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# Discretionary Award Provision in England and Wales

A survey carried out by the  
National Foundation for Educational Research

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Felicity Fletcher-Campbell, Wendy Keys, Lesley Kendall

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**Full report    March 1994**

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With the financial assistance of  
the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation,  
the Sir John Cass's Foundation  
and  
the Department for Education  
and the Further Education Funding Council

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# Foreword

For some time, serious concern has been expressed about the availability of financial support for students through the discretionary awards system. Much of the concern has been based on purely anecdotal evidence. At the same time charitable foundations have reported increasing requests for assistance from those young people who have been refused awards.

In the light of this concern, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the Sir John Cass's Foundation decided to commission a survey of discretionary award giving by the local education authorities in England and Wales. Their aim was to seek to establish the facts in a way that was both more up-to-date and more detailed than the statistics routinely collected by the Department for Education. For example, the figures for 1993/94 returned by local education authorities to the DFE on the agreed schedule will not be publicly available until the summer of 1995. Indeed, the significance of the project was such that both the Department itself and the Further Education Funding Council joined with the Foundations in sponsoring the project.

The National Foundation for Educational Research was chosen to carry out the survey, and this report is the result of their work. A complete, but shorter, Report of the Main Findings and Conclusions is also separately available. The reports represent the outcome of an ambitious and comprehensive survey, and the sponsors are grateful to those LEAs and their officers who devoted time and effort to providing detailed information. At the same time, the outcome is disappointing for two reasons. Some LEAs are making generous levels of student support locally available: but as the report itself sets out, much of the information sought proved to be unavailable: so that the detailed factual position is less clear than it should be. And the report established beyond doubt that potential students' chances of obtaining discretionary awards, and hence — all too often — those potential students' educational opportunities, depend merely on where they happen to live.

I have been privileged to serve as chairman of the project Steering Group. The work has been interesting and is potentially very significant. The facts set out in the reports are an essential starting point for the consideration of the issues that they illuminate, and a necessary preliminary to any subsequent work that endeavours to point the way from the present situation towards a coherent system of student support.

**John Bevan**  
**Chairman of the Steering Group**  
*Secretary, Association for Colleges*

# Discretionary Awards Provision in England and Wales

## Chapter 1 Background to the study

### 1.1 Introduction

Over the past few years, concern has been expressed by further education colleges and higher education institutions in both the public and private sectors about the way in which the discretionary awards system is functioning. This concern is now within the context of the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) which has brought substantial changes to post-16 education, removing responsibility for FE from LEAs and establishing the statutory framework for the incorporation of colleges; new organisations created in the aftermath of the Act are also involved in the area of discretionary awards - for example, the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC), and the Association for Colleges (AFC). Organisations with a particular focus - for example, on the performing arts, law and those responsible for access courses - have similar concerns. A number of charitable foundations have also commented on the increase in applications to them for assistance with the costs of study by individuals who might have previously received support from their LEA.

Much of the evidence about discretionary awards has, however, been either anecdotal or collected by a particular interest group. Surveys of the financial position of potential or actual discretionary award holders have focused on particular constituencies (for example, law students) and have varied as regards the rigour of the research.

In order to gather a greater body of evidence about the position regarding discretionary awards, a survey was commissioned from the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) by the Gulbenkian Foundation and Sir John Cass's Foundation, with support from the Department for Education (DFE) and the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC).

### 1.2 Student awards

The Education Act 1962 allows for two main types of awards for students over the age of 16 wishing to take a course of study in further or higher education: mandatory awards and discretionary awards. An award can comprise an element for tuition fees and an element for maintenance costs.

#### 1.2.2 Mandatory awards

Mandatory awards are available to students on designated courses; these are mainly full-time, advanced courses, including sandwich courses and initial teacher training, which take place at a UK university, publicly-funded institution or, in some cases, a private institution. Designated courses lead to a first degree (such as a BA or BSc) or another specified equivalent qualification, a Diploma of Higher Education (DipHE), a Higher National Diploma (HND) or a Post-Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE).

In addition to attending a designated course, applicants for mandatory awards must also be personally eligible. The main criteria are, broadly, that they must have been 'ordinarily resident' in the UK for three years before the academic year in which the course begins and must not have previously received public funds for a higher education course (for details, see DFE, 1992).

Holders of mandatory awards normally have their fees paid in full (except in the case of fees at private institutions, which may exceed those payable in publicly-funded institutions) but the maintenance element is means-tested on a nationally applied scale announced by the DFE early each Summer. The maximum maintenance grant available was frozen by the government in 1990. Since then, holders of mandatory awards have been eligible to apply for loans up to a maximum amount decided for each year (currently representing just under a third of the maximum grant).

Although the mandatory awards system is administered by Local Education Authorities (LEAs), all amounts paid are recoverable at 100 per cent from central government. The total expenditure on mandatory awards accounts for a substantial proportion of total expenditure on student awards. In 1990/91, the most recent year for which statistics are available, just over £200 million was spent on discretionary awards compared with £1500 million (88 per cent of the expenditure on awards) on mandatory awards (DFE, 1993).

### **1.2.3 Discretionary awards**

As their name implies, discretionary awards are subject to local decision-making. LEAs set their own policies regarding personal eligibility (residence requirements or age), the type of course supported (access, vocational, requisite for professional qualification) and the subjects supported (subjects commonly studied at private institutions are especially pertinent here). Furthermore, discretionary awards are paid entirely out of the LEA's budget and there is no specific grant from central government. The local economic situation (widely interpreted) thus has a considerable influence on discretionary awards policies. LEAs must not 'fetter their own discretion': they may have policies but there must be opportunities for flexibility and the consideration of the situations of particular applicants. LEAs normally have appeals procedures to accommodate this obligation and, in addition, a few have specific provision, such as bursary schemes, for applications falling outside current policy but nevertheless deemed worthy of support.

Under the terms of the Education Act, 1962, there are two categories of discretionary awards.

Awards in the smaller (and, for the purposes of this study, less significant) of the two categories are termed *Section 1 (6) awards*. These are given to students who are on courses designated for mandatory awards but do not fulfil the criteria for personal eligibility. If a Section 1 (6) award is given, present legislation stipulates that it must be at the same rates and subject to the same conditions as for a mandatory award.

Awards in the larger of the two categories of discretionary awards are termed *Section 2 awards* and are given for non-designated courses of further education and higher education; they are mostly for full-time study. Section 2 awards may be given for any

percentage of the tuition fees and/or percentage of the mandatory award maintenance rate. Alternatively, maintenance may be paid according to the LEA's own scale. This local rate, which differs across LEAs in England and Wales, may be higher or lower than that applicable for mandatory awards. Where a higher rate is applied, it is to take account of the fact that many holders of discretionary awards are not eligible to apply for student loans which are available for holders of mandatory awards: loans are not available for further education, post-graduate or part-time courses (except in the case of initial teacher training). The discretionary awards budget may also provide modest one-off sums for students' course-related expenses such as equipment and field trips.

#### **1.2.4 Discretionary awards - local terminology**

There is a confusing range and inconsistent usage of terminology for types of discretionary awards across England and Wales. This reflects the apparent conceptual confusion about the classification of courses and related awards: in the material analysed for this study, types of awards were dependent on such factors as academic standard of course, age of students, length of course or cost of course.

LEAs usually categorise discretionary awards into major and minor awards.

*Major awards* are normally for students aged 18+ pursuing their first, full-time, course of higher education (designated or non-designated). They are normally 'higher value' awards and their composition is different from that of minor awards (see below). For example, they generally contain a standard element for travel so travel cannot be claimed under separate arrangements as it can for minor awards.

Some authorities appear to apply the term 'major' to longer courses of further education, so the category in these authorities can include a considerable proportion of applicants. Furthermore, courses (for example, Foundation Art) can switch categories on account of changes in policy.

*Minor awards* are of lesser value and are for FE courses; they are usually sub-divided into a category for 16-19 year olds and a category for those over 19, though the terminology applied varies considerably. For example, the age range signified by an 'intermediate' award varies (for example, 16-19 year old students or 19-21 year olds). The term is also used to signify study away from home - when a lodgings element might be available. One authority used the term 'minor' for 16-19 awards, 'adult minor' for students over 19 and 'county award' for those who are independent or living away from home. A third LEA called over-19 awards 'discretionary' and under-19 awards 'automatic' while a fourth had four categories: senior, intermediate, minor and junior. A further authority termed **all** its minor awards 'Intermediate' awards. It was, however, helpful in the way it distinguished them from major awards: intermediate awards were for courses at NVQ levels 2 and 3 (level 1 for special education courses) while major awards were for courses at NVQ level 4.

Broadly, the distinctions between types of minor awards - which generate specific types of support - are in recognition of the fact that, under agreement, fees are not payable for students aged 16-18 in publicly funded institutions. There has been some difference of interpretation of the status of 18 year-olds and, at the time of the research, the position

had not been clarified. The FEFC has now stated that '18' means being 'under 19' on 31 August in the year when the student commences a programme of study.

The general position is that awards for 16-19 year olds are in respect of maintenance, travel or equipment only (unless they are in private institutions) whereas those for students over 19 can include a fee element. Sometimes minor awards are also classified according to whether an applicant has reached the age of 25, which is one of the criteria used to determine whether a student is 'independent' for the purposes of the Mandatory Awards Regulations.

### **1.3 Summary of previous investigations**

There have been a number of previous investigations into LEAs' policies and practices with regard to discretionary awards. Although a couple have been of a general nature, most of these reports have been instigated by particular subject-area constituencies.

*The Association of County Councils (ACC)* carried out a survey of its members' discretionary awards policies in 1992 (ACC, 1992). There were responses from 34 counties, representing 74 per cent of members. Information was sought about fees, maintenance, equipment grants and travel grants for FE; for other non-designated advanced courses (for example, dance and drama, law and other postgraduate courses); and for section 1 (6) awards.

Six of the responding authorities reported recent or proposed expansion. These included enhanced support for law, dance and drama, professional retraining and second qualifications; and increased maintenance grants for 19+ FE students. Twenty-nine authorities reported recent or proposed new restrictions on eligibility or value of awards while four reported no restrictions of this nature. Law, dance and drama, postgraduate study, theology and section 1 (6) awards were the subject areas most commonly mentioned as being increasingly threatened. Other restrictions included maximum fee limits for various categories of courses, frozen or reduced value awards, stricter residence criteria and upper age limits. Cash-limited budgets were also mentioned.

As regards applications, of 31 authorities responding to the ACC survey, 30 noted some rise, 14 of these authorities mentioning in particular a rise in the number of mature students applying for access courses and retraining.

The concerns identified included the difficulty of meeting the increased volume of applications within a cash-limited budget, the growing administrative and casework pressure on awards sections, the rising cost of fees, the variation in support available for different areas of training, the falling value of individual awards as the number of applications increased and the impact of the recession on demands for retraining.

Comparisons with data collected for this study would be unreliable as it is not possible to ascertain the comparability either of the respective responding groups nor of the data source (for example, the ACC survey was by questionnaire while information on policy was obtained by documentation for the NFER survey). By the final date for the analysis of materials, the NFER had received documentation from 30 English counties and five Welsh authorities but not all the documentation covered all the issues raised elsewhere. Nevertheless, the trends and general concerns noted by the ACC were borne out by the NFER data.

*The National Union of Students (NUS)* LEA Discretionary Awards Survey 1990/91 (NUS, undated) looked at overall spending trends and also noted various policy issues: for example, the increasing number of responding authorities (59 per cent) which offer awards neither for those post-graduate courses falling outside the responsibility of the Research Councils, nor for second courses (64 per cent). These trends were borne out by the NFER examination of policy documents.

A survey carried out for the *Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET)* (Brinson, 1992) noted the anomalies among LEAs as regards their policies affecting students wishing to undertake dance courses: there was a trend towards offering only partial grants (which in the light of the dance schools' high fees and thus the real terms of the shortfall, could be of little use) and towards the use of quotas. Both these trends were found in the NFER research although there was no confirmation of two other LEA practices mentioned by Brinson: that of only giving support for the first or last years of a three-year course, and that of cancelling awards without warning in the middle of a course. Although there was evidence from the NFER data that LEAs were withdrawing awards for the performing arts, all were honouring commitments to continuing students (subject to the normal satisfactory reports) and the few which were only guaranteeing awards for one year at a time were making the policy clear to applicants.

*The College of Law* has recently undertaken two surveys relevant to the issue of discretionary awards. The first (Hillyer, 1993a) sought to explore the pattern of funding of entrants to the solicitors' branch of the legal profession. A questionnaire was sent to a 10 per cent (419) sample of students on the 1992/93 Law Society's Final Course; 288 replies were received (a response rate of 69 per cent - or 6.9 per cent of the total cohort). Of these, 38 per cent were in receipt of a discretionary award but only three per cent received all fees (£3040 outside London and £3285 within London) and maintenance of more than £2000; and 14 per cent had been awarded part fees only - the remainder were in a position between these two points. In many cases, amounts awarded were small in relation to total costs (see Table 1.1). The majority of students were, thus, dependent on other sources of support. It was pointed out that the new Legal Practice Course (starting 1993/94) would require fees of £4500 (£4750 within London).

**Table 1.1 Law students success in obtaining discretionary awards**

	Percentage of respondents who obtained some/full grant
all fees and maintenance of £2,000 or more	2.8%
all fees and up to £1,999 maintenance	3.5%
all fees (no maintenance)	6.9%
part fees and maintenance of £2,000 or more	4.7%
part fees and up to £1,999 maintenance	6.3%
part fees only	13.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.1%</b>

Source: Hillyer (1993a) Table 8a

A second study (Hillyer, 1993b) investigated the reasons why students cancelled their places before the academic year or failed to register when the term started. There was evidence that just under a half of the 426 students who were in this category had financial reasons for not embarking upon the course. Discretionary awards had been offered to 26 per cent of those who cancelled but only one student had been offered all fees and maintenance: others had part fees (13 per cent), fees only (1 per cent) part fees and part maintenance (9 per cent) and maintenance only (3 per cent). Of the 426 students in the survey, 21 per cent did not apply for a discretionary awards as they had been informed that the policy of their LEA was not to award a grant and nine per cent did not apply as they knew that the LEA would only award a partial grant which would be insufficient.

In a survey of the *role of LEAs in access course developments* (Vesey and Woodrow, 1992) responses were received from 67 per cent of LEAs. Of these, three-quarters reported that discretionary awards for access courses were available. Of the responding authorities offering access courses, just over one-third (37 per cent) offered major awards although cash limits and quotas were in operation. The remaining responding authorities offering awards for access courses gave minor (lesser value) awards, often limited to fees and travelling expenses. The researchers could identify no clear pattern with regard to the amount of award given or the criteria for determining eligibility. It was found that discretionary awards were less likely to be available where LEAs were members of access consortia or Open College networks; it was suggested that LEAs might be funding networks rather than individual students via discretionary awards.

Although it was undertaken before the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, a study into *part-time higher education* (Smith and Saunders, 1991) raised some issues which are still pertinent. The authors noted that there were tensions between eligibility for Department of Social Security (DSS) benefits and eligibility for discretionary awards; these caused some students to 'act illegally' in order to study. The researchers concluded that these tensions should be resolved and that 'a standardised set of support procedures operating throughout the country' was required (p24). They also noted that, in a time of recession, both public and private sector employers were less enthusiastic about sponsoring employees' study; thus awards might be even more critical.

Complementing the available qualitative data has been a certain amount of objective evidence. For example, the Department for Education (DFE) analyses annual returns of statistical data pertaining to LEAs' awards (submitted on Form 503G) although LEAs are not required to submit detailed breakdowns by subject.

## **1.4 The research project: aims and methods**

The main **aims** of the NFER study were:

- to collect and compare statistics of English and Welsh LEA discretionary awards made in the academic years 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93, and LEAs' planned discretionary awards budgets for 1993/94;
- to collect qualitative information on changes in LEAs' discretionary awards policies and estimate the likely demand for discretionary awards.



The research **methodology** consisted of three complementary strands which were carried out concurrently. These were:

- a review of LEA documentation on discretionary awards;
- an interview programme in a small number of LEAs; and
- two questionnaire surveys of LEAs.

## Chapter 2 The Questionnaires

### 2.1 Introduction and methodology

The purpose of the quantitative study was to collect and compare statistics on discretionary awards made by English and Welsh LEAs in the academic years 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93 and on LEAs' planned budgets for 1993/94. Our preliminary enquiries indicated that some LEAs would not have ready access to much of the more detailed information set out in the framework for the survey. In order to allow LEAs sufficient time to gather these more detailed data, without prejudicing their prompt response on the summary information (which was likely to be more readily available since it was similar to that collected each year in the DFE's Form 503G) the survey was carried out in two stages.

The first stage of the study consisted of a short questionnaire (Questionnaire 1) seeking summary information on expenditure and student numbers by type of award, to be returned to NFER within two weeks of receipt. LEAs were asked to verify data supplied to DFE for 1990/91 and 1991/92 and to supply estimates for the two subsequent years. Completed questionnaires were returned by 83 (71 per cent) of the 117 LEAs included in the survey. Representative samples of both metropolitan and non-metropolitan LEAs were achieved and response rates from both types of LEA were virtually identical. Full details of administrative procedures and response rates are given in Appendix 2.4. The data have been grossed up to allow for non-response. The method of grossing up is described in Appendix 2.5.

The second questionnaire focused mainly on new awards in 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93 and sought more detailed (and less readily available) information on:

- expenditure on fees and maintenance;
- subject areas for which discretionary awards had been made;
- students at private institutions;
- students studying outside England and Wales;
- students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
- demand for discretionary awards.

