

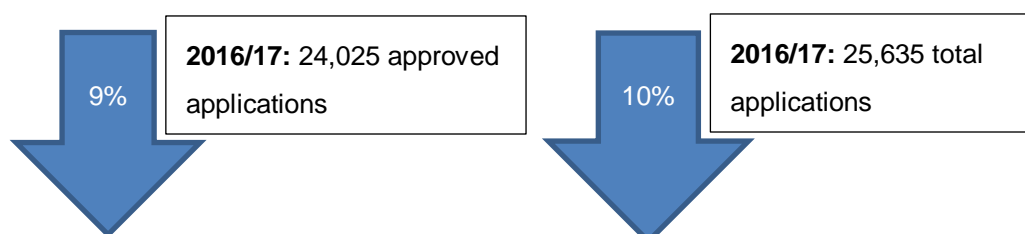
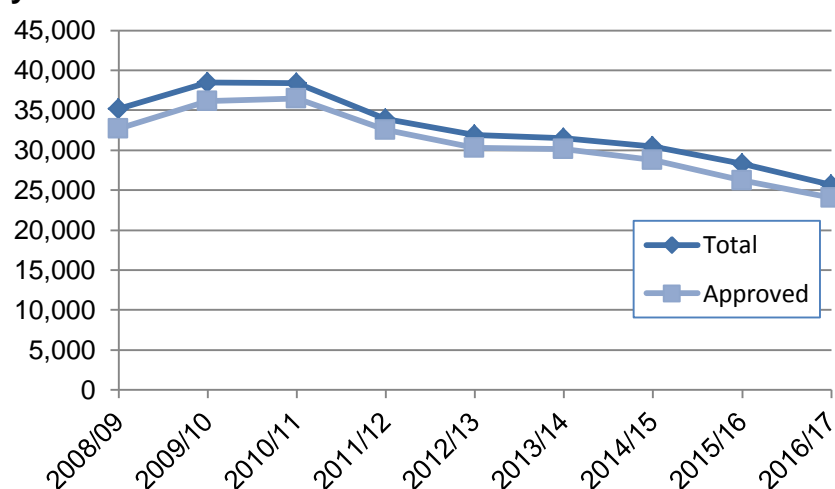


Education Maintenance Allowances Awarded in Wales, 2016/17

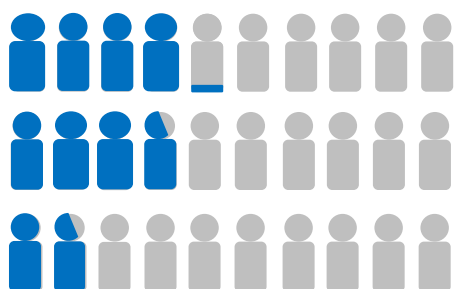
27 September 2017
SFR 105/2017

Overall, after an increase in 2009/10, the number of applications and approvals have generally shown a downwards trend. However, this should be considered in the context of demographic and economic trends over this period (see [Notes](#) page for more information).

Chart 1: Trends in EMA applications and approvals by academic year



- 24,025 (94 per cent) of applications received were approved, 815 (3 per cent) were rejected and 780 (3 per cent) were incomplete.



11,645 (**42 per cent**) from 16 year olds

9,405 (**39 per cent**) from 17 year olds

4,425 (**19 per cent**) from 18 year olds and over

- 11,645 (48 per cent) of approved applications were from first year claimants.

About this release

This Statistical First Release presents a final update on the number of Education Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) awarded to students in further education in academic year 2016/17, as at the end of August 2017.

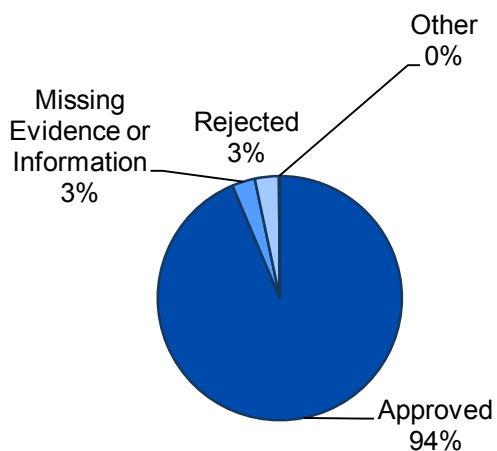
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EMA applications received by current work stage

Chart 2: Total EMA applications received by current work stage for 2016/17, as at 31st August 2017 (a) (b)



As at 31st August 2017, 94 per cent of applications received had been approved and 3 per cent had been rejected. The majority of the remaining applications received were incomplete. These include applications that are either “missing information” (e.g. no date of birth included) or “missing evidence” (e.g. no birth certificate attached).

