**Lifelong learning entitlement (LLE) Market Engagement**

The LLE will launch in 26/27 where it will replace higher education (HE) student finance loans and advanced learner loans (ALLs) for levels 4 – 6, creating a single funding system.

​From September 2026, learners will be able to apply for LLE funding for the first time for courses and modules starting from January 2027 onwards.

​From its launch, the LLE loan will be available for:

* ​full courses at [level 4 to 6](https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels), such as degrees, technical qualifications, and designated distance-learning and online courses
* ​modules of high-value technical courses (HTQs) at level 4 to 5
* ​modules from full level 6 qualifications – for example, degrees – that align to:
* ​priority skills needs
* ​the government’s industrial strategy

​Under the LLE, eligible learners will be able to access:

* ​a tuition fee loan, with new learners able to access up to the full entitlement of £38,140 – equal to 4 years of study based on academic year 2025 to 2026 fee rates
* ​a maintenance loan to cover living costs, for courses with in-person attendance

​Financial help will also be available for:

* ​learners with disabilities
* ​support with childcare

​An additional entitlement will be available for priority subjects or longer courses, such as medicine degrees.

​Learners will be able to see their loan balance through their own LLE personal account hosted by the Student Loans Company (SLC).​

**LLE evaluation**

The aim of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE) evaluation is to assess how well LLE has met its objectives; it will provide analysis and commentary on the success and effectiveness of the LLE and determine whether the intervention was well-targeted, cost-effective, whether desired outcomes have been achieved, and examine any unintended consequences. Data and evidence will also inform the benefits management case and the post-implementation review in academic year (AY) 31/32.

The evaluation will feature impact, process, and value for money (VfM) approaches. For the first 6 years (academic year (AY) 26/27- 31/32) the evaluation will conduct a process and theory-based impact evaluation, before carrying out VfM analysis in AY 36/37. In AY 31/32 a separate feasibility study will be commissioned to assess the possibility of quasi-experimental (QE) methods to measure the impact of LLE on learners, which, if possible, would be conducted in AY 36/37.

**Initially, the DfE would like to let a contract for a theory-based impact evaluation (TBIE) and process evaluation of the LLE.** The process evaluation will give insight on the implementation of LLE, the successes and challenges of delivery and lessons learnt from the perspective of learners, providers, the Student Loans Company (SLC), the Office for Students (OfS) and DfE colleagues. A mixed methods approach drawing on DfE administrative datasets and primary research will enable this.

Similarly, the TBIE will use mixed methods and DfE administrative datasets and primary research to test both causal claims within the theory of change (ToC) and the alternative theories generated. This will enable an assessment of the contribution that LLE has made to measured outcomes.

**Market Engagement Event**

We will be holding a virtual market engagement event on Monday 24th November 2025 (11am-12 noon) to provide more information about the contract and answer questions about the survey.  
  
If you would like to attend please forward your email address to [Sarah.HORSELL@education.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.HORSELL@education.gov.uk)  and you will be sent a meeting invitation.