In recognition of the complexity of the information sought by Questionnaire 2, LEAs were given longer for its completion. In addition, the original date for the return of Questionnaire 2 was extended by several months and strenuous efforts were made to achieve a good response rate. Completed questionnaires were returned by 72 (62 per cent) of the 117 LEAs included in the survey. However, most of these LEAs were unable to provide all the detailed information sought by the survey. Response rates for individual questions ranged from 18 per cent to 49 per cent of all LEAs. In addition, there was evidence that LEAs with lower expenditure on discretionary awards were over-represented amongst respondents to Questionnaire 2. In view of these factors it was decided that it would be unwise to present quantitative data from Questionnaire 2. Some of the other information is, however, presented in the report. Full details of administrative procedures, response rates and data quality are given in Appendices 2.4 and 2.5.

## 2.2 Estimated expenditure and numbers of awards by type of award in 1990/91, 1991/92, 1992/93 and 1993/94

It must be remembered that the results described below are projections based on responses from 71 per cent of the LEAs in England and Wales and that some of these LEAs did not provide complete data. Furthermore, the figures provided by LEAs for 1993/94 (and to some extent estimated outturn for 1992/93) were only estimates, some of which were, necessarily, very provisional and subject to revision. It should also be noted that LEAs vary widely in the level and pattern of provision. The overall pattern of change from year to year will not be reflected in all LEAs, when considered individually.

Standard errors of estimate for total expenditure and total expenditure on each type of award need to be considered when making comparisons between figures for different academic years. These are given below:

<i>Standard errors of estimate</i>	
Total expenditure	1%
Section 2 (FE)	3%
Educational Maintenance Allowances	5%
Section 2 (HE)	5%
Postgraduate Section 2	5%
Section 1(6)	3%
Placement year sandwich students	10%

Where comparisons involve subsets of the data (e.g. comparisons between metropolitan and non-metropolitan authorities) the standard errors will, of course, be larger. A full report on data quality and the way in which standard errors were estimated is given in Appendix 2.5.

Figure 2.1 shows trends in estimated expenditure on discretionary awards by all LEAs in England and Wales between 1990/91 and 1993/94, and Figure 2.2 shows expenditure broken down by type of award. Estimated numbers of awards for the same period are shown in Figure 2.3 and broken down by type of award in Figure 2.4. The numbers on which Figures 2.1 to 2.4 are based are given in Tables 2.1 and 2.2. All the results shown in the Figures and Tables have been grossed up as described in Appendix 2.5. Unless specifically stated, expenditure has been reported in cash terms (i.e. it has not been adjusted to take account of inflation). Where appropriate, expenditure has been expressed in terms of 1990/91 prices by using the GDP deflator, published by the Central Statistical Office. This is a general inflation indicator, covering all goods and services provided in the economy, and is used to re-price public expenditure. Using these data and taking 1990/91 as the base level, cumulative inflation for 1991/92, 1992/93 and 1993/94, respectively, was 5.5 per cent, 9.1 per cent and an estimated 12.9 per cent.

### 2.2.1 Expenditure: the overall picture

Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1 show that, on the basis of the data supplied by DFE (and verified by the 83 LEAs), overall expenditure on discretionary awards in 1991/92 was about 14 per cent higher in cash terms than in 1990/91 (about £252 million compared with about £220 million). Figure 2.1 also shows that expenditure (estimated outturn) decreased

slightly to about £249 million in 1992/93 (but was still about 13 per cent above the 1990/91 level) and that it is projected to fall further to about £230 million in 1993/94 which was four per cent above the 1990/91 level in cash terms. If this projection is fulfilled, this represents a decrease in expenditure of about eight per cent compared with the 1990/91 level. Here, as elsewhere, it must be remembered that the figures for 1992/93 are estimates and those for 1993/94 are projections and, as such, are subject to error.

Figure 2.2 and Table 2.1 show how LEA expenditure was shared out between the different types of discretionary awards and how the proportions appear to have changed since 1990/91. In all four years, LEAs spent or are planning to spend far more (between £130 million and £176 million per annum, 60-70 per cent of total annual expenditure) on Section 2 awards in support of FE (Section 2(FE)) than on any other type of discretionary award. The next most important types of award in terms of expenditure were Section 2 awards in support of HE courses (Section 2 (HE)) (between £24 million and £47 million), and Educational Maintenance Allowances (EMAs) (between £16 million and £25 million).

Strictly speaking, EMAs are not discretionary awards since they are paid to school pupils and students under Regulation 4(e) (1) of the Scholarships and Other Benefits Regulations (1977) and not under the same legislation as discretionary awards (the Education Act 1962). However, sixth-form colleges became part of the FE sector in April 1993, and students who would formerly have been paid EMAs are now eligible for discretionary awards. In order to ensure comparability year-on-year in the future, expenditure on EMAs has been included in our totals.

### **2.2.2 Expenditure: estimated changes between 1990/91 and 1993/4 by type of award**

As noted above, the level of total expenditure on all types of discretionary awards for 1993/94 is projected to be about four per cent higher in cash terms than total expenditure in 1990/91 (in spite of higher levels of expenditure in the two intervening years). However, expenditure on some types of awards was considerably higher in 1992/93 and 1993/94 than in 1990/91, whereas expenditure on other types of award was considerably lower. The greatest increases have been in expenditure on Section 2 (FE) Awards and, to a lesser extent, on EMAs. It should be remembered that the average amounts paid per student for these types of award tend to be lower than for most other types of discretionary awards and that EMAs and, in many cases, Section 2(FE) awards are paid to students from low-income households. Details of estimated changes are summarised below.

- Expenditure on Section 2 (FE) awards appears to have increased between 1990/91 and 1991/92 by about 23 per cent in cash terms (from about £130 million to about £160 million). Estimated outturn for 1992/93 was £176 million (about 35 per cent above the 1990/91 level). However, projections suggest that expenditure in 1993/94 will fall to £167 million (about 28 per cent above the 1990/91 level). If these predictions are fulfilled, this represents an increase of about 14 per cent in real terms.
- Similarly, expenditure on EMAs, although (as mentioned above) much less in total than expenditure on Section 2(FE) awards, appears to have increased between 1990/91 and 1991/92 (by about 26 per cent, from just over £16 million

to just under £21 million). Estimated outturn for 1992/93 was about £24 million (about 47 per cent above the 1990/91 level). Projections suggest that expenditure in 1993/94 will increase to about £25 million (about 55 per cent above the 1990/91 level, making EMAs the second largest category of discretionary support in 1993/94.). If these predictions are fulfilled, this represents an increase of more than a third in real terms.

- On the other hand, expenditure on Section 2 (HE) awards may have decreased between 1990/91 and 1991/92 by about five per cent from about £47 million to about £44 million. Estimated outturn for 1992/93 shows a sharper decrease to £28 million (about 39 per cent below the 1990/91 level). Projections suggest that expenditure on Section 2 (HE) awards will fall to about £24 million in 1993/94 (about half of the amount spent on this type of award in 1990/91). Courses in this category are likely to include a range of professional qualifications in areas such as accountancy, personnel management, social work, youth and community work, purchasing and supply, building, valuation, surveying and pre-entry journalism, as well as some courses in music, theology and alternative medicine. If these predictions are fulfilled, this represents a decrease of 55 per cent in real terms.
- Similarly, expenditure on Section 2 (postgraduate) awards appears to have decreased between 1990/91 and 1991/92 by about 19 per cent (from £12 million to £10 million). Estimated outturn for 1992/93 suggests a decrease to £7 million (about 40 per cent below the 1990/91 level). A further decrease was predicted for 1993/94 to about £4 million (about 63 per cent below the 1990/91 level). If these predictions are fulfilled, this represents a decrease of two thirds in real terms.
- Expenditure on Section 1(6) awards appears to have increased by about 16 per cent between 1990/91 and 1992/93 (from £13 million to £15 million). However, the estimated outturn for 1992/93 fell back to about £13 million. A further fall to £11 million (about 14 per cent below the 1990/91 level) was predicted for 1993/94. If these predictions are fulfilled, this represents a decrease of nearly a quarter in real terms.
- No trends have been estimated for expenditure on placement year sandwich students, since we are uncertain about the reliability of some of the data (see Appendix 2.5) which, in any case, represent only a very small fraction of all expenditure.

### **2.2.3 Numbers of awards: the overall picture**

Figure 2.3 and Table 2.2 show that the total number of students given discretionary awards of any type in 1991/92 was about 14 per cent higher than in 1990/91 (244 thousand compared with 213 thousand). Estimates suggest that numbers of awards increased to about 257 thousand in 1992/93 (about 21 per cent above the 1990/91 level) and are projected to be about 256 thousand in 1993/94 (about 20 per cent above the 1990/91 level).

Figure 2.3 and Table 2.2 also shows the numbers of different categories of discretionary awards made and how these numbers appear to have changed since 1990/91. In all four years, Section 2(FE) awards accounted for the largest proportion (between 69 and 76 per cent) of the discretionary awards made. Educational Maintenance Allowances were the next most important type of award in terms of numbers (between 19 and 21 per cent).

## **2.2.4 Numbers of awards by type of award**

Total numbers of awards are projected to be about 20 per cent higher in 1993/94 than in 1990/91. Yet some categories of awards are expected to decrease. For example, numbers of Section 2 (HE), Section 2 (postgraduate) and, to a lesser extent, Section 1(6) awards decreased quite sharply, whereas numbers of Section 2 (FE) awards and Educational Maintenance Allowances increased considerably since 1990/91. These trends mirror those in expenditure. The results are described in more detail below .

- Estimated numbers of Section 2 (FE) awards increased from 147 thousand in 1990/91 to 174 thousand in 1991/92 (an increase of about 18 per cent). A further increase to 188 thousand was estimated for 1992/93 (28 per cent above the 1990/91 level). Projections suggest that numbers will increase to 194 thousand in 1993/94 (a third higher than the 1990/91 level).
- Similarly, estimated numbers of Educational Maintenance Allowances increased from 41 thousand in 1990/91 to 48 thousand in 1991/92 (an increase of about 17 per cent). A further increase to 55 thousand (36 per cent above the 1990/91 level) was estimated for 1992/93. Projections suggest a slight decrease to 54 thousand in 1993/94, which, nevertheless, is still one-third higher than the 1990/91 level.
- On the other hand, estimated numbers of Section 2 (HE) awards decreased from 17 thousand in 1990/91 to 15 thousand in 1991/92 (a fall of about 10 per cent). There was a much sharper decrease to 9 thousand (just over half the 1990/91 number) in 1992/93. Further projections suggest that numbers of Section 2(HE) awards will fall to about 7 thousand in 1993/94 (less than half of the 1990/91 level).
- Similarly, estimated numbers of Section 2 (postgraduate) awards fell from four thousand in 1990/91 to a little over three thousand in 1991/92 (a decrease of about 21 per cent). A further slight fall to three thousand (25 per cent below the 1990/91 number) was estimated for 1992/93. Projections suggest that numbers of Section 2 (postgraduate) awards will have fallen to under two thousand in 1993/94 (less than half of the 1990/91 level).
- Estimated numbers of Section 1(6) awards, which had remained at around four thousand in 1990/91 and 1991/92, were expected to fall to just over three thousand in 1992/93 and to three thousand in 1993/94 (about three-quarters of the 1990/91 level).
- No trends have been estimated for numbers of placement year sandwich students, since we are uncertain about the reliability of some of the data.

## **2.3 Comparisons between non-metropolitan and metropolitan authorities**

### **2.3.1 Discretionary awards: expenditure and numbers of awards**

Figure 2.5 shows expenditure by non-metropolitan authorities on different types of awards over the four years 1990/91 to 1993/4 and Figure 2.6 gives similar information for metropolitan authorities. Information on numbers of awards for non-metropolitan

and metropolitan authorities is given in Figures 2.7 and 2.8. The numbers on which Figures 2.5 to 2.8 are based are given in Tables 2.3 to 2.6.

A number of overall differences between non-metropolitan and metropolitan authorities were identified in our analyses. The differences, described in terms of percentage change between 1990/91 and 1992/3 (and between 1990/91 and 1993/94) are summarised below. Expenditure has not been adjusted for inflation. However, it should be noted here that LEAs vary widely in the level and pattern of provision. The overall pattern of change from year to year will not be reflected in all LEAs, when considered individually, and within each category a number of authorities were going against this trend.

- As Table 2.1 shows, total estimated outturn on discretionary awards by all authorities in 1992/93 was about 13 per cent above the 1990/91 outturn. However, comparisons between non-metropolitan and metropolitan authorities showed that, whereas non-metropolitan LEAs were projected to increase their overall expenditure in 1993/94, there was projected to be, overall, a downward trend in expenditure amongst metropolitan LEAs. Estimated outturn by non-metropolitan authorities in 1992/93 was about 19 per cent above the 1990/91 level, and projections suggest that expenditure in 1993/94 will be about 14 per cent above the 1990/91 level in cash terms (Table 2.3). Average expenditure in real terms in 1993/94, therefore, was likely to be about the same as the 1990/91 level in non-metropolitan LEAs. On the other hand, estimated expenditure by metropolitan authorities, which reversed to the 1990/91 level in 1992/93, was projected to be about 14 per cent below the 1990/91 level in cash terms in 1993/94 (Table 2.4). If this projection is fulfilled, this would represent a decrease in expenditure by metropolitan authorities of about a quarter in real terms.
- The total numbers of discretionary awards made by all LEAs are estimated to have increased by 21 per cent between 1990/91 and 1992/93 (Table 2.2). However, these overall figures conceal a much greater overall increase in non-metropolitan LEAs (up by 29 per cent) than in metropolitan LEAs (up by nine per cent). Projections suggest that numbers of awards in non-metropolitan LEAs will continue to increase to about 35 per cent above the 1990/91 level in 1993/94, whereas those for metropolitan authorities will revert to near the 1990/91 level. These figures are shown in Tables 2.5 and 2.6.
- Expenditure on Section 2(FE) awards in 1992/93 by non-metropolitan authorities was estimated to have increased more since 1990/91 (by 43 per cent) than in metropolitan authorities (by 16 per cent). Projections to 1993/94 suggest that expenditure on this type of award will decrease slightly in both types of authorities to 38 per cent above the 1990/91 level in non-metropolitan authorities and seven per cent above (i.e. an increase slightly less than the inflation rate of nine per cent for the period under consideration) in metropolitan authorities. If these projections are fulfilled, this represents an increase in expenditure in real terms of just over a fifth by non-metropolitan LEAs and a decrease of about five per cent in real terms by metropolitan authorities. These figures are shown in Tables 2.3 and 2.4 and illustrated in Figures 2.5 and 2.6. A similar pattern (increases of 49 per cent and seven per cent since 1990/91, respectively) was found in the projections of average numbers of awards for 1993/94 (Tables 2.5 and 2.6).

- Projected expenditure on EMAs in 1993/94, expected to have increased by 125 per cent since 1990/91 in non-metropolitan authorities (Table 2.3), is expected to remain at close to the 1990/91 level (an increase of seven per cent) in metropolitan authorities (Table 2.4). Numbers of awards were projected to increase by 59 per cent in non-metropolitan authorities and by 15 per cent in metropolitan authorities (Tables 2.5 and 2.6).
- Projected expenditure on Section 2 (HE) awards in 1993/94 is expected to be substantially below the 1990/91 level in non-metropolitan and metropolitan authorities (by 47 per cent and 53 per cent, respectively) (Tables 2.3 and 2.4). A similar pattern (56 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively, below the 1990/91 level) was found in the projections of average numbers of awards (Tables 2.5 and 2.6).
- Projected expenditure on Section 2 (postgraduate) awards in 1993/94 is also expected to be substantially below the 1990/91 level in non-metropolitan and metropolitan authorities (by 66 per cent and 58 per cent, respectively) (Tables 2.3 and 2.4). A similar pattern (56 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively, below the 1990/91 level) was found in the projections of average numbers of awards (Tables 2.5 and 2.6).
- Projected expenditure on Section 1(6) awards in 1993/94 is expected to be about the same as the 1990/91 level in non-metropolitan authorities (Table 2.3) but to be about two-thirds of the 1990/9 level in metropolitan authorities (Table 2.4). Despite slightly increased expenditure, numbers of awards were expected to be about 14 per cent below the 1990/91 level in non-metropolitan authorities (Table 2.5). Numbers of awards in metropolitan authorities (39 per cent below the 1990/91 level) (Table 2.6) mirrored the projected reduction in expenditure.

## 2.4 Variability

Tables 2.7 and 2.8 are based on information from the 73 LEAs (44 metropolitan and 29 non-metropolitan) which provided complete data on total expenditure and numbers of awards for the four years 1990/91 to 1993/94. These tables show the percentage changes for 1992/93 and 1993/94 as compared with the baseline expenditure figures for 1990/91. They show the very wide variation among authorities and the extent to which their projections tend to lie at the extremes of the spectrum.

Table 2.8 shows that, both in cash and real terms, the majority of responding authorities are projecting changes in expenditure (increases or decreases) in excess of 20 per cent between 1990/91 and 1993/94. Nearly half (34) of the 73 LEAs reported decreases in expenditure on discretionary awards of more than 20 per cent in real terms compared with 1990/91 and about a sixth (12) reported increases in expenditure of a similar magnitude. As Table 2.8 shows, decreases in expenditure of more than 20 per cent were more likely in metropolitan authorities (25 out of 44) than in non-metropolitan authorities (nine out of 29). Nevertheless, five of the 44 metropolitan authorities reported increases in expenditure of more than 20 per cent in real terms since 1990/91. These changes are shown in diagrammatic form in Figures 2.9 to 2.11. Similar comparisons in terms of numbers of awards are shown in Tables 2.9 and 2.10.

This feature of the data serves to emphasise that the overall pattern of change from year to year is most unlikely to be reflected in any given LEA or small group of LEAs.



