



Welsh Government Learning Grants awarded to Welsh Domiciled Students in Further Education, 2016/17

26 October 2017
SFR 160/2017



£5.8m was paid in WGLGs to FE in 2016/17 compared to the **£6.3m** that was paid out in 2015/16.

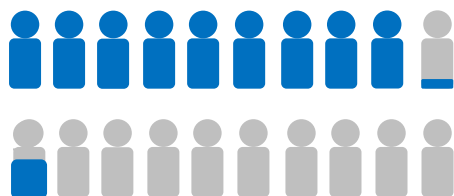
8%

About this release

This Statistical First Release presents information on the number of Welsh Government Learning Grants (WGLGs) awarded in 2016/17 to Further Education (FE) students, as at the end of July 2017.

6,200 students in FE applied for a WGLG in 2016/17. **5,395** applications were successful.

87%
Successful



4,935 (**92 per cent**) of successful applications were from **full-time** students

365 (**7 per cent**) of successful applications were from **part-time** students

3,795 (**77 per cent**) of successful full-time applications

285 (**79 per cent**) of successful part-time applications



£6,120 or less

household income



£6,120 or less

- 2,130 (**43 per cent**) of successful **full-time** applications were from students aged 21 or under.

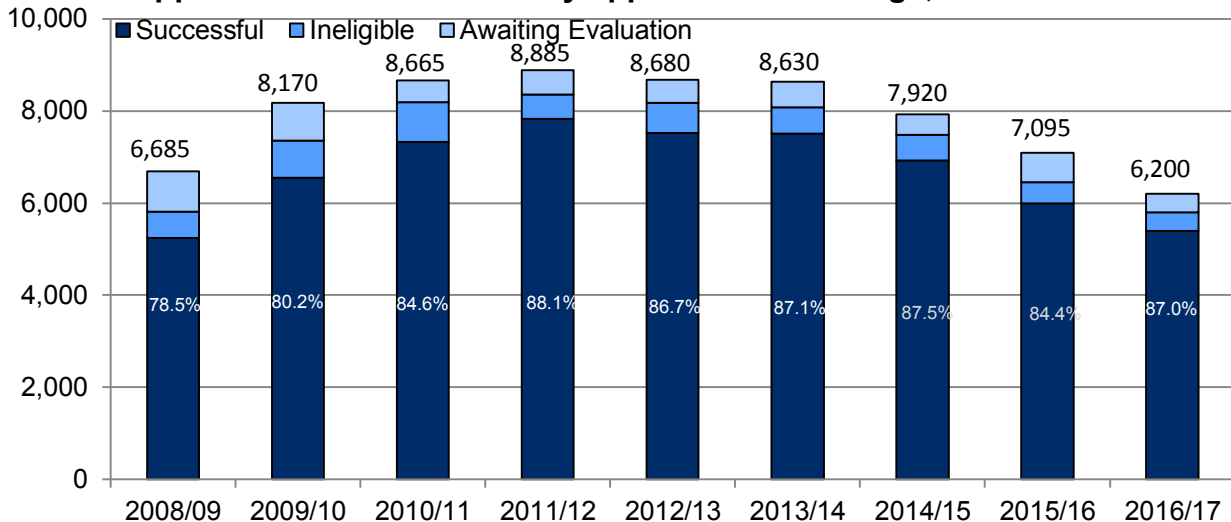
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WGLG FE applications by workstage and mode of study

