%	1%	30%
English Institutions	40	5	60	10	45	5	50	5	55	*
Total	5,575	560	6,260	615	6,655	775	6,535	910	6,540	900

(a) All figures as at July 31

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

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

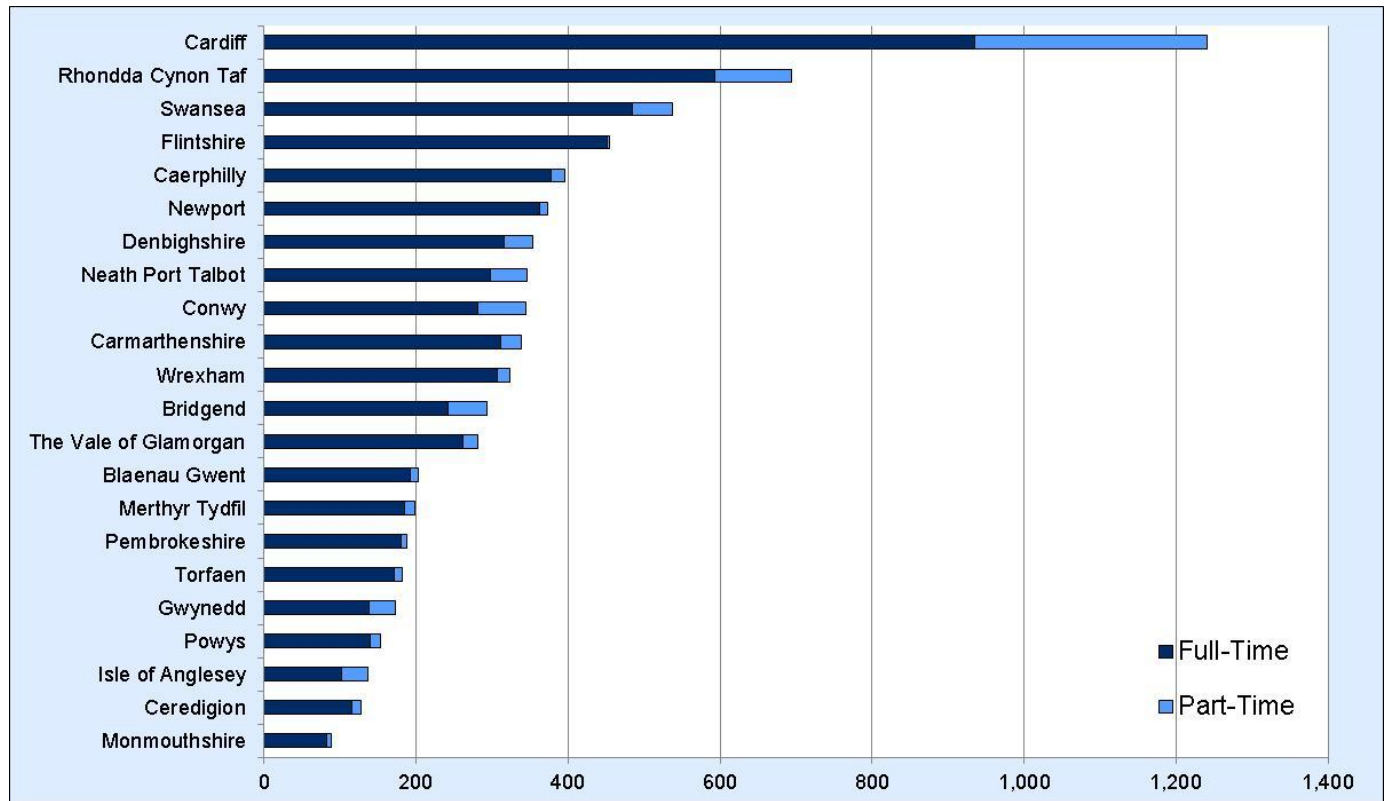
Source: Student Loans Company

98 per cent of successful full-time applications were from students attending FE Institutions, with 1 per cent from HE Institutions and 1 per cent from Other Learning Centres (which include Community Colleges and Community Education Centres) – similar to the proportions seen in previous years. 70 per cent of successful part-time applications were from students attending FE Institutions, whilst 30 per cent

were from Other Learning Centres. This is slightly higher than previous years due to an increase in number of applications for one particular Learning Centre.

Applications by Local Authority

Chart 6: Successful Applications by Local Authority and Mode of Study, 2013/14



Source: Student Loans Company

The number of successful applications by local authority, where mode of study is known, ranged from 85 in Monmouthshire to 1,240 in Cardiff. Cardiff accounted for 14 per cent of all full-time successful applications and 34 per cent of all part-time successful applications.