## **2.5 Changes in average values of awards by type of award**

The average value of an award in 1992/93 was about six per cent below the 1990/91 level in cash terms, and projections for 1993/94 suggest that the average for that year will be about 13 per cent below the 1990/91 level (Table 2.11 and Figure 2.12). Even allowing for estimation errors, this suggests a fall in value by 1992/93 and, of course, an even greater decline (about a quarter) when the effects of inflation are taken into account. Since the average value of an FE award is substantially less than that of an HE award, this decrease is largely attributable to the increasing proportion of FE awards since 1990/91 and the real-terms decline in their value. In addition, these averages conceal quite large differences between types of awards.

- The average amount paid per student for Section 2 (FE) awards was six per cent higher in cash terms in 1992/93 than in 1990/91. It was projected to be about three per cent below the 1990/91 level in cash terms in 1993/94.
- The average amount paid per student for EMAs was nine per cent higher in cash terms in 1992/93 than in 1990/91. It was projected to be about 17 per cent above the 1990/91 level in cash terms in 1993/94.
- The average amount paid per student for Section 2(HE) awards was 16 per cent higher in cash terms in 1992/93 than in 1990/91. It was projected to remain at this level in 1993/94.
- The average amount paid per student for Section 2 (postgraduate) awards was about 21 per cent lower in cash terms in 1992/93 than in 1990/91. It was projected to be about 11 per cent below the 1990/91 level in cash terms in 1993/94.
- The average amount paid per student for Section 1 (6) awards was about 20 per cent higher in cash terms in 1992/93 than in 1990/91. It was projected to be about 14 per cent above the 1990/91 level in 1993/94.

## **2.6 Awards per capita**

Figures 2.13 to 2.15 show the number of awards per capita (in terms of the rate per thousand of the relevant age cohort) made by different LEAs in 1990/91 and 1992/93. The names of LEAs have not been shown. The methodology used was essentially that used by the DFE in its Students Awards Bulletin (average course length and modal ages of student are used to arrive at assumptions on participation). Participants in FE are primarily aged 16 and 17, and those in HE are mainly aged 18 - 20 at the beginning of the academic year. Cohort sizes for Wales were not available for academic year 1992/93. For Wales, therefore, the 1990/91 figures were used throughout. Results are presented separately for Section 2 (FE), EMAs and all HE (Section 1 (6), Section 2 (postgraduate), Section 2 (HE) and sandwich students). A general point to note is that, with a few exceptions, there was a tendency for an LEA that gave a high proportion of a particular type of discretionary award per capita in 1990/91 to give a high proportion of that type of award in 1992/93, and those giving lower proportions in 1990/91 gave lower proportions in 1992/93.

- The great majority of LEAs had made a higher rate of Section 2 (FE) awards per capita in 1992/93 than in 1990/91 (Figure 2.13). Section 2 (FE) awards per capita given by different LEAs varied from nil to over 300 per 1000 of the relevant age cohort in 1990/91 and from nil to over 450 in 1992/93.
- A small number of LEAs had made large increases in the rate of EMAs per capita in 1992/93 compared with 1990/91 (Figure 2.14). The majority, however, had made little or no change. EMAs per capita varied from nil to over 300 per 1000 in 1990/91 and from nil to over 400 in 1992/93.
- Almost all of the LEAs providing information had made fewer HE discretionary awards per capita in 1992/93 than in 1990/91 (Figure 2.15). HE awards per capita varied from near zero per 1000 to over 40 per 1000 in 1990/91 and from near zero to about 30 in 1992/93.

## **2.7 Concluding comments**

The figures presented in this chapter show that overall expenditure by LEAs in England and Wales is projected to decline by about seven per cent in real terms between 1990/91 and 1993/94 whereas, in the same period, total numbers of awards made are projected to increase by about one fifth. In the same period, numbers of discretionary awards in support of further education have increased and numbers of awards in support of higher education have decreased. The study also identified differences between non-metropolitan and metropolitan authorities: the overall expenditure by non-metropolitan authorities in 1993/94 was projected to be close to the 1990/91 level in real terms, whereas overall expenditure by metropolitan authorities was projected to decrease by about a quarter in real terms. It should be noted, however, that the overall pattern of change from year to year will not be reflected in all LEAs, when considered individually, and within each category a number of authorities were going against these trends. The following chapter examines the LEA policies and practices with regard to discretionary awards which lie behind the quantitative data described above.

Figure 2.1  
All LEAs: Expenditure on discretionary awards by type of award

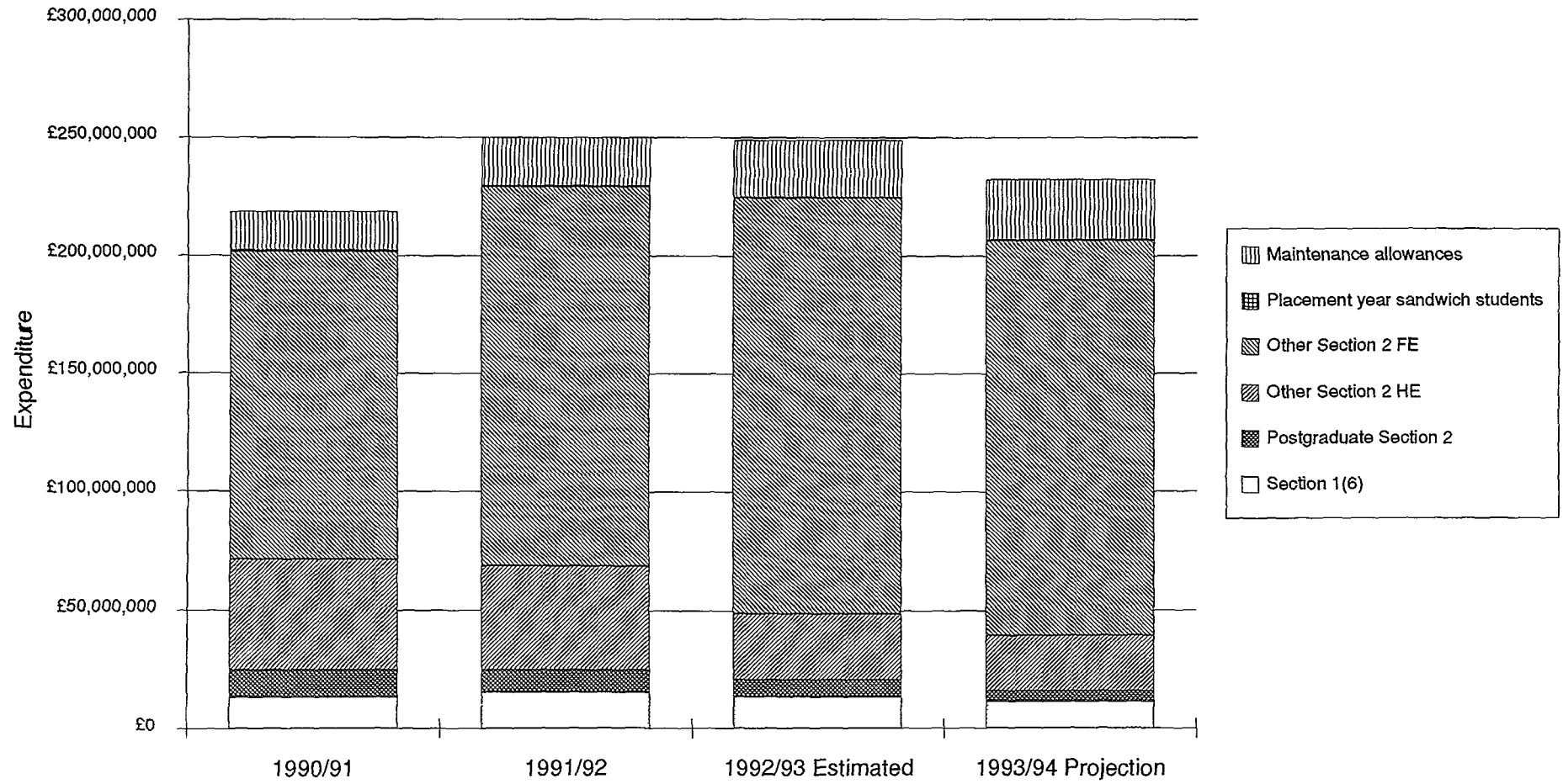


Figure 2.2  
All LEAs: Expenditure on discretionary awards by type of award

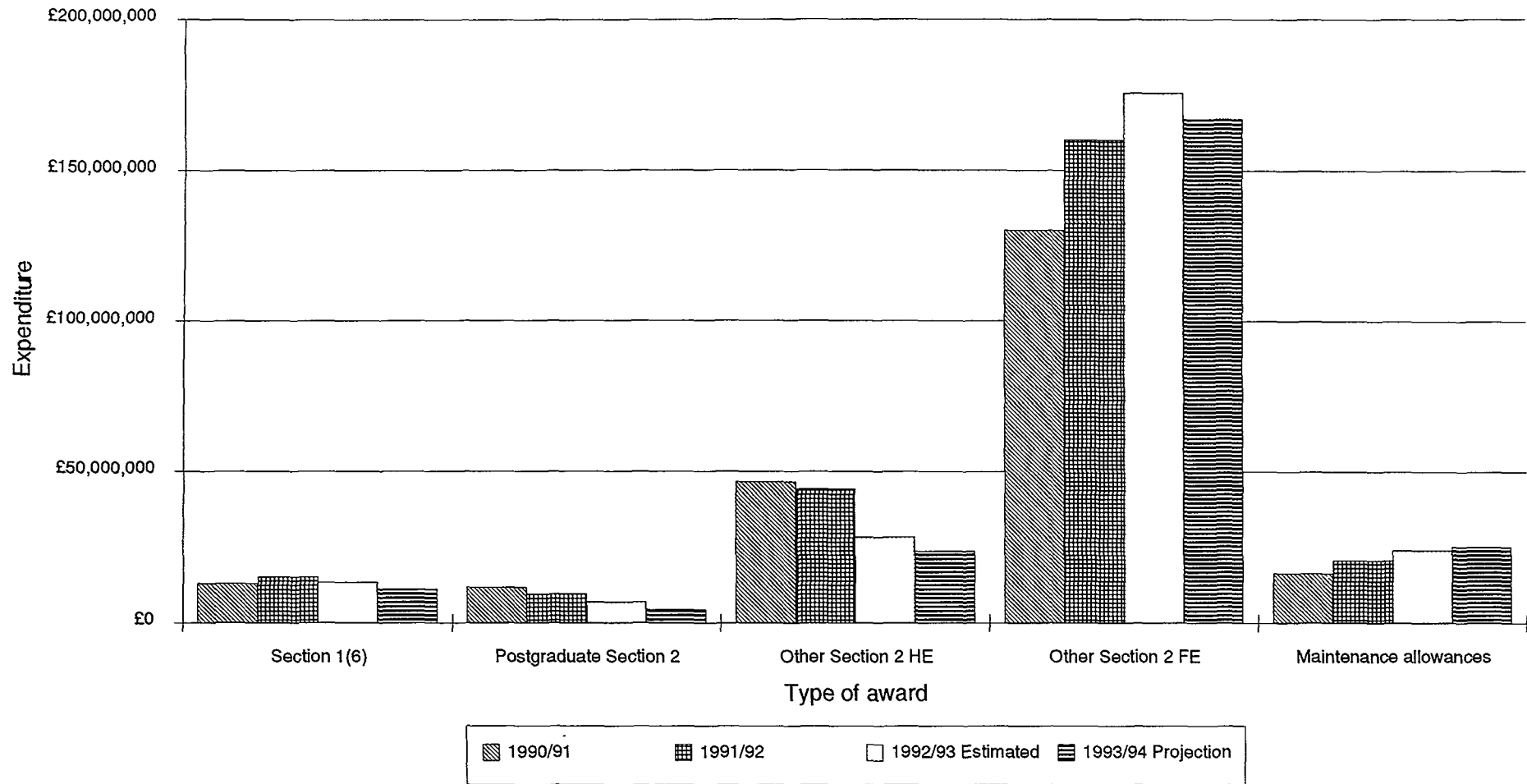


Figure 2.3  
 All LEAs: Number of discretionary awards by type of award

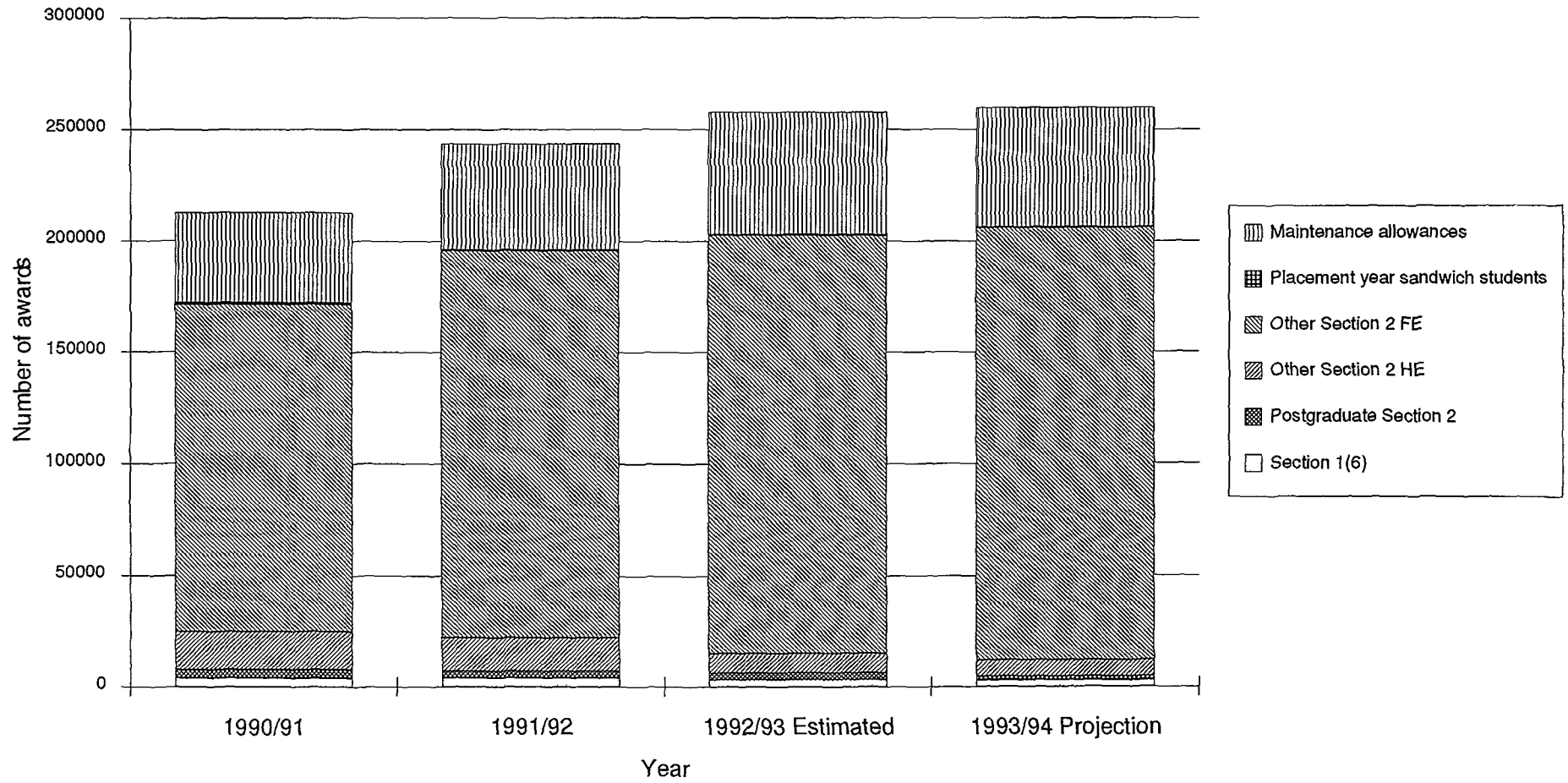


Figure 2.4  
 All LEAs: Number of discretionary awards by type of award

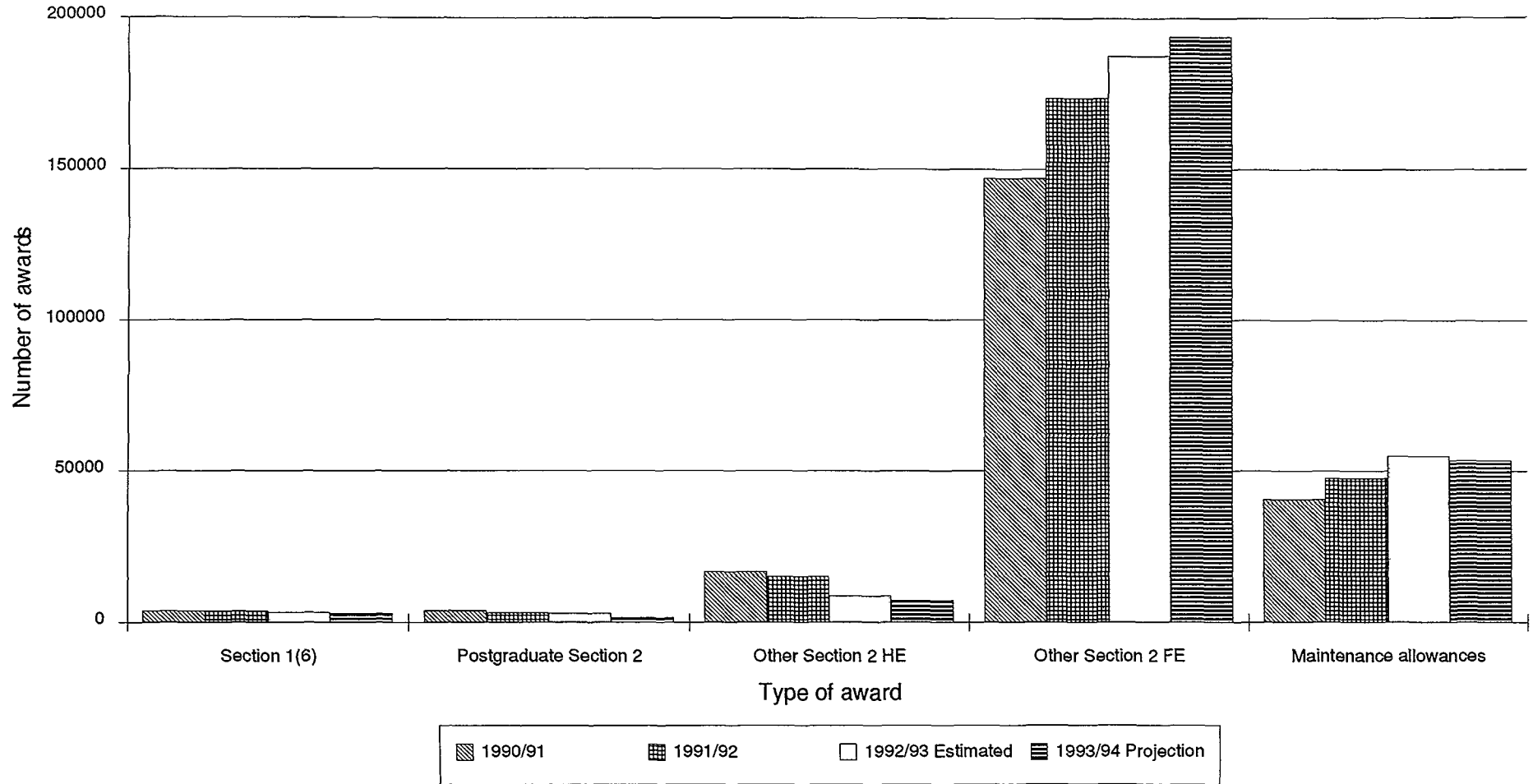


Figure 2.5  
 Non-metropolitan LEAs: Expenditure on discretionary awards by type of award