- (a) Current work stage denotes the status of the application at 6th September 2017 when data were extracted from the Student Loans Company (SLC) database.
- (b) Due to rounding percentages may not sum to 100.

Table 1: EMA applications by current work stage and gender, 2016/17 (a)

Application current work stage	Male	Female	Total
Approved	11,785	12,245	24,025
<i>of which received at least one payment</i>	11,580 (e)	12,075 (e)	23,650
Rejected	415	400	815
Incomplete (b)	380	400	780
Other (c)	10	5	15
Total	12,585	13,050	25,635
<i>of which are renewals (d)</i>	6,460	6,730	13,190

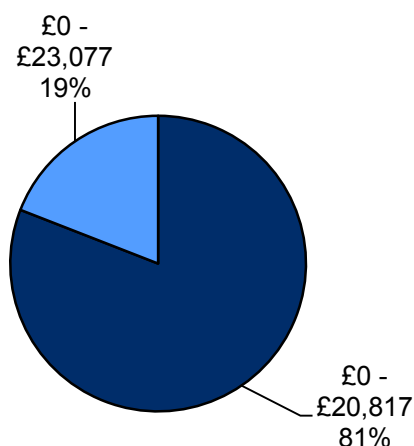
Source: Student Loans Company

- (a) As at 31st August 2017
- (b) These include applications that have “missing information” (e.g. no date of birth included) or “missing evidence” (e.g. no birth certificate attached)
- (c) These include applications that are in one of the following workstages: assessed; awaiting rejection; data awaiting decision
- (d) Applicants who also applied for an allowance in previous academic year
- (e) Dropping records where sum of EMA awarded is blank

Of the total applications received, 49 per cent were from males and 51 per cent were from females. The same proportions apply for approved applications. The same proportions were seen in 2015/16.

Approved EMA applications by household income threshold

Chart 3: Approved EMA applications by household income threshold level, as at 31st August 2017 (a)



(a) Current work stage denotes the status of the application at 6th September 2017 when data were extracted from the Student Loans Company (SLC) database.

Of those entitled to the £30 award, 19,445 (81 per cent) of approved applications were from students with a household income threshold of £20,817 or less (independent students or only child in household), and an additional 4,585 (19 per cent) were from claimants with a household income of £23,077 or less (with siblings aged 16 or under in the household or one or more siblings aged 20 or under in full-time education or training and eligible for child benefit in the household).

Table 2: Approved EMA applications for a £30 award by household income threshold (a)

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Household threshold level					
£0 to £21,885	4,080
£0 to £20,817	17,905	21,840	21,065	19,780	19,445
£0 to £23,077	7,750	8,340	7,690	6,465	4,585
Unknown	25	0	10	0	0
Total	29,760	30,180	28,770	26,245	24,030

Source: Student Loans Company

(a) Figures as at 31 August
"." denotes not applicable

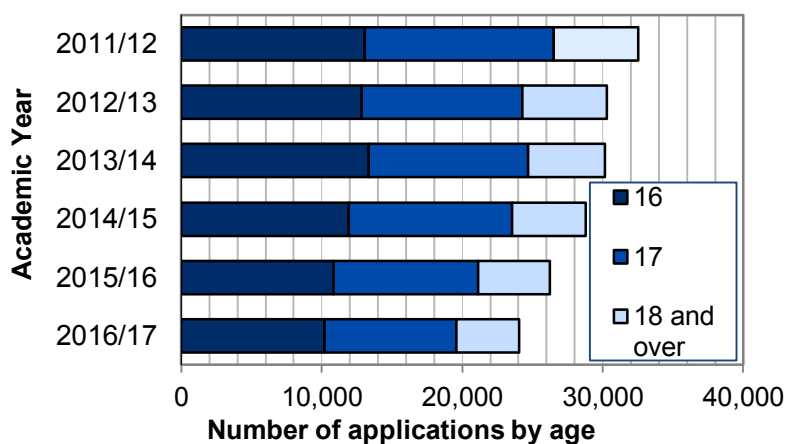
Since 2011/12 those students who qualify for EMA get an award of £30 per week. There are two different household income thresholds, which are based on the student's family circumstances.