Chart 1: Applications for WGLG FE by application workstage, 2016/17

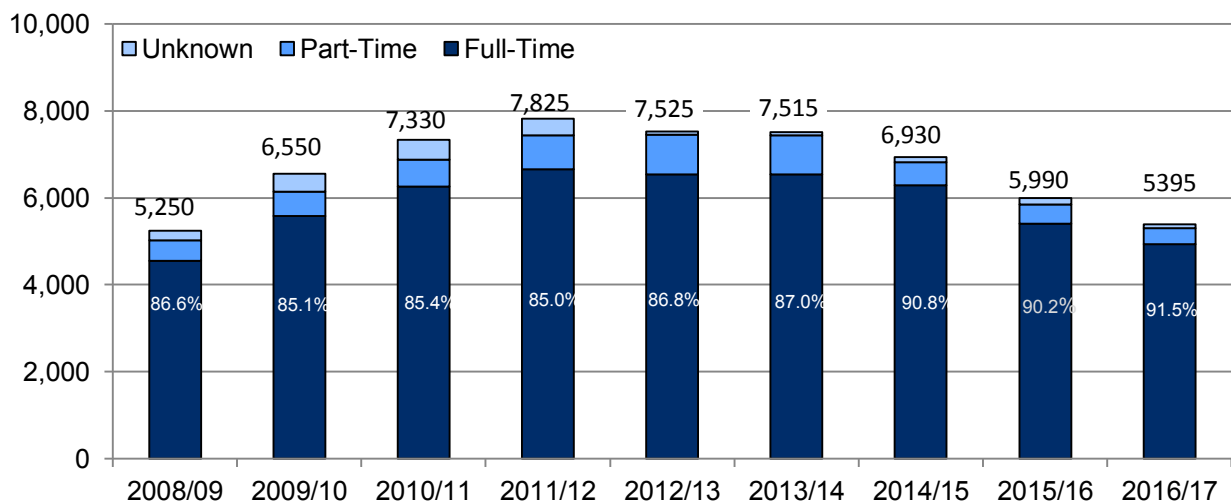


Source: Student Loans Company

In 2016/17 there were 6,200 applications for a WGLG FE, a decrease of over 12 per cent on the previous academic year. The number of successful applications was 5,395, a decrease of 10 per cent on the previous academic year [see [Table 1](#)].

Overall, total and successful applications have generally shown a downward trend since 2012/13. However, this should be considered in the demographic context over this period, which has shown an overall decline in learner numbers since 2005/06¹.

Chart 2: Successful applications by mode of study, 2016/17



Source: Student Loans Company

In 2016/17, 4,935 of successful applications were from full-time students, a decrease of 9 per cent compared to 5,405 of successful applications in 2015/16. 365 of successful applications were from part-time students, a 18 per cent decrease on 2015/16 [see [Table 1](#)].

¹ [Unique learner numbers by age and gender](#)

Table 1: Applications by outcome and mode of study (a)(b)

Academic Year	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Full-Time					
Successful	6,535	6,540	6,290	5,405	4,935
Ineligible	185	160	85	80	70
Awaiting Evaluation	20	10	10	10	*
Total	6,740	6,710	6,380	5,495	5,015
Part-time (c)					
Successful	910	900	525	445	365
Ineligible	150	120	70	50	55
Awaiting evaluation	5	0	0	0	*
Total	1,065	1,020	595	495	420
Unknown					
Successful	80	80	115	140	95
Ineligible	310	290	400	330	280
Awaiting evaluation	485	535	430	630	390
Total	875	900	945	1,105	765
All Successful applications	7,525	7,515	6,930	5,990	5,395
All Applications	8,680	8,630	7,920	7,095	6,200

(a) All figures as at 31 July.

Source: Student Loans Company

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

(c) Part-time applications include applications where the course of study is below threshold of taught hours.

In 2016/17 there were 5,015 applications for financial assistance from full-time students, of which 4,935 (98 per cent) were successful. Similarly, there were 420 applications from part-time students, of which 365 (87 per cent) were successful.

Applications by age

Chart 3: Successful full-time applications by age, 2016/17 (a)

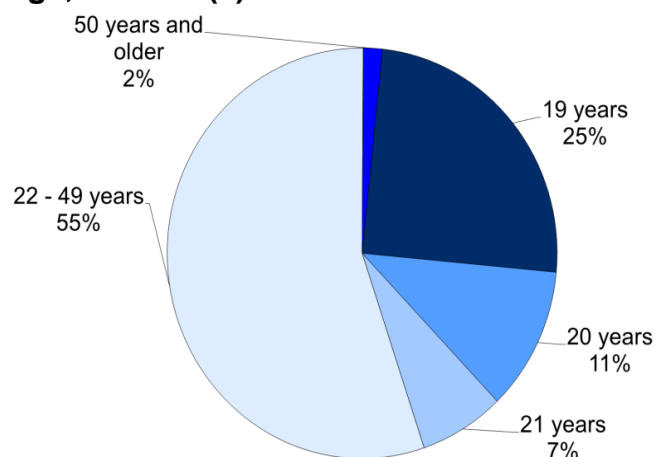
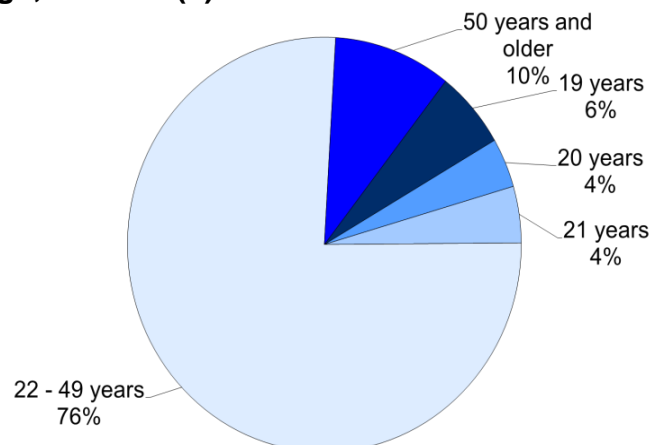