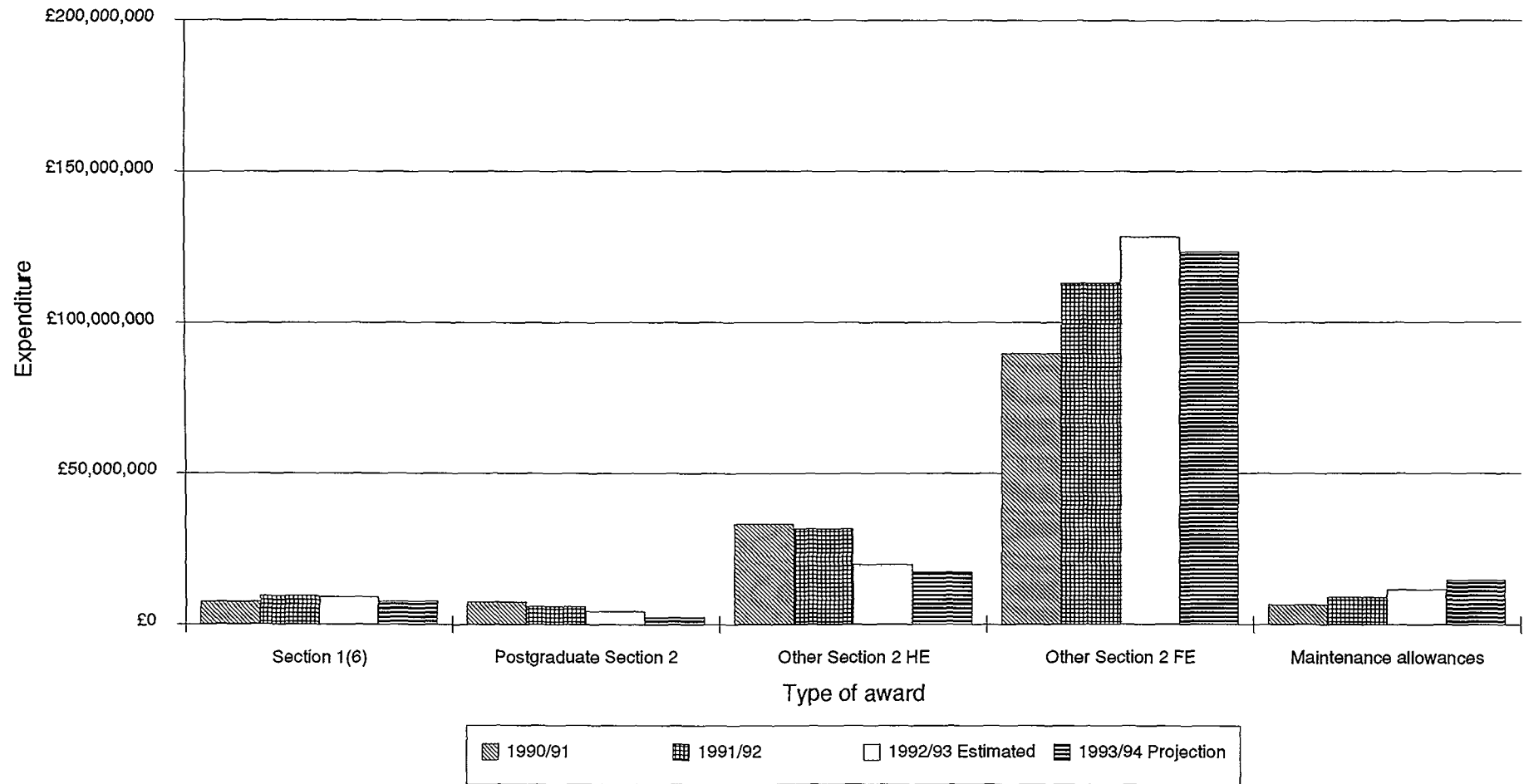


Figure 2.6  
Metropolitan LEAs: Expenditure on discretionary awards by type of award

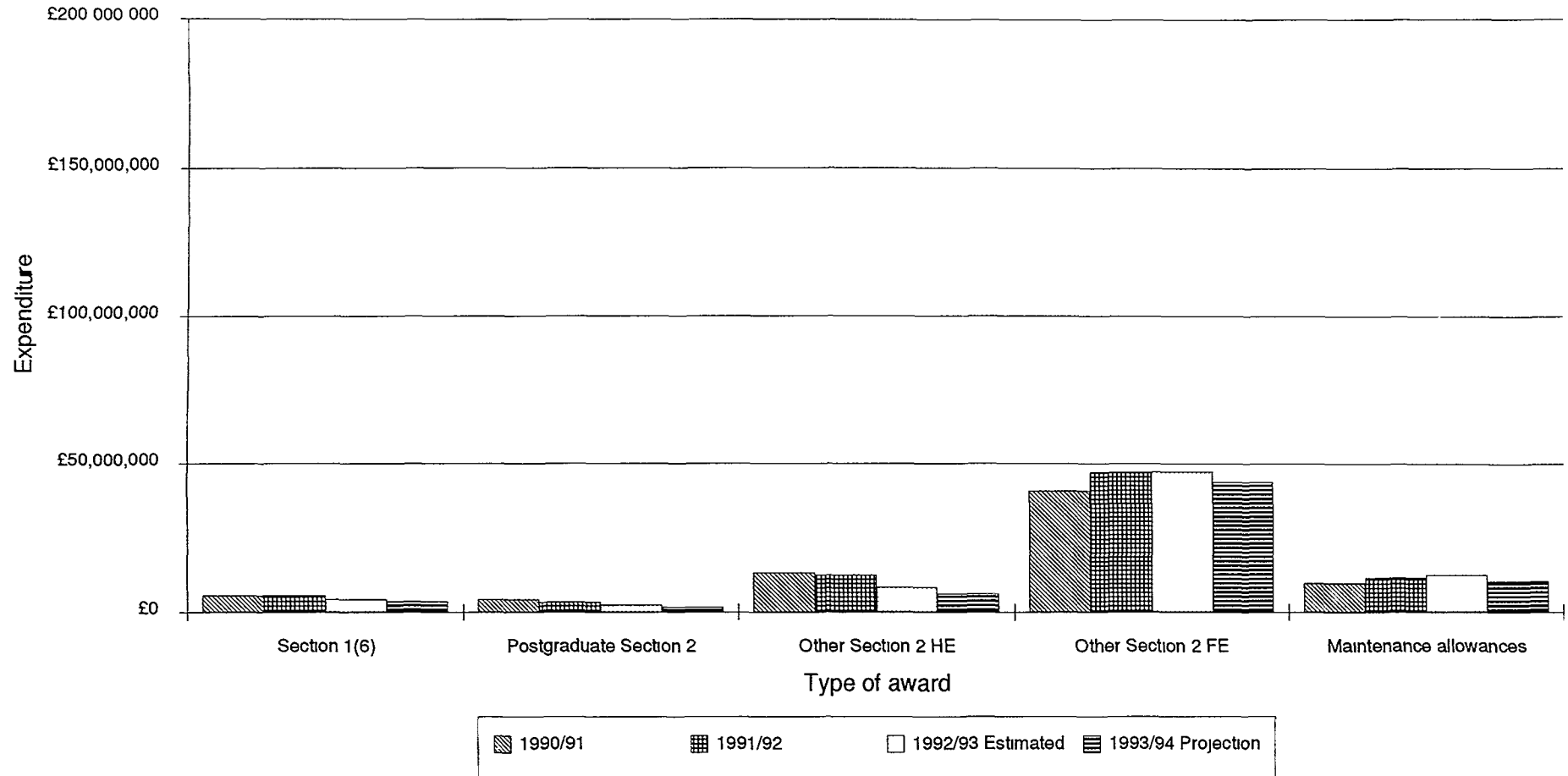




Figure 2.7  
 Non-metropolitan LEAs: Number of discretionary awards by type of award

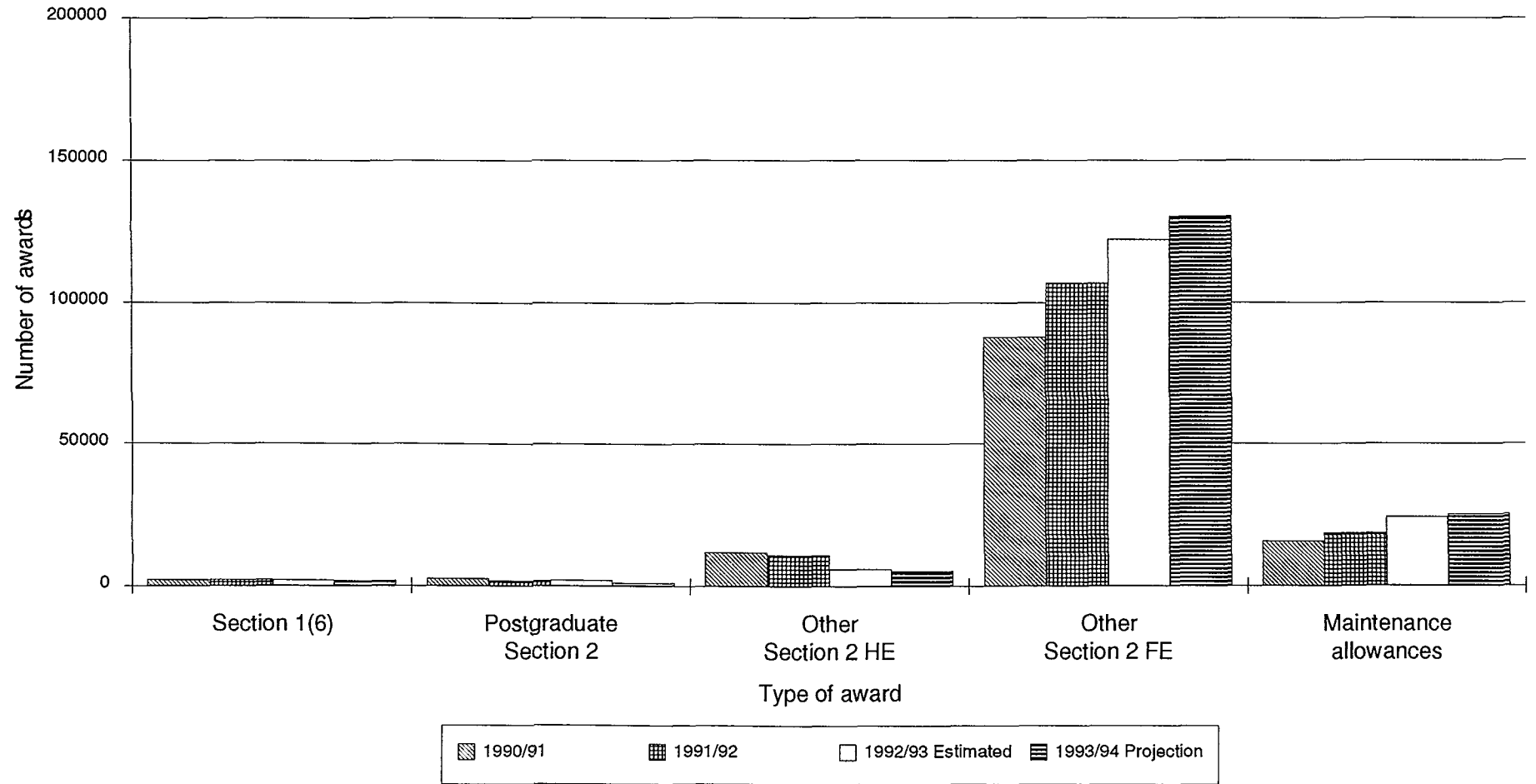
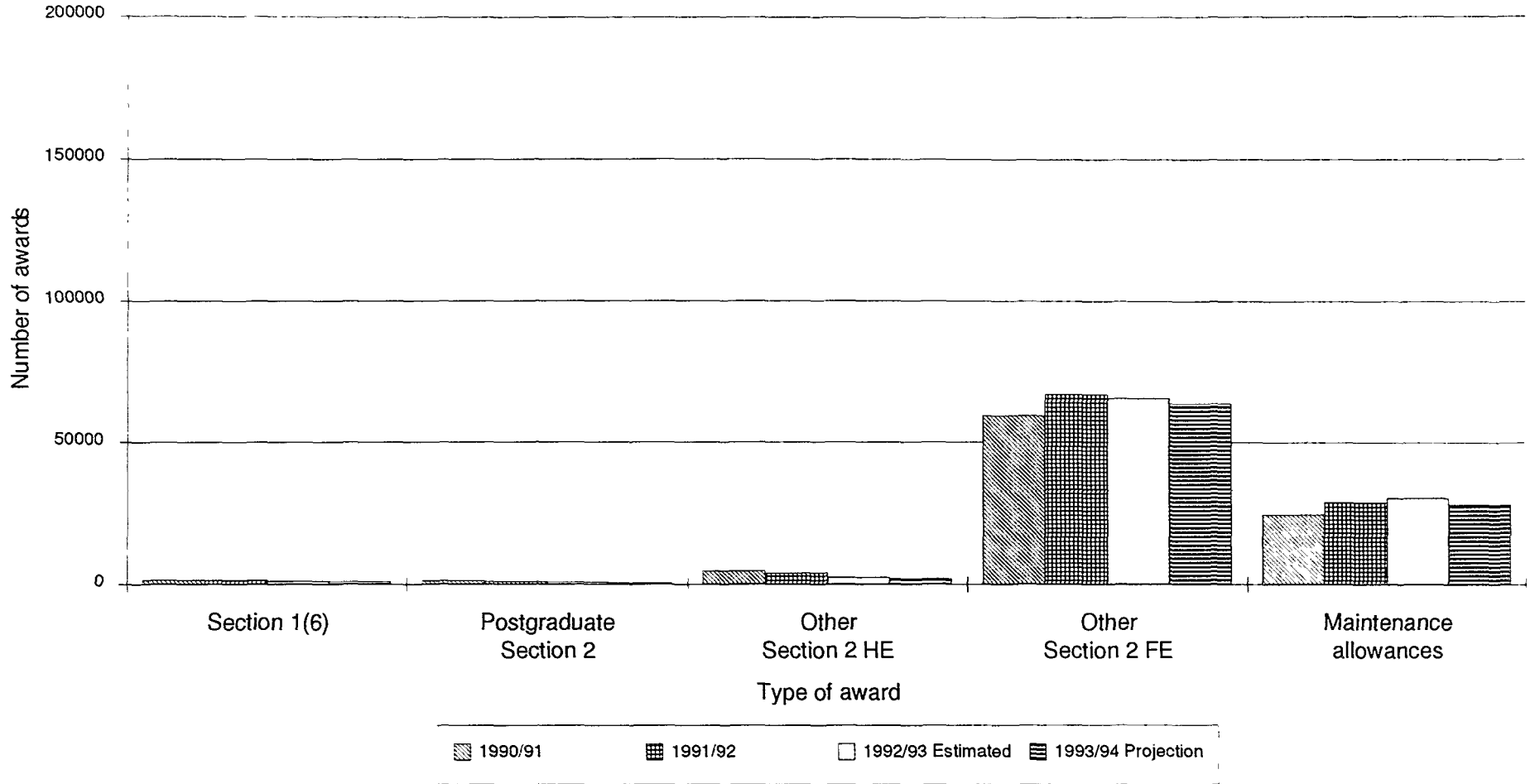
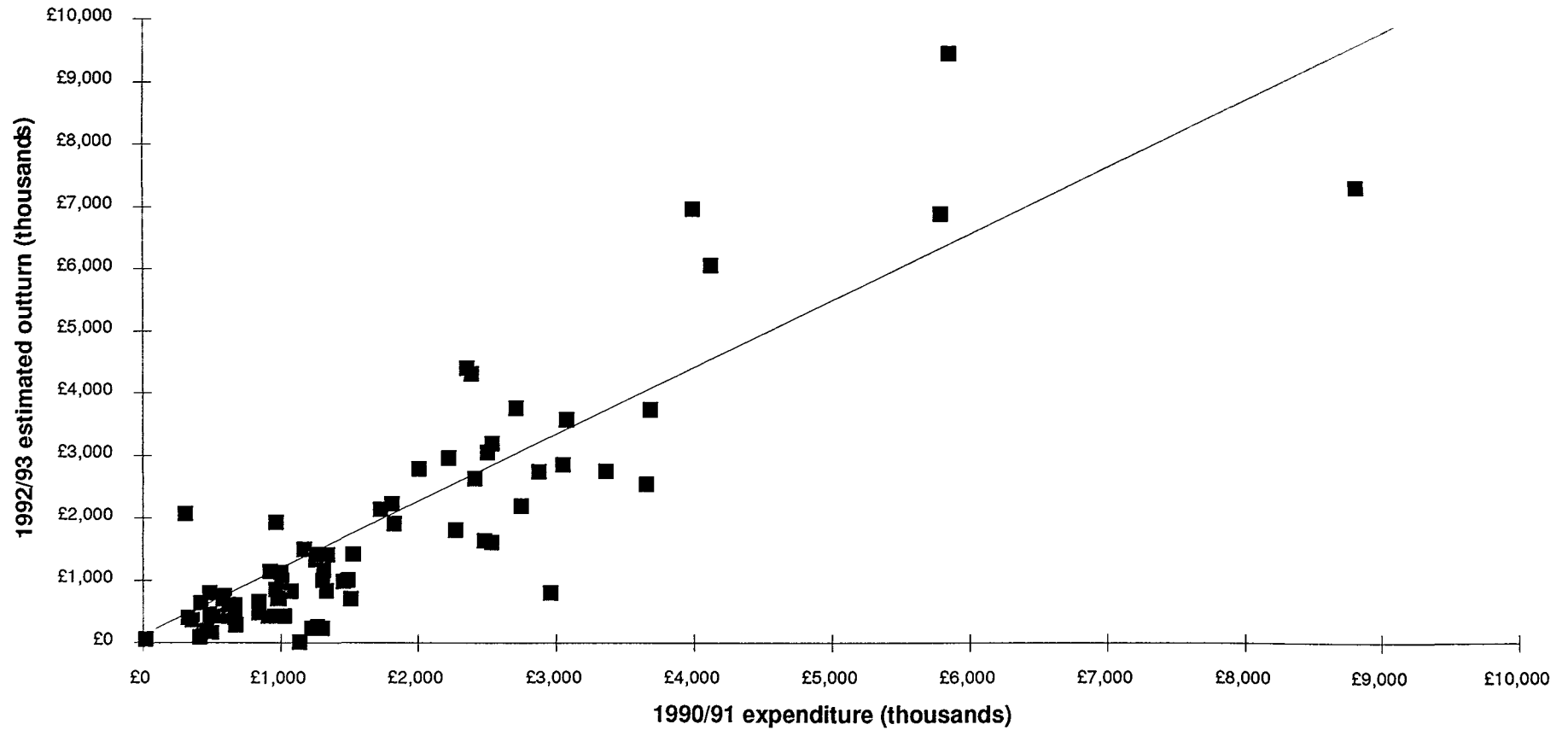


