

Advanced Learner Loan

Aged 19 or over and thinking about further education?

You may qualify for an Advanced Learner Loan. These loans help you to pay the fees charged by colleges and training organisations. Most learners aged 19 and over, studying at Level 3 to 6, will qualify for these loans from the UK Government. It's easy to apply, your household income isn't taken into account and there's no credit check. You won't have to pay anything back until your income is over £21,000 a year.

Key facts

Read this fact sheet along with the 'Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – Learners' which you'll find at nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk. You can also get more information from your college or training organisation.

Do I qualify?

To qualify you must be:

- **aged 19 or over (24 or over if your course begins before 1 August 2016)** on the first day of your course (there's no upper age limit)
- **living in the UK on the first day of your course** and have lived in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man for three years immediately before this unless you meet one of the exceptions detailed in the 'Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) – Learners'
- **studying with a college or training organisation in England** approved for public funding
- **enrolling on an eligible course at Level 3 to 6 (Level 3 and 4 only if your course begins before 1 August 2016)** which includes A levels, Access to HE Diplomas and other vocational qualifications.

These loans do not cover Degrees or other forms of Higher Education (HE). For information on funding for HE go to gov.uk/studentfinance

Applying is easy

Apply online or download an application form at gov.uk/advancedlearnerloan

Making the right choice

It's important you consider your own circumstances and look into all options for paying for your course before choosing to take out a loan. If you want advice on managing your finances you can get impartial money advice from the Money Advice Service at moneyadviceservice.org.uk

How much can I get?

The amount you can get depends on your course, the fees charged by your college or training organisation and maximum amounts set by the government.

The minimum loan amount is £300.

You can take out a loan for the maximum amount to cover your fee or you can pay all or part of the fee yourself.

Course fees

The fee for your course will be set by your college or training organisation. They'll confirm the cost and the amount that can be covered by a loan before you enrol.

Advanced Learner Loans are administered by Student Finance England (SFE).

Student Finance England is a Student Loans Company service, providing financial support to students on behalf of the UK Government.



Key facts continued

How's the loan paid?

Student Finance England will pay your agreed loan to your college or training organisation once they've confirmed that you have registered on the course.

How many loans can I get?

You can have up to a maximum of four Advanced Learner Loans.

If you started your course before 1 August 2016, you can only take out one loan at a time for non A Level courses and you can't get a second loan for a course of the same type and level as one you have already completed. **If you start your course on or after 1 August 2016** you can apply for up to four loans at the same time for courses of the same type and level.

For A Levels you can apply for a loan to fund each course you take towards your A Levels - up to a maximum of 4 A Levels. This means you can have

up to 8 loans if you're taking each A Level as 2 separate courses (AS and A Level if you start on or after 1 August 2015 or AS and A2 if you start before 1 August 2015). The courses must be in the same subject to qualify for a full A Level. You can get up to three more loans for non A Level courses once you have completed your A Levels.

Access to HE Diplomas

If you're undertaking an Access to HE Diploma and then go on to complete an HE qualification, the outstanding balance of your Advanced Learner Loan will be written off.

To qualify for this write off you must have fully completed both courses. You 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 you complete.

Repayment

Repaying your Advanced Learner Loan is straightforward.

- Your monthly repayments will be based on your income, not what you borrowed.
- You'll only start making repayments when your income is more than £404 per week, £1,750 per month or £21,000 per year.
- You'll only pay back 9% of any income above £21,000 a year, see the table below for examples of what you'll repay:

Income each year before tax	Monthly salary	Monthly repayment
Up to £21,000	£1,750	£0
£22,000	£1,833	£7
£25,000	£2,083	£30
£30,000	£2,500	£67
£35,000	£2,917	£105
£40,000	£3,333	£142

So, if you're paid monthly and earn £2,500 before tax you would repay 9% of the difference between what you earn and the threshold: £2,500 - £1,750 = £750 9% of £750 = £67.50

Your loan repayment would be **£67 in that month**. If your income drops or rises, for example if you receive a bonus, your repayment amount will automatically change to reflect this.

You can make voluntary repayments at any time to pay off your loan more quickly.

- If you're self-employed you'll be responsible for making student loan repayments as part of your annual self-assessment tax return.
- If you're employed, you don't need to do anything. Your employer will take your repayments directly off your salary as they do with tax and national insurance contributions.
- If you stop working, your repayments will stop and only start again when your income is more than £21,000 a year.

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Repayment continued

- You'll be due to start repaying your loan in the April after you leave or finish your course – whichever comes first. You can make voluntary repayments at any time.
- Any loan remaining 30 years after you're due to start making repayments will be written off.

Interest

Some of the interest on your loan will be based on inflation (Retail Price Index (RPI)). The table below shows how interest is calculated:

	Interest rate
While you're studying and until the April after you finish or leave your course	Retail Price Index (RPI) plus 3%
From the April after you finish or leave your course	Interest will be based on your income. £21,000 or less – RPI £21,001 to £41,000 – RPI plus up to 3%, depending on income £41,000 and over – RPI plus 3%

Find out more

- For information and advice on learning, career and funding options, visit nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk
- For more information and to apply, visit gov.uk/advancedlearnerloan
- Speak to your college or training organisation

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