Chart 4: Successful part-time applications by age, 2016/17 (a)



(a) All figures rounded to the nearest whole number (i.e. percentages may not sum to 100)

1,225 (25 per cent) of the successful full-time applications were from 19 year olds, 560 (11 per cent) were from 20 year olds, 345 (7 per cent) were from 21 year olds, 2,725 (55 per cent) were from applicants aged between 22 and 49, and 80 (2 per cent) were from applicants aged 50 and over.

20 (6 per cent) of the successful part-time applications were from 19 year olds, 15 (4 per cent) were from 20 year olds, 15 (4 per cent) were from 21 year olds, 275 (76 per cent) were from applicants aged between 22 and 49, and 35 (10 per cent) were from applicants aged 50 and over. [see Table 2].

Table 2: Successful applications by age and mode of study (a)(b)

	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
19 years	1,505	75	1,550	75	1,560	30	1,225	35	1,225	20
20 years	840	50	830	55	775	30	655	20	560	15
21 years	550	50	545	35	460	20	405	20	345	15
22 to 49 years	3,520	640	3,490	630	3,385	395	3,030	320	2,725	275
50 years and over	115	95	120	100	105	50	90	55	80	35
Unknown	*	0	5	*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	6,535	910	6,540	900	6,290	525	5,405	445	4,935	365

(a) All figures as at 31 July.

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

Source: Student Loans Company

Applications and amount paid by household income

Table 3: Successful applications and amount paid by household income (a)(b)

	Number				Amount Paid (£000s)			
	2015/16		2016/17		2015/16		2016/17	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
£0 - £6,120	4,145	355	3,795	285	5,390	220	4,950	175
£6,121 - £12,235	785	60	735	45	495	25	470	20
£12,236 - £18,370	475	30	405	30	175	5	150	10
Total	5,405	445	4,935	365	6,060	250	5,570	200
Percentage								
£0 - £6,120	77%	80%	77%	79%	89%	88%	89%	87%
£6,121 - £12,235	14%	13%	15%	13%	8%	10%	8%	9%
£12,236 - £18,370	9%	7%	8%	9%	3%	3%	3%	4%

(a) All figures as at 31 July.

Source: Student Loans Company

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

An overall total of £5.8 million was paid out in WGLGs to FE students in 2016/17, a decrease of 9 per cent on the £6.3 million that was paid out in 2015/16.

3,795 (77 per cent) of successful full-time applications and 285 (79 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 4: Successful applications by institution and mode of study (a)(b)

	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Welsh Institutions	6,480	905	6,480	895	6,240	520	5,385	440	4,910	355
<i>of which (per cent)</i>										
FE Institutions (c)	96%	73%	98%	70%	97%	95%	99%	95%	99%	93%
HE Institutions	1%	-	1%	-	-	1%	-	1%	-	1%
Other Learning Centres	3%	27%	1%	30%	1%	4%	1%	3%	-	4%
English Institutions	50	5	55	*	50	*	20	*	30	5
Total	6,535	910	6,540	900	6,290	525	5,405	445	4,940	365

(a) All figures as at 31 July.