Figure 2.8  
Metropolitan LEAs: Number of discretionary awards by type of award

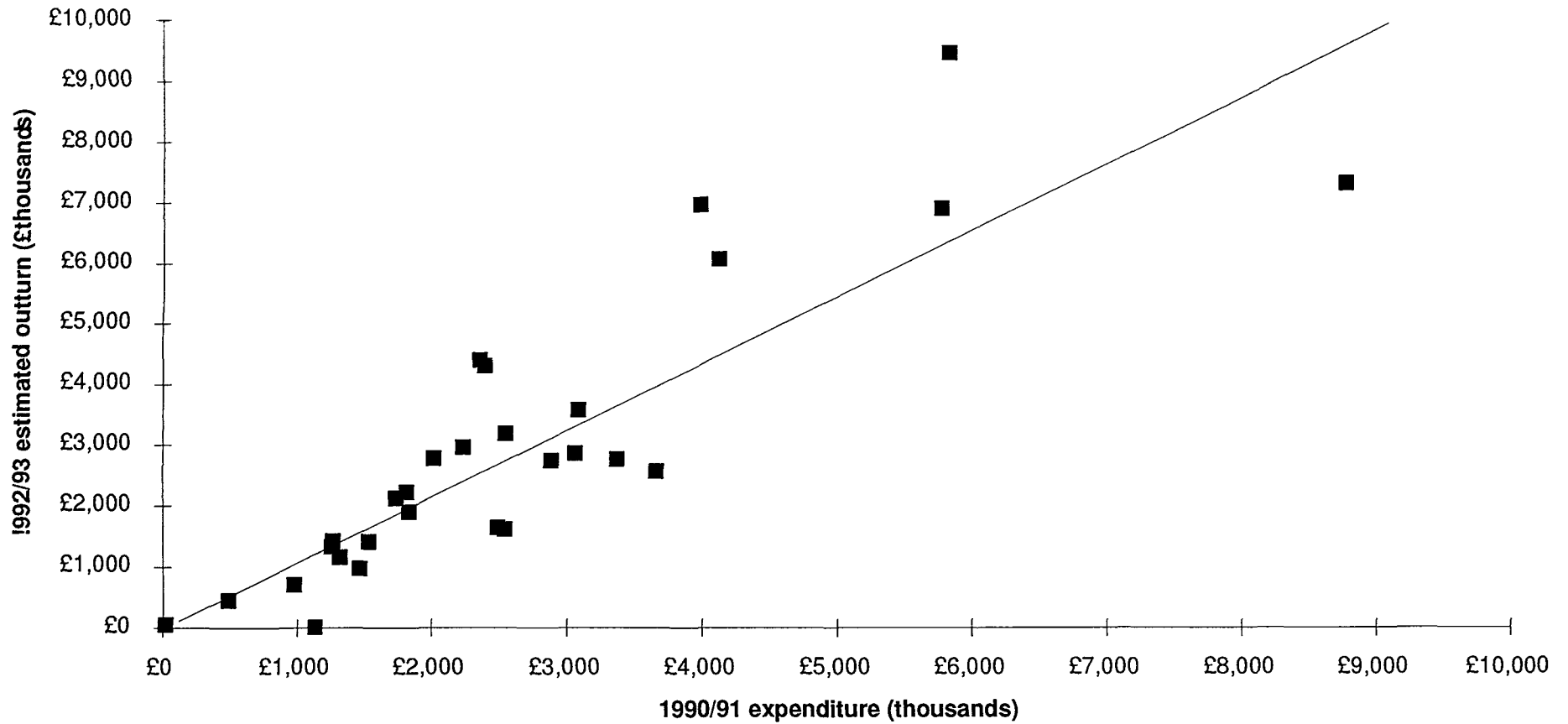


**Figure 2.9**  
**1990/91 Expenditure and 1992/93 estimated outturn**  
**All LEAs with complete returns**



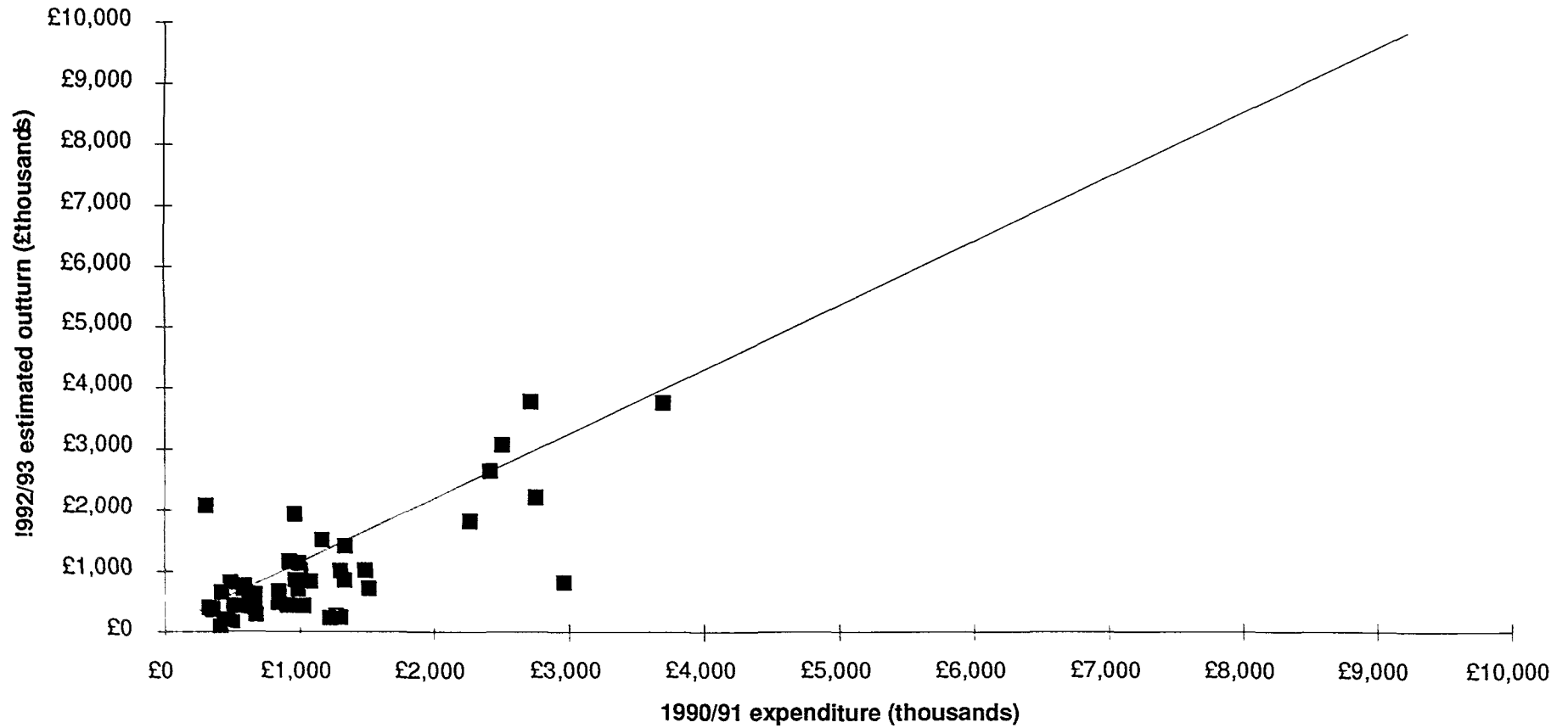
Points above the line represent LEAs with an increase in real expenditure in 1992/93, and points below the line represent LEAs with a decrease.

**Figure 2.10**  
**1990/91 Expenditure and 1992/93 estimated outturn**  
**Non-metropolitan LEAs**



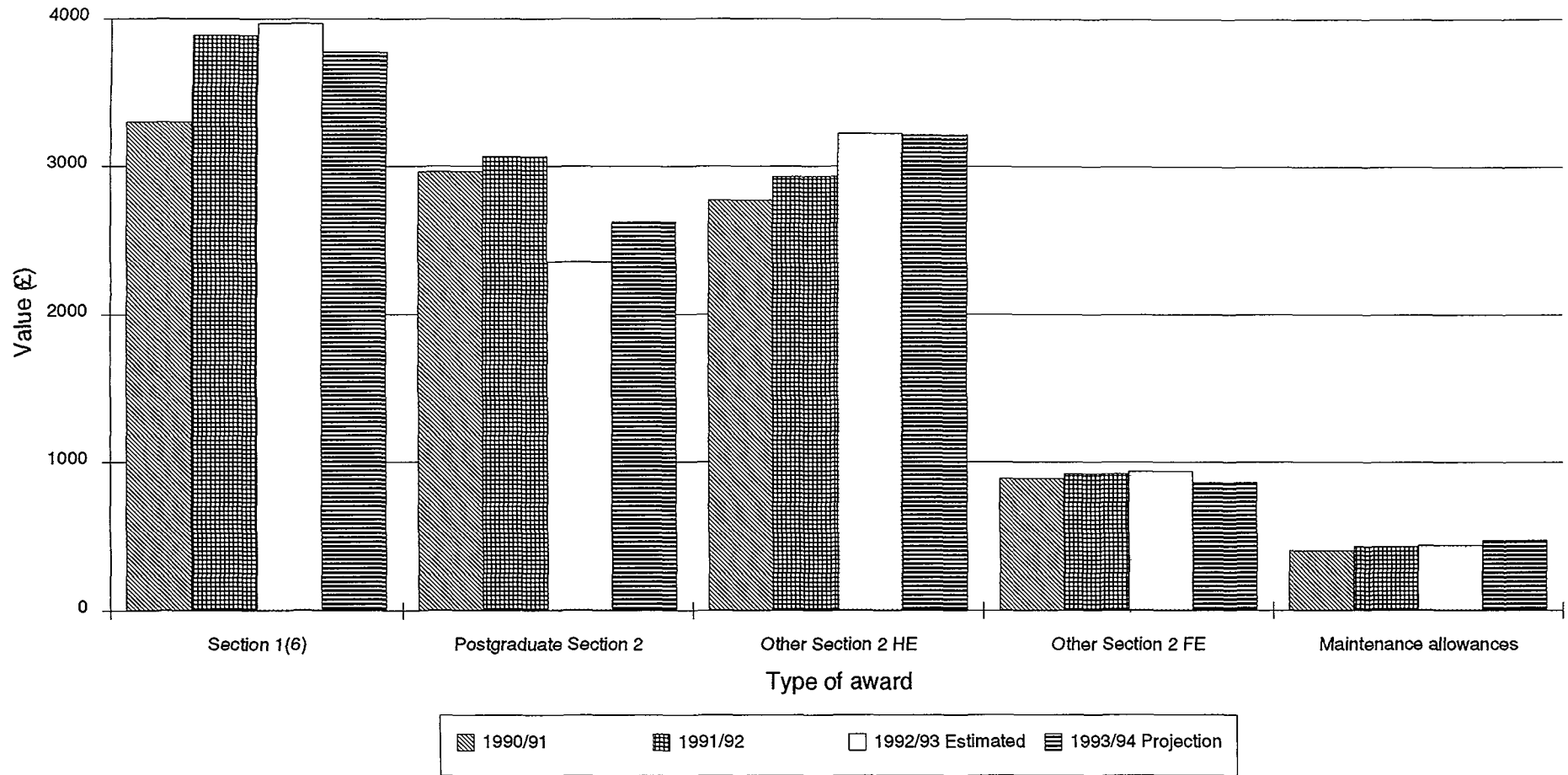
Points above the line represent LEAs with an increase in real expenditure in 1992/93, and points below the line represent LEAs with a decrease.

**Figure 2.11**  
**1990/91 Expenditure and 1992/93 estimated outturn**  
**Metropolitan LEAS**

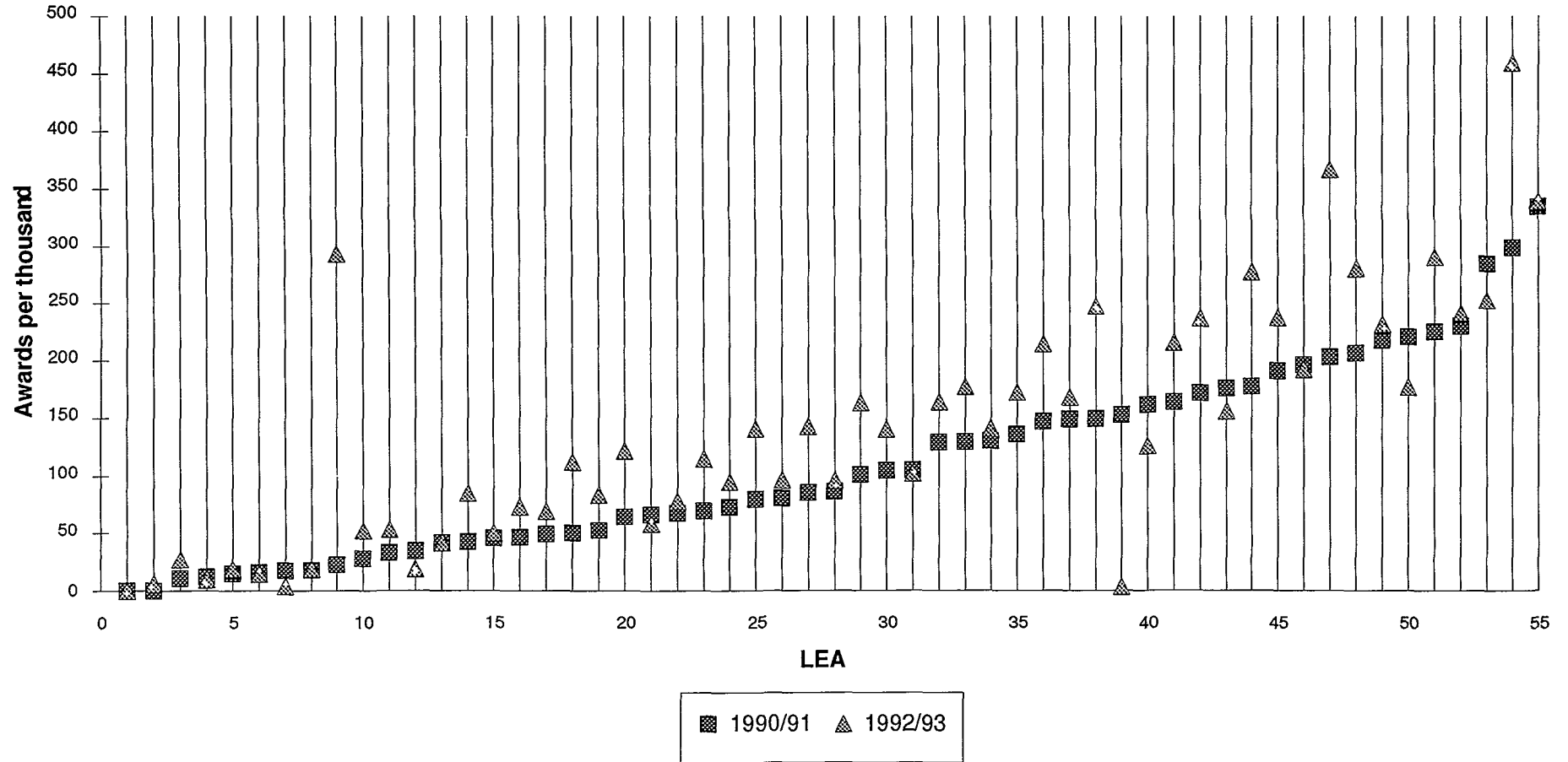


Points above the line represent LEAs with an increase in real expenditure in 1992/93, and points below the line represent LEAs with a decrease.