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 the Isle of Anglesey with 75 per cent [see Table 4].

Table 4: Successful Applications by Local Authority and Mode of Study (a)

	2009/10 (b)		2010/11 (b)		2011/12 (b)		2012/13		2013/14	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Isle of Anglesey	90	25	115	20	110	30	95	25	100	35
Gwynedd	160	40	155	35	205	40	165	60	140	35
Conwy	315	30	335	45	305	40	310	70	280	65
Denbighshire	260	30	270	25	310	20	305	50	315	35
Flintshire	290	10	360	5	400	10	455	10	450	*
Wrexham	260	10	300	20	300	15	300	15	305	15
Powys	175	15	190	15	190	20	180	15	140	15
Ceredigion	120	20	125	25	120	15	135	10	115	15
Pembrokeshire	155	*	155	15	155	10	180	5	180	10
Carmarthenshire	310	20	305	15	340	25	330	35	310	25
Swansea	380	25	500	20	490	25	455	45	485	50
Neath Port Talbot	235	40	260	35	280	55	305	65	300	50
Bridgend	165	15	185	25	265	55	240	60	240	50
Vale of Glamorgan	205	15	245	20	260	25	275	25	260	20
Cardiff	665	115	830	140	955	205	1,020	265	935	305
Rhondda Cynon Taf	615	60	695	70	725	115	575	80	595	100
Merthyr Tydfil	145	15	155	15	125	10	135	10	185	15
Caerphilly	400	20	415	25	380	15	325	15	380	15
Blaenau Gwent	175	25	185	15	215	20	205	25	190	10
Torfaen	130	*	150	10	160	10	145	10	170	10
Monmouthshire	75	10	80	10	75	10	65	5	80	5
Newport	225	10	245	15	285	5	320	10	360	10
Wales	5,575	560	6,260	615	6,655	775	6,535	910	6,525	900

(a) All figures as at July 31

Source: Student Loans Company

(b) For the 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12 full-time total, also included are some (less than 10) applications where Local Authority is in England or unknown.

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

Annex: Notes

1. Context

1.1 Policy/operational context

Assembly Learning Grants (ALGs) were introduced by the Welsh Government from 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 Student Loans Company (SLC).

The number of Assembly Learning Grants awarded is influenced by the overall numbers of learners in post-16 education, and the effect of the recent recession on employment levels and household income may also have influenced numbers eligible for means-tested allowances.

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

1.2 Assembly Learning Grant (Further Education) 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 the 2011/12 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: 19 or over at the start of the academic year for further education courses. There are no age criteria for ALG 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.

Calculation of level of award 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, 2011/12 onwards

Further Education	Residual household income			
	Between £0 - £6,120	Between £6,121 - £12,235	Between £12,236 - £18,370	£18,370 or over
Cumulative contact hours in the academic year 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14				
275 – 499	£750	£450	£300	Nil
500 or more	£1,500	£750	£450	Nil

The residual income bands for previous years are:

2010/11 and 2009/10: £0-£5,895, £5,896-£11,790, £11,791-£17,700 and £17,701 or over;
2008/09: £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 SLC. Data held on ALG FE students is entered by SLC staff onto an administrative database for the purpose of assessing and paying ALG FE 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. 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 ensures 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 7 October 2014. All information is based on applications received by 31 July 2014.

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 SLC.

Further information including numbers of ALGs administered by the SLC 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 Code of Practice for Official Statistics. 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 SLC before tables are published. The figures in this release reflect the final position as at the end of the 2013/14 academic year (31 July 2014), and are correct as at 7 October 2014.

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, 2013/14](#)'.

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.

2013/14 FE data includes approximately 545 applications which, as at the 31 July 2014, were deemed to be awaiting evaluation. These are applications which are incomplete, missing either information from the application or supporting evidence. In 2012/13, 510 applications were deemed as awaiting evaluation, with 525 applications in 2011/12, 480 applications in 2010/11, 815 applications in 2009/10, 875 applications in 2008/09, 665 applications in 2007/08 and 825 applications in 2006/07. 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 80 successful applications in 2013/14 where the mode of study was 'unknown' and are included in Table 1 (and within the 'Total Amount Paid' column of Table 2), but are excluded in other tables showing figures by mode of study.

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 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 on [StatsWales](#).

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 can be found at www.slc.co.uk/statistics.

Information on Educational Maintenance Allowances (for younger FE learners) was published in September 2014 in the statistical first release ['Education Maintenance Allowances Awarded in Wales, 2013/14'](#).