Source: Student Loans Company

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

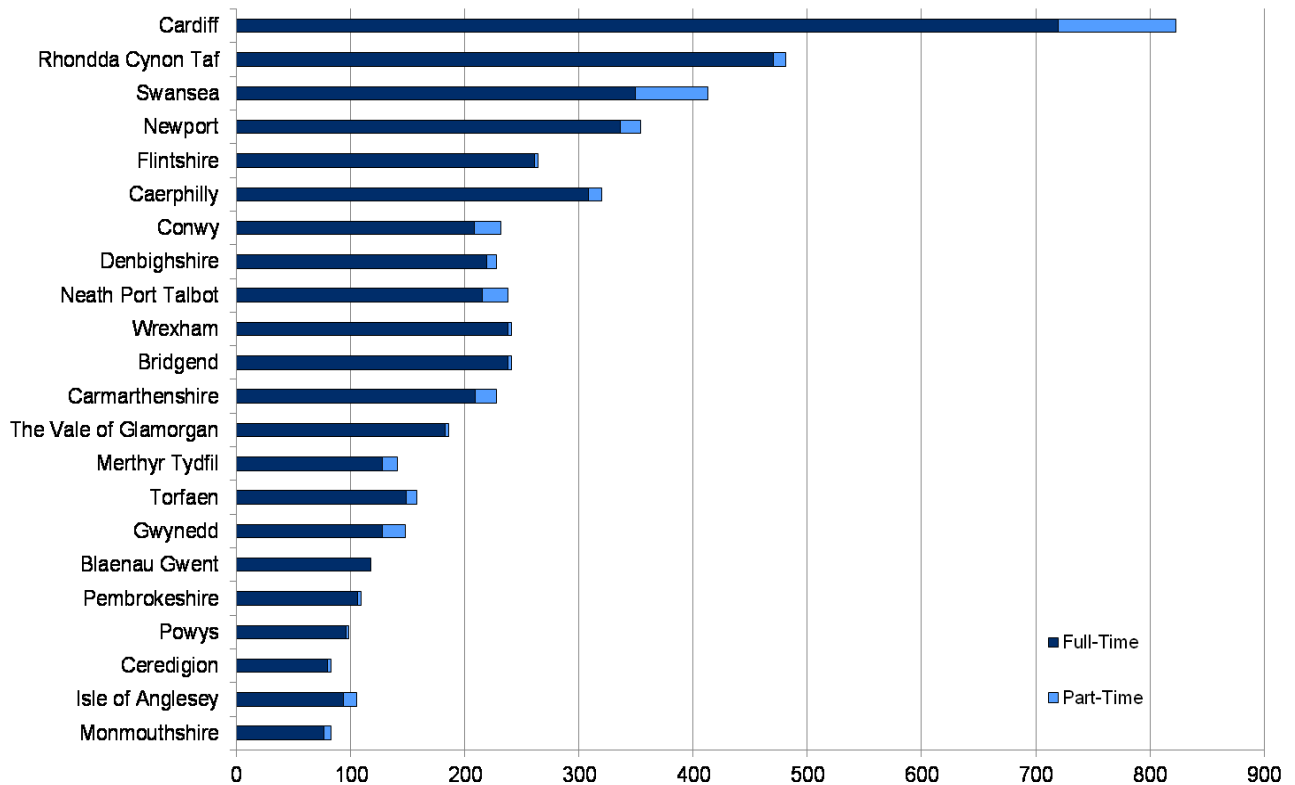
(c) Includes students on courses at the Workers Educational Association (WEA) and the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

99 per cent of successful full-time applications were from students attending FE Institutions, with none from HE Institutions and less than 1 per cent from Other Learning Centres (which include Community Colleges and Community Education Centres) – similar to the proportions seen in previous years.

93 per cent of successful part-time applications were from students attending FE Institutions, with 1 per cent from HE Institutions and 4 per cent from Other Learning Centres.

Applications by local authority

Chart 5: Successful applications by local authority and mode of study, 2016/17



Source: Student Loans Company

The number of successful applications by local authority, where mode of study is known, ranged from 75 in Monmouthshire to 720 in Cardiff. Cardiff accounted for 15 per cent of all full-time successful applications and 28 per cent of all part-time successful applications.

All successful applications from Blaenau Gwent were from full-time students. The local authority with the lowest proportion of full-time successful applications was Swansea, with 85 per cent [see [Table 5](#)].

Table 5: Successful applications by local authority and mode of study (a)(c)

	2012/13 (b)		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16		2016/17	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Isle of Anglesey	95	25	100	35	115	10	85	10	95	10
Gwynedd	165	60	140	35	165	15	130	20	130	20
Conwy	310	70	280	65	320	30	275	15	210	25
Denbighshire	305	50	315	35	305	15	260	5	220	10
Flintshire	455	10	450	*	380	*	330	*	260	*
Wrexham	300	15	305	15	325	10	250	5	240	*
Powys	180	15	140	15	125	5	105	10	95	*
Ceredigion	135	10	115	15	95	5	95	10	80	*
Pembrokeshire	180	5	180	10	150	5	130	*	105	*
Carmarthenshire	330	35	310	25	295	20	220	25	210	20
Swansea	455	45	485	50	465	45	340	95	350	65
Neath Port Talbot	305	65	300	50	290	50	250	15	215	25
Bridgend	240	60	240	50	230	45	240	5	240	*
Vale of Glamorgan	275	25	260	20	250	15	200	10	185	*
Cardiff	1,020	265	935	305	945	130	825	115	720	105
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	575	80	595	100	540	45	510	20	470	10
Merthyr Tydfil	135	10	185	15	170	10	165	15	130	15
Caerphilly	325	15	380	15	320	10	290	10	310	10
Blaenau Gwent	205	25	190	10	155	5	125	10	120	0
Torfaen	145	10	170	10	180	15	150	15	150	10
Monmouthshire	65	5	80	5	75	*	75	*	75	5
Newport	320	10	360	10	380	35	340	20	335	20
Wales	6,535	910	6,525	900	6,275	525	5,390	445	4,930	360

(a) All figures as at 31 July.