Figure 2.12  
All LEAs: Average value of discretionary awards by type of award

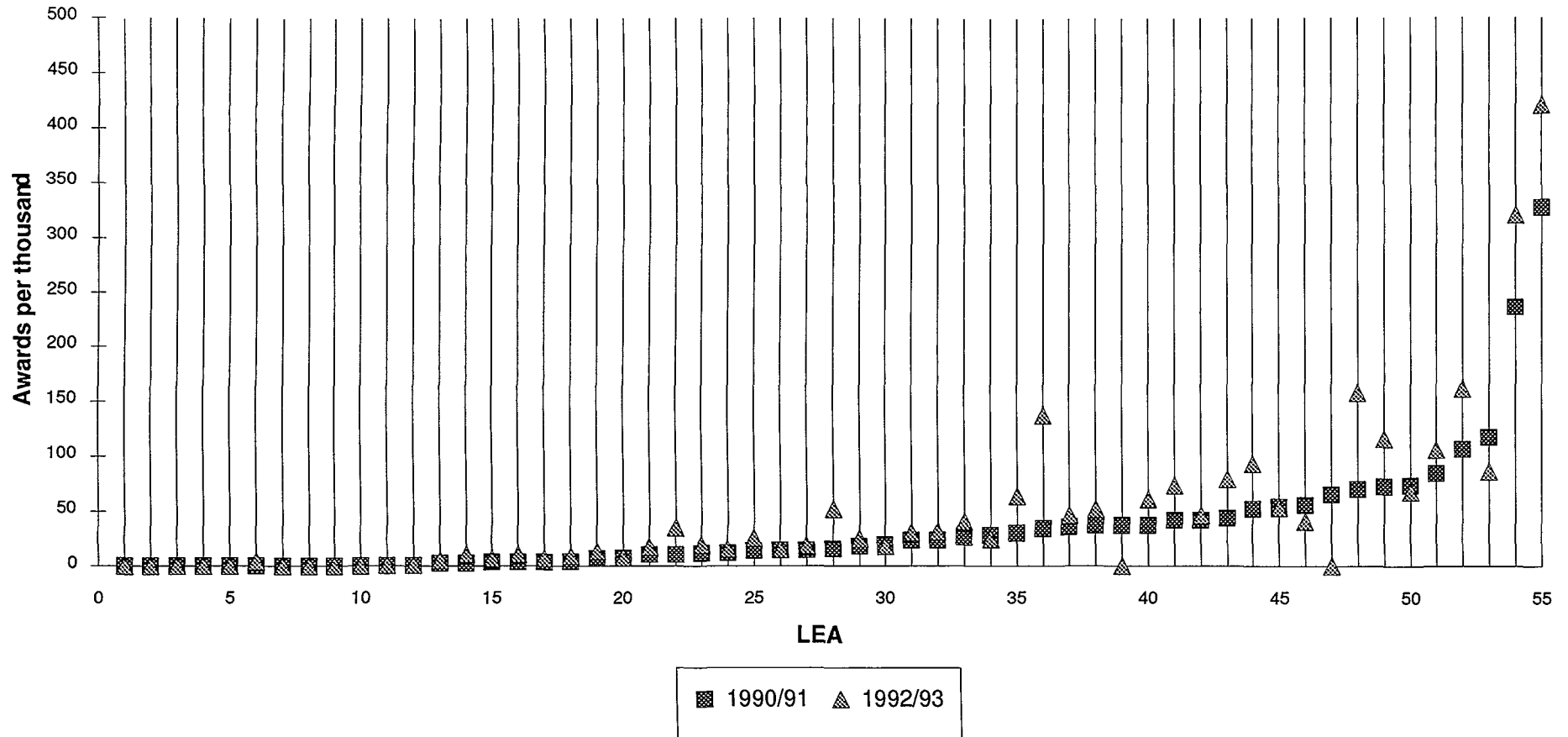


**Figure 2.13**  
**FE awards per capita in 1990/91 and 1992/93**  
**rate per thousand of relevant cohort**



LEAs arranged in order of increasing number of FE awards in 1990/91

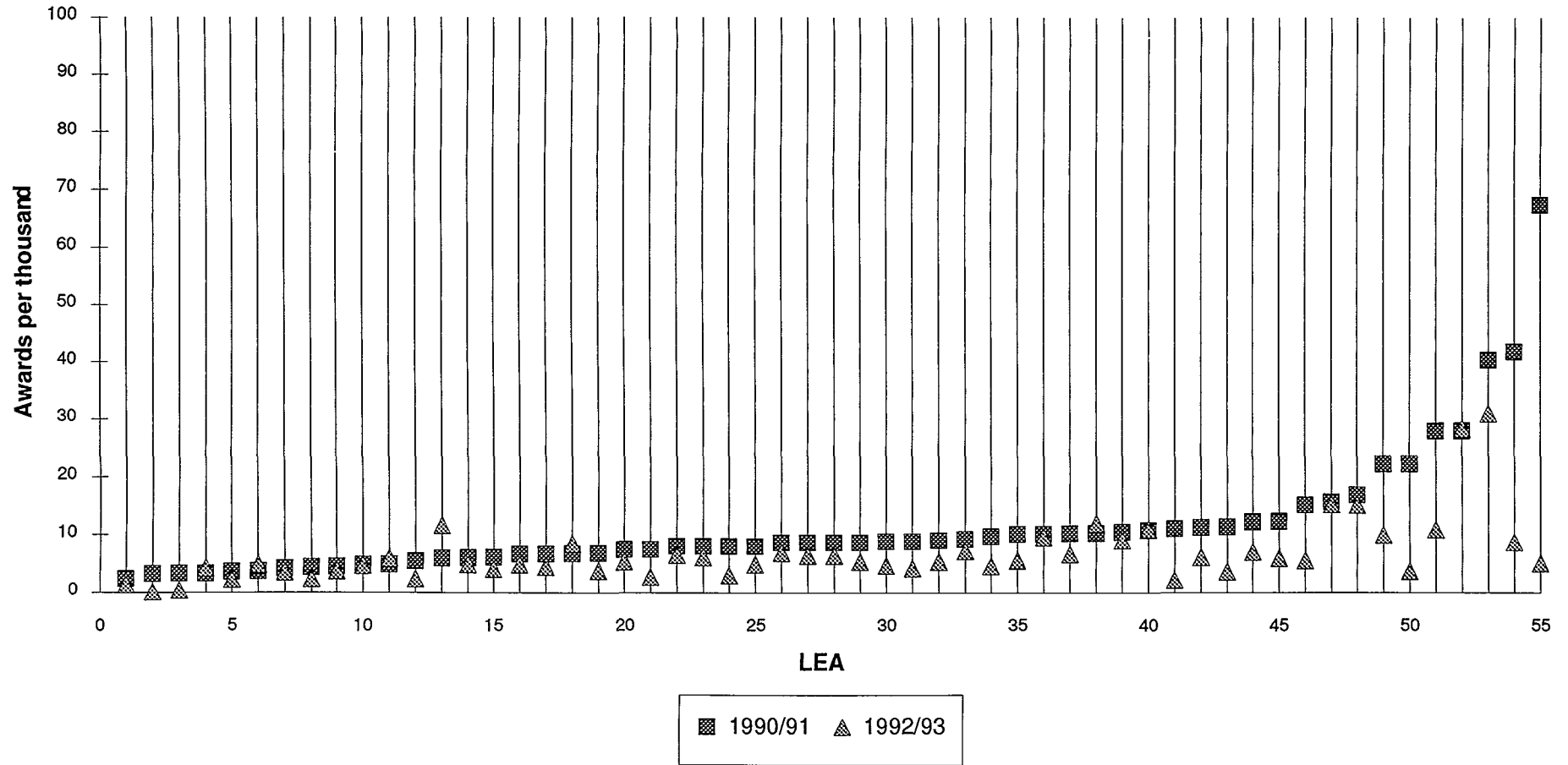
**Figure 2.14**  
**Educational maintenance awards per capita in 1990/91 and 1992/93:**  
**rate per thousand of relevant cohort**



LEAs arranged in order of increasing number of EMAs in 1990/91



**Figure 2.15**  
**HE awards per capita in 1990/91 and 1992/93**  
**rate per thousand of relevant cohort**



LEAs arranged in order of increasing number of HE awards in 1990/91

## Notes to Tables

1. All estimated values and projections are subject to margins of error - see Appendix 2.5 for details.
2. The totals shown are not equal to the sum of the components, although the discrepancy is usually less than 1%.
3. The number of placement year sandwich students is small and liable to fluctuate markedly from year to year. Accordingly, no figures are shown for year on year percentage changes.
4. The responsibility for some post-16 students with special learning difficulties and disabilities transferred from LEAs to the FEFC with effect from 1 April 1993.

Table 2.1 : All LEAs : Expenditure (in cash terms except where stated) on discretionary awards by type of award (grossed)

	1990/91	1991/92	£ thousands		% change 90/91 to 91/92	Estimated % change 90/91 to 92/93	Projected % change 90/91 to 93/94	Projected % change (real terms) 90/91 to 93/94
			1992/93 Estimated Outturn	1993/94 Projected				
Section 2 FE	130,321.0	160,260.1	175,766.4	167,247.3	23	35	28	14
Maintenance allowances	16,371.3	20,682.3	24,141.8	25,388.1	26	47	55	37
Section 2 HE	46,526.5	44,229.3	28,308.8	23,643.2	-5	-39	-49	-55
Postgraduate Section 2	11,779.2	9,583.2	7,045.9	4,385.8	-19	-40	-63	-67
Section 1(6)	13,056.4	15,160.1	13,441.0	11,272.3	16	3	-14	-24
Placement year sandwich students	409.7	177.4	166.0	150.8	-	-	-	-
Total	220,081.6	251,764.2	248,927.8	229,644.5	14	13	4	-8

See 'Notes to Tables' on page 32.

Table 2.2 : All LEAs : Number of discretionary awards by type of award (grossed)

	1990/91	1991/92	thousands		% change 90/91 to 91/92	Estimated % change 90/91 to 92/93	Projected % change 90/91 to 93/94
			1992/93 Estimated	1993/94 Projected			
Section 2 FE	147.0	173.7	187.5	193.9	18	28	32
Maintenance allowances	40.6	47.5	55.0	53.5	17	36	32
Section 2 HE	16.8	15.1	8.8	7.4	-10	-48	-56
Postgraduate Section 2	4.0	3.1	3.0	1.7	-21	-25	-58
Section 1(6)	4.0	3.9	3.4	3.0	-1	-14	-25
Placement year sandwich students	.6	.2	.3	.3	-	-	-
Total	213.1	243.8	257.2	256.3	14	21	20

See 'Notes to Tables' on page 32.

Table 2.3 : Non-metropolitan LEAs : Expenditure (in cash terms except where stated) on discretionary awards by type of award (grossed)

	1990/91	1991/92	£ thousands		% change 90/91 to 91/92	Estimated % change 90/91 to 92/93	Projected % change 90/91 to 93/94	Projected % change 90/91 to (real terms) 93/94
			1992/93 Estimated Outturn	1993/94 Projected				
Section 2 FE	89,572.2	113,173.7	128,410.1	123,537.3	26	43	38	22
Maintenance allowances	6,606.3	9,153.0	11,573.6	14,884.2	39	75	125	100
Section 2 HE	33,292.5	31,661.5	20,010.8	17,483.8	-5	-40	-47	-53
Postgraduate Section 2	7,521.4	6,098.2	4,525.0	2,590.5	-19	-40	-66	-69
Section 1(6)	7,485.6	9,503.6	9,107.3	7,710.7	27	22	3	-9
Placement year sandwich students	141.0	123.2	120.8	112.8	-	-	-	-
Total	144,619.2	169,713.2	172,540.1	164,529.7	17	19	14	1

See 'Notes to Tables' on page 32.

Table 2.4 : Metropolitan LEAs : Expenditure (in cash terms except where stated) on discretionary awards by type of award (grossed)

	1990/91	1991/92	£ thousands		% change 90/91 to 91/92	Estimated % change 90/91 to 92/93	Projected % change 90/91 to 93/94	Projected % change 90/91 to (real terms) 93/94
			1992/93 Estimated Outturn	1993/94 Projected				
Section 2 FE	40,748.7	47,079.6	47,279.6	43,707.3	16	16	7	-5
Maintenance allowances	9,765.0	11,535.8	12,576.5	10,490.7	18	29	7	-5
Section 2 HE	13,234.0	12,576.9	8,354.6	6,205.3	-5	-37	-53	-58
Postgraduate Section 2	4,257.7	3,487.4	2,534.1	1,803.0	-18	-40	-58	-62
Section 1(6)	5,570.8	5,651.7	4,339.5	3,558.1	1	-22	-36	-43
Placement year sandwich students	268.7	54.0	45.4	38.1	-	-	-	-
Total	75,462.4	82,039.4	76,390.5	65,000.8	9	1	-14	-24

See 'Notes to Tables' on page 32.

Table 2.5 : Non-metropolitan LEAs : Number of discretionary awards by type of award (grossed)

	1990/91	1991/92	thousands		% change 90/91 to 91/92	Estimated % change 90/91 to 92/93	Projected % change 90/91 to 93/94
			1992/93 Estimated	1993/94 Projected			
Section 2 FE	87.7	106.8	122.1	130.4	22	39	49
Maintenance allowances	15.9	18.6	24.5	25.3	17	54	59
Section 2 HE	11.9	11.1	6.2	5.3	-7	-48	-56
Postgraduate Section 2	2.6	2.1	2.1	1.1	-22	-18	-56
Section 1(6)	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.0	3	-4	-14
Placement year sandwich students	.3	.2	.2	.2	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>120.8</b>	<b>141.0</b>	<b>156.1</b>	<b>162.5</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>

See 'Notes to Tables' on page 32.

Table 2.6 : Metropolitan LEAs : Number of discretionary awards by type of award (grossed)

	1990/91	1991/92	thousands		% change 90/91 to 91/92	Estimated % change 90/91 to 92/93	Projected % change 90/91 to 93/94
			1992/93 Estimated	1993/94 Projected			
Section 2 FE	59.4	66.9	65.4	63.5	13	10	7
Maintenance allowances	24.6	28.9	30.5	28.2	17	24	15
Section 2 HE	4.9	4.0	2.6	2.1	-18	-46	-58
Postgraduate Section 2	1.4	1.1	.8	.5	-21	-38	-61
Section 1(6)	1.7	1.5	1.2	1.0	-8	-29	-39
Placement year sandwich students	.3	.1	.1	.1	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>92.4</b>	<b>102.7</b>	<b>101.1</b>	<b>93.7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>

See 'Notes to Tables' on page 32.

Table 2.7: LEAs with complete data for total expenditure in all four years (N=73): percentage change between 1990/91 and 1992/93

	Cash terms			<i>Real terms</i>		
	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan	Total	<i>Metropolitan</i>	<i>Non-metropolitan</i>	<i>Total</i>
Up at least 20.0%	12	10	22	10	7	17
Up 10.1% to 20.0%	4	4	8	3	3	6
Up 0.1% to 10.0%	4	7	11	3	4	7
Down 0.0% to 9.9%	4	5	9	5	9	14
Down 10.0% to 19.9%	7	2	9	3	4	7
Down at least 20%	13	1	14	20	2	22
Total number of LEAs	44	29	73	44	29	73

Note: Inflation for 1992/93 compared with 1990/91 was 9.1%

Table 2.8: LEAs with complete data for total expenditure in all four years (N=73): percentage change between 1990/91 and 1993/94

	Cash terms			<i>Real terms</i>		
	Metropolitan	Non-metropolitan	Total	<i>Metropolitan</i>	<i>Non-metropolitan</i>	<i>Total</i>
Up at least 20.0%	11	11	22	5	7	12
Up 10.1% to 20.0%	1	3	4	3	2	5
Up 0.1% to 10.0%	5	2	7	4	5	9
Down 0.0% to 9.9%	2	4	6	3	2	5
Down 10.0% to 19.9%	2	3	5	4	4	8
Down at least 20%	23	6	29	25	9	34
Total number of LEAs	44	29	73	44	29	73

Note: Inflation for 1993/94 compared with 1990/91 is estimated at 12.9%

Table 2.9: LEAs with complete data for total student numbers in all four years (N=73): percentage change between 1990/91 and 1992/93

	Metropolitan	Non- metropolitan	Total
Up at least 7.5%	25	25	50
Up 2.5% to 7.5%	2	0	2
Up 2.5% to down 2.5%	2	1	3
Down 2.5% to 7.5%	0	0	0
Down at least 7.5%	15	3	18
Total number of LEAs	44	29	73

Table 2.10: LEAs with complete data for total student numbers in all four years (N=73): percentage change between 1990/91 and 1993/94

	Metropolitan	Non- metropolitan	Total
Up at least 7.5%	22	23	45
Up 2.5% to 7.5%	1	1	2
Up 2.5% to down 2.5%	2	1	3
Down 2.5% to 7.5%	0	2	2
Down at least 7.5%	19	2	21
Total number of LEAs	44	29	73

Table 2.11 : All LEAs : Average value of award (in cash terms except where stated) by type of award (grossed)

	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93 Estimated Outturn	1993/94 Projected	% change 90/91 to 91/92	Estimated % change 90/91 to 92/93	Projected % change 90/91 to 93/94	Projected % change (real terms) 90/91 to 93/94
Section 2 FE	890	920	940	860	4	6	-3	-14
Maintenance allowances	400	440	440	470	8	9	17	4
Section 2 HE	2770	2930	3220	3210	6	16	16	3
Postgraduate Section 2	2960	3060	2350	2620	4	-21	-11	-22
Section 1(6)	3300	3890	3970	3780	18	20	14	1
Placemeni year sandwich students	720	780	650	590	-	-	-	-
Overall average	1030	1030	970	900	0	-6	-13	-23

See 'Notes to Tables' on page 32.