Care should be taken when making comparisons with earlier years: there had previously, under the 2010/11 EMA scheme, been award amounts of £10, £20 or £30 per week. 2012/13 was the final year that £10 and £20 awards were given to returning students, after three years of receiving EMA.

See [Notes](#) page for more information about household income criteria.

Approved EMA applications by age

Chart 4: Approved EMA applications by age (a)(b)



Approved applications from 16 year olds were 42 per cent in 2016/17 (41 per cent in 2015/16).

Approved applications from 17 year olds were 39 per cent in 2016/17 (39 per cent in 2015/16).

Approved applications from 18 year olds were 19 per cent in 2016/17 (20 per cent in 2015/16).

(a) Figures as at 31st August

(b) Data include 19 year olds who are eligible due to exceptional circumstances

Approved EMA applications by learning centre type

Table 3: Approved EMA applications by age, learning centre type, gender and academic year (a)

	2015/16 (b)				2016/17 (c)			
	16	17	18+	Total	16	17	18+	Total
Further Education College:	6,785	6,790	4,515	18,090	6,600	6,430	4,025	17,060
Males	3,460	3,365	2,265	9,090	3,370	3,170	2,045	8,585
Females	3,325	3,430	2,245	9,000	3,230	3,260	1,980	8,470
Secondary School:	3,835	3,295	420	7,550	3,375	2,760	255	6,385
Males	1,705	1,400	225	3,330	1,490	1,185	125	2,795
Females	2,130	1,890	200	4,220	1,885	1,575	130	3,585
Other Learning Centre:	210	210	190	610	220	215	150	585
Males	150	140	125	410	150	150	100	400
Females	60	70	65	195	70	70	45	185
All Learning Centres:	10,830	10,295	5,120	26,245	10,195	9,405	4,425	24,025
Males	5,315	4,905	2,615	12,830	5,005	4,500	2,275	11,785
Females	5,515	5,390	2,510	13,415	5,185	4,905	2,155	12,245

Source: Student Loans Company

(a) Age at start of academic year

(b) As at 31st August 2016. Includes 19 year olds (see notes for explanation)

(c) As at 31st August 2017. Includes 19 year olds (see notes for explanation)

17,060 students attending further education colleges had their applications approved. These accounted for 71 per cent of all approved applications.

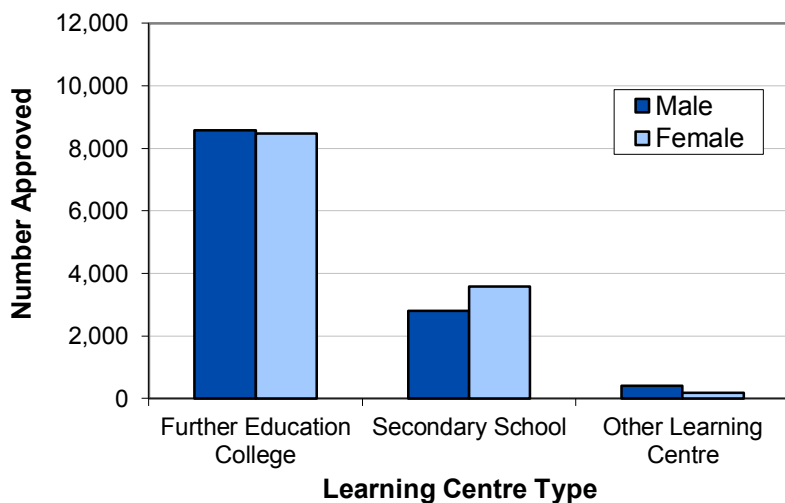
6,385 students attending secondary schools had their applications approved, accounting for 27 per cent of all approved applications.

The remaining 2 per cent of approved applications were for students attending other learning centres¹.

¹ "Other learning centres" comprises of Special schools and Independent schools.

Approved EMA applications by gender

Chart 5: Approved EMA applications by learning centre type and gender, 2016/17



There were similar proportions of approved applications from males and females in further education colleges, but there were more females in secondary schools (56 per cent). 585 approved applications were from students attending other learning centres, more than two thirds of which were from males.