Source: Student Loans Company

(b) For the 2012/13 full-time total, also included are some (less than 15) applications where Local Authority is in England or unknown.

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

Notes

1.1 Policy/operational context

Welsh Government Learning Grants (previously known as Assembly Learning Grants) 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 WGLGs for students at Further Education Institutions was transferred from Local Authorities (LAs) to the Student Loans Company (SLC).

The number of Welsh Government Learning Grants awarded is influenced by the overall numbers of learners in post-16 education, and the effect of minimum wage and/or employment levels on household income may also have influenced numbers eligible for means-tested allowances.

Further information on Welsh Government Learning Grants can be found on the [Student Finance Wales website](#).

1.2 Welsh Government 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 WGLGs FE 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 WGLG higher education courses.

Course criteria

Further Education: The course is supported through the Education directorate 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 Welsh Government Learning Grant by mode of study and residual income

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 onwards)				
275-499 (part-time)	£750	£450	£300	Nil
500 or more (full-time)	£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

WGLG FE applications and payments are administered by the SLC. Data held on WGLG FE students is entered by SLC staff onto an administrative database for the purpose of assessing and paying WGLG 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 2 August 2017. All information is based on applications received by 31 July 2017.

Prior to the academic year 2006/07 data on applications for WGLG 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 WGLGs 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 a WGLG 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 WGLG 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. Equal opportunities

4,245 Equal Opportunities monitoring forms were received in 2016/17, which equates to 68.5 per cent of all applications received. It is not known whether these applications have been approved, rejected or are currently being processed, since the data are disassociated from the application process, and not all forms were fully completed.

The data as at 1 September 2017 show that of the applications for which an equal opportunities form was completed:

- 15 per cent classed themselves as disabled;
- 88 per cent classed their ethnicity as white;
- 7 per cent made up each of the groups who were of mixed race, Asian or British Asian and 'Chinese or other ethnic origin';
- 5 per cent said they were 'Black or British Black'.

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.

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.

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 2016/17 academic year (31 July 2017), and are correct as at 2 August 2017.

Timeliness and punctuality

This release has met the previously announced date of publication.

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.

Comparability and coherence

When the WGLG 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 WGLGs 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, 2016/17](#)'.

2016/17 FE data includes approximately 395 applications which, as at the 31 July 2017, were deemed to be awaiting evaluation. These are applications which are incomplete, missing either information from the application or supporting evidence. In 2015/16, 640 applications were deemed as awaiting evaluation, with 440 applications in 2014/15, 545 applications in 2013/14, 510 applications in 2012/13, 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 WGLG 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 WGLGs from students at Further Education institutions showed approximately 95 successful applications in 2016/17 where the mode of study was 'unknown' and are included in Table 1, 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. Prior to 2006/07 there were Assembly Learning Grants awarded to students entering Higher Education so releases at that time would have included such information. This data was collected from each Welsh Local Authority. Following the 2006/07 introduction of Welsh Government Learning Grant for entrants to Higher Education, very few applications for LGs from Higher Education students were processed by LAs in the succeeding 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.

To link to information on the HE scheme that exists now, the considerable 'WGLG HE' student support, see '[Further Details](#)'.

National Statistics status

The [United Kingdom Statistics Authority](#) has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#).

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators ("national indicators") that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on indicators and associated technical information - [How do you measure a nation's progress? - National Indicators](#)

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

The document is available at:

<http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/assembly-learning-grants-awarded/?lang=en>

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

Further information about the WGLG FE scheme can be found on the [Student Finance Wales website](#).

Information on WGLG HE is published by the Student Loans Company in the SFR '[Student Support for Higher Education in Wales](#)'.

Related articles

Information on Educational Maintenance Allowances (for younger FE learners) was published in September 2017 in the statistical first release: '[Education Maintenance Allowances Awarded in Wales, 2016/17](#)'.

List of tables and data items provided on StatsWales

- i. [Applications for Further Education Welsh Government Learning Grants by LEA, academic year, mode of study and outcome of application](#) (*Chart/Table 5 shows 'successful'*)
- ii. [Successful applications for Further Education Welsh Government Learning Grants by institution type, academic year and mode of study](#) (*Table 4*)
- iii. [Successful applications for Further Education Welsh Government Learning Grants by mode of study, residual income, academic year and measure](#) (*Table 3*)

Next update

October 2018

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to post16ed.stats@gov.wales.

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