## Chapter 3 LEA Policies and Practices

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on current practices and recent changes within different LEAs with regard to the provision of discretionary awards. The material on which this chapter is based derives from three sources: a review of documentation; an interview programme; and responses to open-ended questions in the two questionnaires.

The review of documentation consisted of an analysis of LEA documentation on discretionary awards. LEAs were requested to send to the NFER materials such as notes for applicants, guidelines for awards officers and relevant committee minutes. The material was analysed according to common themes - as reported below. Seventy-five (45 non-metropolitan, 30 metropolitan) out of the 117 authorities in England and Wales had returned some form of documentation by the final date for analysis. LEAs returning documentation were broadly representative of all LEAs in terms of overall expenditure on discretionary awards, and in terms of metropolitan/non-metropolitan LEAs. For details of the nature of the material submitted, see Appendix 2. In addition, an analysis of qualitative information from the two questionnaire surveys, concerning changes in the Authorities' discretionary awards policies since 1990/91, changes in demand and discretionary awards policies with regard to students with disabilities or learning difficulties, has been included in this chapter in order to complement the qualitative data yielded by the analysis of documentation. Two observations ought to be made here. First, not all officers were able to comment on this issue, or give information for earlier years, since some had only been in post for a relatively short time or did not have access to the relevant records. Second, where information was supplied, it was sometimes not possible to cross-check it against the documentation from that authority as relevant material from two and three years back was not always supplied. Although some LEAs sent copies of previous years' documentation, many sent only the current documentation stating the position for 1993/94.

The review of documentation was also complemented by an interview programme consisting of face-to-face interviews with the principal awards officer in 17 authorities. These authorities were selected to reflect as far as possible the totality of LEAs in England and Wales in terms of size, expenditure on discretionary awards *per capita* (from DFE figures), type (metropolitan, non-metropolitan), geographical location and political persuasion; their profile, together with the policy areas discussed in the interview programme, is given in Appendix 2.

### 3.2 Changes in expenditure and policy

There were considerable differences among LEAs *vis-à-vis* both eligibility for discretionary awards and the level of support given. The latter ranged from one of the authorities taking part in the interview programme where the principal awards officer remarked that 'the discretionary awards budget never seems to run out' to those authorities where no new discretionary awards were being given except in exceptional cases; the latter included all types of authorities.

Projected budgets were at the forefront of interviewees' minds as they were evaluating the situation in the light of Committee decisions regarding the discretionary awards

budget. However, these budgets were provisional and subject to revision. Evidence from the authorities in the interview programme, however, suggested that some planned budget cuts for 1993/94 would be considerable.

*Examples of proposed budget cuts*

Authorities in the interview programme proposed budget reductions of:

- LEA A: two-thirds
- LEA B: half
- LEA C: just under a half (45 per cent) from the previous year's levels
- LEA D had a planned budget of £200,000 for 1993/94 compared with £1.6 million for 1991/92.
- LEA E, not included in the interview programme, proposed a budget decrease of 40 per cent for 1993/1994.

It ought to be pointed out that in at least one of these authorities it had been realised that the allocated budget was insufficient to meet continuing awards and the position was thus being reconsidered by the Education Committee. It should be noted that these authorities serve as examples but are not necessarily representative of the position across England and Wales. Objective data are reported in chapter 2.

### **3.2.1 The effect on policies of the cost of continuing awards**

Most authorities guarantee support for the duration of a student's course and thus honour continuing awards despite any plans for budget cuts. The academic and financial years do not coincide and so there are, in effect, only seven months in which to make reductions to implement the new year's budget; thus the onus of the cuts fell on new applicants - hence some LEAs' policy of not offering any new awards other than in exceptional circumstances. One interviewee remarked that he hoped that this was 'a temporary suspension of services' but, nonetheless, feared for the future.

On Questionnaire 2, awards officers were asked to indicate the extent to which they believed their Authority's policy on new discretionary awards had been determined by the cost of continuing awards. There were no differences between the responses of metropolitan and non-metropolitan authorities. Over half (41) of the 72 awards officers responding to questionnaire 2 indicated that the cost of continuing awards was a significant factor affecting policy.

*[The number of continuing awards] is a significant factor in determining the number of new awards to be made available and the implementation of quotas for types of courses. However, the biggest impact is the reduction in the overall discretionary award budget due to central government capping in each year from 1990 to 1993 and the need to reduce LEA spending in all areas.*

(questionnaire 2 respondent)

Another 15 awards officers said that, although cuts were planned, the cost of continuing awards had not been a factor in policy decisions.

*[The LEA] has a limited budget for discretionary awards and every year as the demand for courses increases and tuition fees rise we have to tighten our policies to stay within budget.*

(questionnaire 2 respondent)

Eight of the 72 awards officers said that the cost of continuing awards had no effect but they did not indicate whether or not they were able to meet the demand for discretionary awards. A further two said that they had, so far, been able to meet all demands for discretionary awards from eligible students.

*Apart from relatively minor reductions, the council has been able to maintain a fairly consistent level of expenditure on awards and, as a consequence, has been able to continue with much the same policies from year to year. The cost of continuing awards has no greater or lesser effect than in previous years.*

(questionnaire 2 respondent)

The value of awards paid, where means-tested, was rising (unless the LEA had set a maximum limit) as there was a greater proportion of award-holders from households with low incomes or on such benefits as income support.

### **3.2.2 Changes in policy resulting from the LEAs' financial position**

Changes in policy in recent years largely reflected responses to these pressures. One of the officers interviewed commented:

*In the old days, when a new constituency was identified, you just asked for more money. Everything is budget-driven now so this is no longer possible - there is no longer the idea of going out and seeing what people want.*

(senior awards officer, interview programme)

Policy followed budgetary allocations. Various strategies were used to make any cuts that were necessary. Some interviewees said that sometimes cuts were made to 'fit' the budget. For example, if a saving of £50,000 was needed, the budget head within the discretionary awards budget nearest to that amount would be a prime target for cuts. In other cases, the largest budget head was targeted as cuts there were not so noticeable. When deciding budgets, it was rarely possible to provide for the continuation of policies pursued within the LEA's schools. For example, one of the interview programme authorities had particularly robust performing arts provision in schools but the awards section had had to withdraw all discretionary awards for dance and drama in order to achieve the necessary savings. It should be pointed out that a decision not to make new awards in any one year had implications for subsequent years in that there would be declining numbers of continuing awards to consider when allocating the budget.

An interviewee regretted that he felt that he was no longer able to offer clients the same quality of service as he had been accustomed to offer. Staff were committed to meeting the needs of individuals but they felt under increasing pressure. A number of interviewees remarked on the low morale in the awards section. The increase in applications overall, the number of refusals on account of ineligibility and the increase in appeals meant a heavier workload which had often not been matched by a comparable increase in staffing. Although one of the LEAs in the interview programme had taken on extra staff, in the majority, staffing was at best static and at worst reduced. In some authorities, the Awards Office had had to take on the administration of other education-related benefits such as clothing grants and free meals.

Of the 75 authorities returning documentation, nine (1 non-metropolitan, 8 metropolitan) were making no new discretionary awards for 1993/94 although they were honouring continuing awards and most of these mentioned that they would still consider 'exceptional' cases. (Such a clause meant that authorities would not be fettering their own discretion.)

As regards *major* (higher education) awards in the remaining 66 responding authorities, since 1991:

*the position regarding major awards*

- 15 (4 non-metropolitan, 11 metropolitan) had withdrawn all major awards
- 5 (1 non-metropolitan, 4 metropolitan) were paying fees only
- 2 (non-metropolitan) were paying maintenance only
- 5 (metropolitan) were restricting awards to priority categories
- 3 were offering them for a limited number of specified courses only
- 1 (non-metropolitan) was operating on a fixed budget on a first-come, first-served basis.

Most of the other LEAs operated on criteria for eligibility or other restrictions for major awards. The following were represented:

*restrictions on major awards*

- means-testing of fees
- age limits
- proportion of mandatory rate maintenance only - no fees
- restriction to certain subjects or to certain courses at specified institutions.

Where full fees were paid, they were generally only to the LEA maximum amount (£759) agreed by the Council of Local Education Authorities (with the exception of some courses at private colleges - see below).

Of those responding authorities giving discretionary awards for 1993/94 (66)

*the position regarding higher education awards*

- 23 (14 non-metropolitan, 9 metropolitan) had withdrawn support for post-graduate study
- 1 (metropolitan) was operating a quota system
- 2 (metropolitan) offered awards only if the study was a vital qualification for entry to a profession
- 1 (non-metropolitan) only if the study was undertaken within two years of the applicant's first degree
- 5 (2 non-metropolitan, 3 metropolitan) had withdrawn section 1(6) awards
- 1 (metropolitan) only offered section 1 (6) awards to students aged over 25.

All LEAs planning to make new discretionary awards for 1993/94 offered *minor* awards although in most cases there were tighter restrictions. Some of these were associated with age factors. Several LEAs would not offer minor awards for GCE or GCSE study above a certain age (19 or 21) while others would not give them for lower-level courses to students over a certain age. For example the following practice was represented:

*age factors in minor award policy*

- supporting students over the age of 19 only if they were on NVQ level 3 courses
- making exception to the age rules if students had been subject to a disrupted education.
- differentiating the value of support by age. In one LEA, all minor award holders received £100 for books and equipment; thereafter, students under 18 received £125 travel, while 18 year-olds received £300 for travel, and those over 19 received £300 travel plus £800 towards maintenance and fees.
- having different maintenance rates for the age groups 16-18, 19-21 and 22+.

Maintenance was always subject to a means test and, in most LEAs, restricted to those on low incomes or in receipt of certain specified benefits such as income support or unemployment benefit. In some cases, fees, where payable and within the scheme, were also means-tested. Some of the total amounts offered were quite modest: maximum maintenance awards cited ranged from £192 to £500. A number of authorities were making the parental contribution scale steeper or were reducing the upper limit for qualifying incomes.

One LEA was reducing the qualifying point to £6,000 - broadly, parental incomes over this amount would not qualify for consideration under the minor awards maintenance scheme.

*Experience in [a neighbouring metropolitan borough], where the qualifying residual income scale is reduced to £6,000, is that there is a ten per cent increase in students with awards dropping out of courses before the end and that there is a decrease in participation in full-time Further Education of approximately 20 per cent amongst the relevant group of students.*

(LEA committee paper)

One LEA stressed that awards represented the additional costs of study only and were not intended to cover day-to-day living expenses: thus amounts varied according to perceived costs of study such as books and equipment.

### 3.3 Demand for discretionary awards

In Questionnaire 2, awards officers were asked to indicate what changes in demand for discretionary awards since 1990/91, if any, the Authority had identified and by what means (e.g. statistics of enquiries or application). They were also asked to say what, in their view, were the main reasons for any changes identified.

Two-thirds (49) of the 72 Authorities responding to Questionnaire 2 indicated that there had been an increase in demand for discretionary awards since 1990/91. Of these, 13 gave estimates of the size of the increases. These ranged from 18-79 per cent, with a median value of 50 per cent. These estimates should, however, be regarded with caution, since it was not clear whether the few authorities which did give a figure based their estimates on similar data.

A number of LEAs gave details of the types of awards for which demand had increased. Reference was made to:

*areas showing increased demand for awards*

<b>course:</b>	<b>student:</b>	<b>subject areas:</b>
further education/ vocational (13)	16-19 year olds (8)	legal courses (4)
access to higher education (5)	19+ (3)	agriculture (1)
post-graduate (3)	mature (6)	alternative medicine (1)
courses at private institutions (1)	single parents (1)	accountancy (1)
		hairdressing/beauty (1).

The main reasons suggested by awards officers for increases in demand were:

*reasons for increased demand*

- redundancy/unemployment (no specific effect cited)
- the recession/current economic climate (no specific effect cited)
- the effects of the recession on particular groups (16-19 year olds preferring FE to unemployment; reductions in parental income; other sources of funding drying up; reduction in job opportunities, apprenticeships and other training schemes)
- increases in applications from mature students, women returners, single parents
- colleges offering a wider range of courses, marketing themselves more effectively and making efforts to attract more students
- increased staying on rates resulting from central/local government initiatives and better qualified school leavers

Five respondents reported that there had been no change in the demand for discretionary awards in their authority, and seven reported a decrease. The main reasons given for decreases in demand were that courses which were formerly non-designated had become designated and thus eligible for mandatory awards; and greater local awareness of more restricted discretionary awards policies.

### **3.4 Examples of policy changes**

Respondents to questionnaire 1 were asked to identify changes which had occurred in each year since 1990/91. For 1990/91 only 16 LEAs commented, identifying 26 changes of which 19 were new restrictions within the scheme. For 1991/92, 35 respondents commented. Although a few extensions of the scheme were noted for each year, the majority of the changes were by way of withdrawal of certain types of awards (notably for courses at private colleges, or leading to post-graduate or second qualifications); or restrictions (mainly at private colleges and regarding personal eligibility). Table A2.5.1 (see appendix) gives details of the policy changes identified in the returns to questionnaire one.

The situation must be seen within a context in which there was expansion of support for further education; authorities were allocating greater proportions of the discretionary awards budget to further education courses and smaller amounts to HE courses.

### **3.5 Policy formulation**

In all the LEAs taking part in the interview programme, the Education Committee was the forum for decisions on Awards policy issues, though two authorities were considering creating a form of community affairs committee which would take over the responsibility for all the Council-administered benefits to individuals. From the evidence of the documentation, in most authorities there was some sort of sub-committee whose brief was discretionary awards. Examples of titles of these sub-committees in the LEAs participating in the interview programme were: Awards, Grants and Financial Assistance; Client Support; Operations; and Education Policy. They were now generally responsible directly to the Education Committee as LEAs' Further Education sub-committees

(which sometimes dealt with awards themselves and sometimes had an additional sub-committee) had disappeared with the Further and Higher Education Act 1992. In most cases, the policy committee was distinct from the Awards Appeals committee (see section 3.19). In only one of the interviews was it claimed that elected members had little interest in discretionary awards and preferred that the officers took the lead in policy formulation.

### 3.6 The application process

Across authorities, the closing date for applications for discretionary awards for courses starting in September/October ranged from mid-May (15th) to the end of October (31st); sometimes the requirement was stated more generally - for example, 'before the end of the first term' (the national rule for mandatory awards) or 'before the start of the course', though the more general wording was usually associated with low value awards. There were different dates for new and for continuing awards and in those LEAs using auditions as a selection process for performing arts awards, the final application date was sometimes a month ahead of the normal date in order to accommodate the additional administrative procedures. One LEA had three closing dates for different categories of application. All the Welsh LEAs had agreed on a June 30th deadline.

As regards late applications, a few LEAs did not consider these at all but more made statements like 'only in exceptional circumstances' (sometimes these were stipulated - eg illness, genuine error) or said that they would be considered in order of receipt 'if finances were available' or on a *pro rata* basis. In view of the widespread pressure on budgets, it is likely that only the 'exceptional circumstances' late applications would be considered. Late applicants whom LEAs would consider were those who had applied in time for a mandatory award but had failed their 'A' levels and had to consider redirecting the next stage of their studies.

Some LEAs did not have a closing date. Of these, a few were operating on a 'first-come, first-served' basis: when the budget had been allocated, no further applications were considered. One of the LEAs in the interview programme was in this category. More commonly, there was no closing date because the policy regarding the particularities of eligibility had been determined on the basis of expected numbers of applications according to determined categories and there was a degree of confidence that the budget would be able to accommodate these applications. However, one of the awards officers interviewed pointed out that the budget could quite easily become overspent if a higher proportion of maintenance awards were given at the full value (on account of low income households) than had been the case the previous year (non-metropolitan). One small authority maintained a modest contingency budget (£21,000) for 'unpredictable demand'.

*An unusual approach to planning the awards budget*

One of the authorities participating in the interview programme had a rather different approach. The closing date had recently been brought forward so that the awards officers could analyse the nature of the applications and estimate whether they could be supported by the available budget, bearing in mind obligations to continuing students, or whether there would have to be further restrictions in policy. Policy options were then prepared and put before the awards sub-committee.

(LEA officer: interview programme)



*A typical processing procedure*

Evidence from the interviews suggested that LEAs began processing applications as they received them: they acknowledged them, indicating either that they were ineligible - being outside policy - or making a provisional offer. Parental income forms were then sent out and when these were returned, provisional indications were given of the amount of grant offered for the coming academic year. These provisional figures were confirmed when the student had a secure place.

The following example represents a different approach.

*Processing awards - an example*

One of the authorities in the interview programme processed continuing awards, and new FE awards not dependent on the publications of examination results, in May. However, for new awards, an initial acknowledgement indicated whether or not the application was eligible for an award. The relevant application form, guidelines and parental assessment form were sent when the applicant confirmed that he or she had a firm place. Then a firm offer of support was made. This procedure meant that staffing levels had to be increased when institutions were making firm offers of student places following the announcement of public examination results in the Summer.

