

Pre-Training Module – Eligibility Transcript



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Slide 1

Welcome to the pre-training module on Eligibility.

Slide 2

In this module we are going to look at the key points on Eligibility for Advanced Learner Loans.

During this short session we will cover:

- What types of Learning Aim are eligible for Advanced Learner Loans;
- The eligibility criteria your Learners need to meet to get an Advanced Learner Loan; and
- Eligibility information and evidence they'll need to provide when they come to apply.

Slide 3

So first of all let's look at Learning Aim eligibility for Advanced Learner Loans.

A Learning Aim must be approved by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and delivered in England by an approved Learning Provider in order to be eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan.

The minimum loan amount a Learner can borrow is £300, while the maximum amount will be either:

- The fee charged by you, the Learning Provider; or
- The maximum amount set for the Learning Aim by the ESFA, whichever is the lower figure of the two.

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There are also requirements in terms of how long Learning Aims need to run for, in order to be eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan.

The minimum duration of a Learning Aim is two weeks.

The maximum period of time during which Advanced Learner Loan payments can be made to Learning Providers depends on the type of Learning Aim:

- For a programme of A or AS levels, the limit is two years for each A Level or AS;
- For an Access to HE Diploma, payments can only be made over a maximum of two years (even if the course actually lasts longer than this in practice);
- Finally, approved general and technical qualifications at Levels 3, 4, 5 and 6 have a maximum period for loan payments of three years (although the ESFA has approved a handful of courses that exceed this limit).

Slide 5

Now let's look at the criteria that Learners themselves need to meet, in order to be eligible for an Advanced Learner Loan.

Learners must meet the required Residency criteria to be eligible as;

- A UK 'Home' Learner.
- A Learner with Settled or Pre-Settled Status granted following an application to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).
- A Learner from the Rest of the World (this includes those with Indefinite Leave to Remain and Refugees).

A couple of other things to note here:

- UK learners will be asked for confirmation that they are resident in the UK on the first day of the Learning Aim; and were ordinarily resident in the UK for 3 years prior to the start of their Learning Aim.
- Learners who live in the UK but not in England can apply for an Advanced Learner Loan, so long as the Learning Aim is delivered in England.
- Rest of the World nationals must demonstrate "Settled Status" with no limitation or restriction on the length of their stay in the UK.
- If a Learner is unsure if they meet these residency criteria, they should call our customer helpline. The number for this is 0300 100 0619.

There are some additional personal eligibility criteria. Learners must also:

- Be aged 19 plus on the first day of their Learning Aim; and
- Not have exceeded the maximum amount of Advanced Learner Loans available (which is 4).

So, Learners can apply for up to 4 loans in total and they can also get more than one at the same time.

- They can also apply for more than one loan for the same level of a course, e.g. a qualification in Hairdressing if they've already had a loan for the same level of qualification in Barbering.
- The one exception to this is Access to Higher Education diplomas - Learners can only apply once for an Advanced Learner Loan for an Access course.

Slide 6

We're now going to have a look at the new eligibility rules for European Learners, as these are changing for anyone starting courses on or after 1st August 2021, following the UK's departure from the EU.

- For Learners from the EU, there is a new requirement to have been given Settled or Pre-Settled Status under the EU Settlement Scheme in order to be eligible for Advanced Learner Loans, if they are starting a course in academic year 2021/22.
- Please be aware that learners need to have been living in the UK before 31st December 2020 to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme, and the deadline for applications is 30th June 2021.
- Any EU Learners who have not been given this status, or who come to the UK after 1st January 2021, may need to apply for a visa in order to study in the UK.
- This does not apply to Irish citizens however.

Please note that any Learners who start a course prior to 1st August 2021 will be subject to the residency rules for Advanced Learner Loans from the academic year they started, rather than the new rules that apply from the 2021/22 academic year.

Slide 7

Now let's have a look at the end-to-end process that learners go through in demonstrating their eligibility when they apply.

- Before you invite a learner to apply for an Advanced Learner Loan, you must check on their previous study to determine if they are eligible for other funding for a first full Level 3 – the latest Funding Rules document will provide details of this. And if they're starting an Access to HE course with you, please ensure they've not applied for loan funding for one of these programmes previously (as only one loan is permitted for an Access course).
- Prior to applying, please ensure that all your learners are given a Learning and Funding information Letter (or LAFIL).
- SLC require details from this letter about your organisation and the Learning Aim, including your organisation's UKPRN and the Learning Aim Reference Number in order to verify eligibility and progress the application.
- Residency eligibility also needs to be evidenced. Learners from the UK should enter details of their valid UK passport on the application. If they don't have a passport, they will need to send in an original birth/adoption certificate. Learners from outside the UK will need to send in their original passport or identity card.
- Once an application is fully approved, we will then check their National Insurance Number with the DWP (apart from Learners from the EU who are exempt from providing a National Insurance Number although if they already have one, they should enter this on their application).

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- Once we've received confirmation that the National Insurance Number is valid, and you begin to submit Attendance Confirmations for the Learner, payments will be made in the monthly pay runs that the SLC makes to Learning Providers.
- Learners from the EU starting courses from 1st August 2021 will need to have Settled or Pre-Settled Status under the EU Settlement Scheme and during the application process they will be asked to provide a valid EU Share Code. Details of how to get one of these are provided when they apply to the EU Settlement Scheme.
- Learners from the Rest of the World may need to provide additional supporting evidence, including evidence of settled status or proof of immigration status.
- Start and end dates and fee and loan amounts will also need to be entered to ensure the Learning Aim is eligible for funding.
- If all the eligibility criteria are met, the learner will be asked to give their consent to the terms and conditions of the loan on the Declaration section of the application.

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So to recap, here is a checklist of the residency evidence that Learners may need to provide to demonstrate their personal eligibility for an Advanced Learner Loan when they apply:

- UK Nationals will need to provide a valid UK Passport number or send in their original Birth or Adoption Certificate.
- Other Learners will need to send their non-UK passport or identity card.
- Learners with Settled or Pre-Settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme will need to provide a valid EU Share Code.

SLC also send out or make available to download a range of forms to assist Learners in providing evidence of their eligibility:

- The UK Passport Form
- The Birth Certificate / Adoption form
- The Evidence Return Form
- The Loan Request Form
- And finally, the Declaration Form, which must be signed and dated for paper applications

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Thank you for taking the time to go through this module, we hope you found it useful. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your FE Account Manager.



For more information:

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