Table 4: Approved EMA applications by gender and academic year (a) (b)

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
All Learning Centres:	30,270	30,180	28,770	26,245	24,025
Males	14,485	14,500	14,040	12,830	11,785
Females	15,785	15,680	14,730	13,415	12,245

Source: Student Loans Company

(a) Figures as at 31st August

(b) Data include 19 year olds who are eligible due to exceptional circumstances

Approved EMA applications by year claiming EMA

Table 5: Approved EMA applications by year claiming EMA (a)

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Year claiming EMA:	30,270	30,180	28,770	26,245	24,025
First	14,585	15,140	13,415	12,295	11,645
Second	10,865	10,885	11,410	9,935	9,025
Third	4,815	4,150	3,940	4,005	3,360
Fourth	5	*	10	10	0

Source: Student Loans Company

(a) Figures as at 31st August

In 2016/17, 11,645 applications (48 per cent) of approved applications were from first year claimants.

Notes

1.1 Context

Trends in applications and approvals for EMA provided in this release should be considered against the context of trends in the eligible cohort (of mainly 16 to 18 year olds), their participation in education and training, and their household income levels (since EMA is means-tested). In general, demographic trends have shown a decline in this age cohort since mid-2008. The Lifelong Learning Wales Record August 2016 pupil projections provides the following estimates for 16-18 year olds starting at maintained schools or FE:

2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
64,190	62,355	60,560	58,765	57,965	58,455	59,860

This suggests that numbers will continue to fall until 2021/22.

1.2 Policy/operational context

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a scheme providing young people who wish to continue in education after school leaving age with an incentive to earn awards through good attendance and achieving agreed objectives. [Changes to this scheme](#) were introduced from September 2011.

1.3 Eligibility criteria

A student has a general entitlement to receive an EMA if:

Student criteria

- He/she is aged 16, 17 or 18 years old² on 31st August 2016.
- He/she has a bank or building society current account.
- He/she meets the nationality/residency criteria.

Course criteria

- He/she is studying full-time at a school; or studying at least 12 guided hours a week at a recognised further education institution.
- He/she is studying an academic or vocational course up to and including level 3. Eligible academic or vocational course include GCSEs, A-Levels, BTECs, NVQs, GNVQs and Basic Skills courses.
- He/she is studying an eligible course that lasts at least 10 weeks.

Household income criteria

- Evidence of household income in the prior tax year determines whether a student will be eligible for an EMA.
- Students new to EMA may qualify for an award of £30 per week. There are two different household income thresholds, which are based on the student's family circumstances. Students will not be able to receive EMA if their household income is above the threshold levels.

² Entitlement may be extended to 19 and 20 year olds if they have not already received 3 years of EMA.

For students new to EMA:

Family circumstances	Household income threshold
You are the only dependant child in the household	£0 - £20,817
You have one or more dependants aged 16 or under in the household	£0 - £23,077
You have one or more dependants aged 20 or under in full-time education or training and eligible for child benefit in the household	£0 - £23,077

- Returning EMA students, who met the eligibility criteria for the 2010/11 EMA scheme, continued to get payments of £10, £20 or £30 per week until 2012/13. After three years of receiving EMA, these students have now exited the system.

2. Data source

EMA applications and payments are administered by the [Student Loans Company](#) (SLC). Data held on EMA students is entered by SLC staff onto an administrative database for the purpose of assessing and paying EMA 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 6th September 2017. All information is based on applications received by 31st August 2017.

3. Definitions

3.1 Change in applicant circumstances

The data represented in this release refer to applicants' most recent learning agreement. Therefore, if an applicant has attended more than one type of learning centre or has received different values of weekly payments, to avoid double-counting, they are only included under their most recent status.

4. Rounding strategy

All the figures are rounded to the nearest 5 for confidentiality. Where figures have been rounded there may be an apparent discrepancy between the sum of the constituent items and the total.

The following symbols are used in the tables:

- the data item is not exactly zero, but is less than half the final digit shown.
- . the data item is not applicable.
- .. the data item is not available.
- * the data item is disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication.

5. Equal opportunities

11,834 Equal Opportunities monitoring forms were received in 2016/17, which equates to 46 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 1st September 2017 show that, of the applications for which an equal opportunities form was completed:

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

Key Quality Information

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 and Coherence.

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; and
- Individual citizens, private companies, and the media.

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

- advice to Ministers;
- to inform and evaluate the education policy-making process in Wales; and
- 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 Student Loans Company before tables are published. The figures in this release reflect the final position as at the end of the 2016/17 academic year (31st August 2017), and are correct as at 6th September 2017.

Looking at previous years' data, it is possible to estimate how close provisional data are to final data. Below is a table showing the percentage increase/decrease seen between each month's update of approved applications, compared with the final figure as at end of August, published in September:

Percentage change in the number of approved applications between provisional data (as at end of stated month) and final data (as at end of August)

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
2010/11	4.3%	2.6%	1.5%	0.8%	0.4%	1.0%	0.7%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%
2011/12	2.1%	0.4%	-0.2%	-0.6%	-0.8%	-0.5%	-0.6%	-0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
2012/13	2.4%	1.1%	0.5%	0.1%	-0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2013/14	3.6%	1.6%	0.7%	0.5%	0.2%	-0.2%	-0.3%	-0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
2014/15	4.3%	2.0%	0.9%	0.7%	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
2015/16	7.5%	3.5%	1.7%	1.2%	0.4%	0.0%	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
2016/17	8.4%	3.6%	1.4%	0.6%	0.1%	-0.2%	-0.4%	-0.5%	0.1%	0.0%

Timeliness and punctuality

For academic year 2016/17, the first monthly publication on the number of EMA applications was released in December 2016, relating to applications up until the end of November 2016. Monthly updates during a given academic year are published as soon as possible on [StatsWales](#), a few weeks following the end of a given month, and according to a planned and pre-announced series of publication dates. Data in this release refers to final 2016/17 data.

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

For the academic year 2004/05 only students aged 16 at the start of the academic year were eligible to receive an EMA. The scheme was extended to 17 year olds for the 2005/06 academic year and to 18 year olds in 2006/07. Therefore, comparability between years varies, and before 2006/07 should not be compared with later years. Figures from 2006/07 onwards are comparable with each other.

Data for 2011/12 included approximately 310 students who were 19 years old and eligible for EMA, due to exceptional circumstances. 2012/13 included approximately 275 students who were 19. 2013/14 included approximately 210, 2014/15 included approximately 250, 2015/16 included approximately 285 and 2016/17 included approximately 275.

Data for 2011/12 onwards will only be comparable with previous years' data from November onwards. This is due to a change in the Student Loans Company's procedure for renewing applications for existing students, which first came into affect in academic year 2010/11.

There can be a drop in approved EMA applications, often in the Spring of the academic year. This is due to the annual exercise carried out by SLC to sample check a proportion of those returning EMA applicants who have chosen to self certify their income and assess the application against the applicants' previous years income evidence. If the applicant later fails to provide evidence of household income (if requested) then they will be assumed to no longer be eligible for support.

From academic year 2011/12, students new to EMA can only qualify for an award of £30 per week, depending on household income. Returning EMA students (who met the eligibility criteria for the 2010/11 EMA scheme), continued to get their payments of £10, £20 or £30 per week 2012/13. After three years of receiving EMA, these students have now exited the system. The performance bonus payments (previously paid in September, January and July) were removed at the end of academic year 2010/11, and are no longer paid out to any students.

Northern Ireland and Scotland have their own EMA schemes. The EMA scheme in England has been cancelled and has been closed to new applicants since 1st January 2011. This scheme has been replaced by a £180m [bursary scheme](#) which focuses on students from less wealthy households.

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

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

This release is available at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/ema-awarded-wales/?lang=en>

Comparable monthly data and further detailed information on EMA applications can be found on the [StatsWales website](#).

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

Related articles

The [Scottish Government](#) publish statistics on recipients of EMA.

[Statistical Releases on other strands of student support in Wales](#).

List of tables and data items provided on StatsWales

- i. [Cumulative totals of applications for EMA by academic year and work stage](#)
(*Chart 1 and Chart 2*)
- ii. [Approved applications by LEA and type of award](#)
(*Chart4*)
- iii. [Approved applications by learning centre type, gender and type of award](#)
(*Table3 and Table 4 and Chart 5*)

Next update

The next update to this Statistical First Release will be September 2018.

The next update to the StatsWales table on cumulative applications, covering November 2017 EMA data, will be on 20th December 2017.

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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