The final date of application had an additional significance in that a number of LEAs guaranteed that, if applications were received by the deadline, a student's grant cheque would be processed and waiting at college by the beginning of term.

### **3.7 General criteria**

Many LEAs issued general criteria for personal acceptability. The following is a representative example.

All applications eligible for consideration in a particular category are compared and awards offered to those who present the strongest case for support. In making these decisions the Authority will take into account the following factors:

- Whether the applicant appears to have the ability to complete the course successfully
- Whether the applicant had definite aims in taking the course and the commitment not only to complete it but also to realise those aims subsequently
- Whether the qualification is genuinely necessary or useful to the applicant and appropriate to his or her aims
- Whether the applicant's aims are realisable if the course is successfully completed, taking into account any experience or appropriate background or other abilities which may be required in addition to a formal qualification to achieve a particular aim

- Whether the applicant's aim is one which justifies discretionary awards support. Where, for instance, an applicant is already established in a particular career or has a qualification which would permit this, he or she would be expected to satisfy the Authority that there is some good reason for not using an existing qualification and/or continuing an existing career even in circumstances where the possession of an existing qualification is not in itself a bar to a further award. Discretionary awards are also not normally offered to students studying for purely personal satisfaction or to 'fill in' a year between leaving school and going to university
- Whether the qualification can reasonably be obtained in any other way - eg secondment or part-time study
- Whether the applicant is medically fit to undertake the course.

*source: LEA documentation submitted to NFER*

A rider to the effect that the opinion of headteachers might be sought as to an applicant's suitability was fairly common.

### 3.8 Residence requirements

Eligibility for a mandatory award normally requires three years' residence in the UK although exceptions are made - for example, for students whose parents have been working abroad and for those of refugee status. LEAs determine their own residence requirements for discretionary awards within the broader legal framework. Although it is not a statutory condition, most authorities required the three years' UK residence as a minimum condition.

Twenty-eight authorities (excluding inner London boroughs) submitting documentation by the final date for analysis specified additional residence requirements. Five LEAs (metropolitan) required three years, five (4 non-metropolitan, 1 metropolitan) required two years and fourteen (8 non-metropolitan, 6 metropolitan) required one year. One metropolitan authority required one year's residence for minor awards but three years for major awards. A further authority (metropolitan) required three years but, within this policy, accorded priority to applicants who had resided in the authority for the longest period. Of the remaining LEAs, one (metropolitan) had a one-year residence rule but allowed for the recent return of former longer-term residents and the other (non-metropolitan) asked for either one year preceding application or three out of the four immediately preceding years.

#### *The case of the inner London boroughs*

The Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) had required applicants for discretionary awards to have lived in inner London for three years. On the demise of the ILEA, following the Education Reform Act 1988, it was suggested that the residence rules for the new inner London LEAs should initially be one year in the borough plus two years in inner London, changing to two years in the borough plus one year in inner London in the second year, until the third year gave the final position of the requirement that applicants should have three years' residence in the particular borough. However, not all boroughs were following this policy. While some had brought in the three-year requirement straightaway (in order to control the volume of applications), others had been more lenient.

One of the authorities in the interview programme had remained with the transitional policy and only demanded one year's residence in the borough. The awards officer interviewed considered that this put additional pressure on what was already an extremely tight budget as the authority was 'mopping up neighbouring boroughs' tight policy': there was, apparently, movement across the boundaries in order to gain access to the more favourable policy. While this is, probably, hard to prove, it serves as a reminder of the different chances of obtaining support encountered by students even within a small geographical area. Of the 10 inner London boroughs for which information was available, seven were operating on the three-year requirement, one on a two-year requirement and two on a one-year requirement.

### **3.9 LEA boundaries**

Prior to 1992/93, most LEAs had restricted awards to intra-authority colleges in the first instance, only supporting extra-authority study if particular courses were unavailable or were full. In some cases, students were required to produce evidence that they had applied to colleges within the authority. An LEA had been able to reclaim course fees for students resident outside its boundaries but attending its colleges; the fees were recoverable from the student's 'home' authority. However, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 had altered the position in that the Act introduced the incorporation of colleges as from April 1993 and the customary recoupment procedures were no longer in force. Although some LEAs still restricted award holders to courses in the colleges within their boundaries, most changed the regulations regarding location to minimise expenditure on travel costs: students were required to attend the nearest college regardless of which LEA it was in, provided that a place on the preferred course was available. Courses outside the authority which might potentially involve lodgings allowances or substantial travel costs were only supported in exceptional cases. Ten authorities provided information about residential courses: seven supported students attending agriculture/horticulture courses; one supported specialist art colleges; and the other mentioned dance and drama courses. Of the remaining authorities, one did not specify the particular courses it would support and the other was withdrawing support.

### **3.10 Previous failure, drop-out and repeat studies**

All authorities submitting documentation had policies regarding applications from students who had previously withdrawn from courses or failed them and wished to repeat studies. Commonly, support was only given in such cases if there were medical reasons or the student had undergone severe domestic pressure - for example, having to care for a younger sibling in the event of parental difficulties.

The interviews suggested that trends in drop-out rates were taken into consideration when allocating the budget as it was assumed that the monies earmarked for the second and third terms (though the third term would, of course, come into the new financial year) could be used elsewhere (for example, for late applications, or students on a reserve list). In one inner London borough in the interview programme, the senior awards officer said that the drop-out rate for students holding discretionary awards was about 30 per cent; in another interview programme authority the senior awards officer said that it was 10

per cent. A high rate drop-out rate represented a considerable proportion of the budget. However, an awards officer considered that, in his particular authority, with fewer awards being made and thus lower numbers overall and more rigorous selection, this safety net would go as there would be a lower drop-out rate and thus less room for manoeuvre. There was only anecdotal evidence as to the reasons for the high proportions of withdrawal from courses in some authorities. It was suggested that colleges might be enrolling inappropriately. The Audit Commission report (Audit Commission 1993) proposed changes to college funding which are, clearly, relevant here. It should be remembered that the FEFC has responsibility for further education. However, so far as awards officers were concerned, the drop-out rate did have administrative consequences *vis-à-vis* the recovery of debts. Most maintenance awards were calculated on a *per diem* basis and were recovered accordingly; as these awards were for quite modest amounts and were largely given to students in restricted circumstances who would, following withdrawal from the course, be in receipt of DSS benefit, the costs of recovering debts were considerable. Tuition fees did not seem to be pursued. In some cases these were paid termly so money could be recovered from the subsequent term. However, in one authority in the interview programme, one annual fee payment was made to institutions and this was not reclaimed by the authority on a *pro rata* basis on the withdrawal of a student. One interviewee said that colleges often did not inform the Awards Office of drop-out until May, by which time it was considered to be 'too late to recover fees anyway'. Data on these administrative procedures were neither sought nor submitted on a national basis so no general statement can be made about the position.

Discretionary awards were made for repeat studies on the basis that there would be a deduction in lieu of previous public monies received: thus a student might be supported from the second term if he or she had withdrawn during the first term of a previous course. In view of the position regarding tuition fees noted above, it is apparent that a student may, in fact, be funded for an unfinished as well as a completed course, and that colleges may be in receipt of fees for students for whose tuition they are no longer responsible.

*Some examples of support for 'repeat' studies*

- One authority (metropolitan) reserved a proportion of the discretionary awards budget to support students in both the maintained and the private sectors who had previously failed, or not completed, a course for a valid reason such as illness.
- One authority (metropolitan) considered applicants of this type as a priority: for the year 1992/93, 28 students were supported for the 'repeat' studies at a total cost of £88,084, compared with 10 students pursuing initial vocational studies at a total cost of £55,970.
- One authority did not automatically require any 'payback' period though individual cases were rigorously scrutinised.
- Some authorities also made concessions for particular categories of repeat studies - for example, 'A' levels

### 3.11 Restrictions on course length

As pointed out in 2.2.1, support for the duration of the course was usually guaranteed once a discretionary award had been made - although it ought to be noted that a few authorities were introducing one-year only awards: students had to reapply for an award annually and there was no guarantee of support throughout the course. There were, however, restrictions on the overall length of course. This was commonly three years post-16 except in the case of students with special educational needs requiring additional study time.

#### *Examples of other policies on course length*

- Up to four years' support for all categories of student.
- Support for FE courses for two years; HE courses for three years.
- Conditions regarding progression within the maximum three years' support: for example, either two years at level 1 of a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) and one year at level 2; or one year at NVQ level 1 or 2 and two years at level 3.
- No maximum length restrictions.
- Assistance for courses leading to NVQ level 3 restricted to three academic years.

At the other end of the scale, courses of under one academic year's duration were not generally supported - though one LEA (non-metropolitan) put six months or two terms as the lower limit. In one authority (metropolitan), courses under two years were not supported unless they yielded a vocational qualification or were for students with special educational needs.

### 3.12 Other means of controlling numbers: quotas, points systems, other screening

Generally, quota systems were not in operation (except performing arts (see section 3.13.1)); there was little consistency among the examples that were found.

#### *Some examples of quotas*

- One inner London borough divided up the budget proportionally: 35 per cent respectively for access and FE courses; 25 per cent for HE; three per cent for courses at private colleges; and two per cent for students wishing to take a second qualification.
- Another inner London borough reserved 12 per cent of the total discretionary awards budget for applications to private institutions.
- An outer London borough had numerical quotas: eight awards for each of access and first diploma courses, and three awards for each of higher diploma and performing arts awards.
- A shire county had two categories: 138 access awards and 158 other awards for students under 25.

Other examples of quotas were with respect to particular categories of courses within an LEA's policy. For example, one authority had quotas for access courses (the number was not given) and gave a maximum of 65 awards for Foundation Art. In the latter case, applicants were selected on the basis of references, interview and a portfolio of work. In another (small) authority, there was selection by merit when demand exceeded supply in a particular area. The case of quotas and eligibility criteria for performing arts courses is reported separately below.

Three LEAs gave details of quite complex systems of points and prioritisation.

*Example 1: priority categories - in rank order*

- a Foundation course, Access course or FE course at a maintained establishment not attracting a mandatory award giving them their first post school qualification
- other courses at a maintained establishment not attracting a mandatory award, giving them their first post-school qualification
- a course at a maintained establishment having failed to complete a course due to ill health or compelling personal or family reasons
- applicants already possessing a post-school qualification wishing to complete a professional qualification for which no mandatory award is available and for which funding is not available through post graduate research councils
- a course at a private college leading to a first post-school qualification for which no provision is available in the maintained sector
- applicants who had failed with good reason to complete a previous post-school qualification
- a second post-school qualification to enable a career change. A minimum of ten years would have to have elapsed since applicants gained their first qualification and priority was given to those who had been made redundant or were otherwise unemployed

*Example 2: a points system*

Points were awarded as follows:

Where, at 1 March 1993, the applicant:

- had been registered unemployed or had been unable to undertake full-time employment because of domestic or family responsibilities, or sickness or disability

For 100% of the time over the past 2 yrs	20 points
For 75% or more of the time over the past 2 yrs	10 points
For 50% or more of the time over the past 2 yrs	5 points
For 25% or more of the time over the past 2 yrs	2 points

- had been living on low income (in receipt of income support, family credit etc) 10 points
- had not previously undertaken a post-school course of study 15 points
- could demonstrate that the chosen course was a progression from a previous post-school course 5 points
- wished to take an access courses 20 points
- wished to take a course which lead to a recognised vocational qualification 8 points
- had special educational needs 30 points

**30 points were deducted if:**

- the proposed course was not an academic progression from any previous post-school course
- the applicant was repeating a previous course
- the applicant had attended a designated course

*Example 3: points system combined with priority courses and colleges*

All eligible applications for priority courses were scored against four criteria, giving a maximum of 20 points. The criteria were:

- academic experience
- other (eg career related) experience
- disrupted education
- equal opportunities (financial hardship, gender, single parent, ethnic minority, disability)

An additional weighting of 5 points was obtained by doubling one of the criteria for particular courses within the disrupted education and equal opportunity categories.

*(source: LEA documentation)*

*Some other examples*

- One LEA requested 'evidence of commitment' for major awards (for example, part-time preparatory study undertaken at the applicant's expense).
- Another authority asked applicants to identify the minimum level of assistance needed to undertake the course (a reassurance was given that this information would not jeopardise decisions about an award).
- Two of the authorities in the interview programme, and several others, required all applicants to write explaining why they wanted to study; this was taken into consideration in making the award.

### **3.13 Private colleges: general policy**

Few courses at private colleges are designated and eligible for mandatory awards; most of these courses are thus subject to discretionary awards.

Most LEAs did not offer section 2 awards for courses in private institutions unless the course was unavailable in the public sector. The main areas into which such courses fall are law, the performing arts, theology and ordination training, and alternative medicine; there is a section on each of these below. Reference was made to the fact that alternative sources of funding are often available for students wishing to pursue courses at private institutions. For example, one LEA participating in the interview programme had withdrawn discretionary awards for maritime courses as funding was forthcoming from the shipping companies; others mentioned airlines with respect to air and pilot training, and the churches with respect to theological studies and training for ordination or missionary work. For some legal studies courses, sponsorship is available from firms but reference should be made to the report by the College of Law (Hillyer, 1993a), which comments on the limited extent of this and the fact that it may draw students away from the less affluent high street practice which deals with the less financially attractive aspects of law and thus cannot offer sponsorship. Smith and Saunders (1991) also commented on the decline in employer sponsorship at a time of recession.

Fees at private institutions may greatly exceed those payable in public institutions. Some performing arts courses can cost up to £8000, while the new Legal Practice course costs in the region of £5000.

Where support for private institutions was given, most LEAs limited the amount of the award. In some cases this was the current CLEA rate for fees in higher education (£759 for the year 1992/93), representing a small proportion of what had to be found. Elsewhere, maximum awards for fees varied considerably from £2000 to, very rarely, full fees.

#### **3.13.1 Performing Arts courses**

Thirty-seven of the 75 LEAs submitting documentation mentioned that they were still considering awards for performing arts courses in private colleges but in most cases there were restrictions on the value or number. Most only considered courses at institutions accredited by the CDET or the National Council for Drama Training although one authority (non-metropolitan) in the interview programme would consider any course - for example, at a circus school - while another authority (metropolitan) only supported students at the Laban School.

Auditions were common, especially with regard to dance - where the centrally administered CDET tests were often used. (Auditions were also mentioned with respect to music but this area of the performing arts is less problematic *vis-à-vis* discretionary awards as more designated courses are available.) However, auditions are expensive to administer.



*Examples of audition policies*

- LEA A was no longer able to select via local auditions as the education advisory service which had provided the auditions had become privatised and the advisers were charging for their time. This meant that auditioning had become too expensive a process. (In the previous year, 50 applicants had auditioned for two dance foundation awards).
- In LEA B, £5000 was reserved for the administration of the screening process.
- In LEA C, applicants for drama awards were strongly urged to attend the LEA's youth theatre course run by the adviser, who was also responsible for making recommendations about a candidate's suitability for a discretionary award.
- In LEA D, the interviewee observed that as the LEA advisory service had been abolished, the awards officers could no longer seek advice about an applicant's ability from someone who had probably known him or her through school-days.

Contrasting practice was found in another interview programme authority (non-metropolitan). The interviewee said that they did not audition for performing arts awards on the grounds that the exercise slowed down the processing of the award; was redundant if the applicant had been awarded a place on an accredited course - an LEA audition would just be going over the same ground and the offer of a place was ample evidence of ability; and was inequitable in that internal scrutiny was not applied to any other applications. However, it should be pointed out that no quotas were operating in this authority.

One LEA (non-metropolitan) offered support to all applicants who had satisfied the CDET auditors but more common was the situation whereby applicants were put in rank order with a cut-off point for support determined by the budget available. In the small LEAs, only one or two applicants might be offered an award.

*Examples of performing arts awards policies in small LEAs*

Of five inner London boroughs still supporting performing arts courses there was, respectively:

- one award for a student aged 16-19
- two dance awards and one drama award
- two dance foundation awards (and it is interesting to note that for 1992/1993 there were 50 applicants, each of whom was auditioned)
- one award for a student aged 16-19 and another at a specialist music school (this could be post-16).
- performing arts courses considered within a general policy of limiting fees to £2000 for courses at private institutions.

The cut-off point where students were placed in a rank order following audition was

significant insofar as the available budget could be spread 'thinly', so that a number of students had a small amount of support, or 'thickly' so that candidates who were considered to be of outstanding ability could be fully supported. There are to date insufficient reliable data regarding reasons for withdrawal of places to gauge the effect of partial support for high-cost courses, though the study by the College of Law (Hillyer, 1993b) suggested that it was a critical issue. One officer interviewed in a small authority (non-metropolitan) remarked that it did not seem to be a deciding factor - students seemed to get the money somehow. An interviewee in an authority (non-metropolitan) which maintained awards for the performing arts had noticed that, as other LEAs withdrew support for this area of study, a higher proportion of its residents were successful in obtaining places at dance and drama colleges with the result that pressure had been put on the discretionary awards budget. This authority had, in fact, recently introduced auditions and a tighter residence requirement (three years in the authority) applicable solely to performing arts awards. In only one (metropolitan) of the authorities for which data were available, performing arts awards were given on a first-come, first-served basis: the quality of the candidate, or another criterion such as parental income, was normally the basis for decision-making.

*Examples of performing arts policies in the 17 interview programme authorities*

- 6 (2 non-metropolitan, 4 metropolitan) gave no support for the performing arts
- 1 (metropolitan) offered three bursaries of £5000 after auditions, though this LEA did, additionally, fully support courses at non-maintained colleges if the course was the first stage of progression to a recognised teaching qualification
- 3 restricted fees to amounts varying from the mandatory award rate or the CLEA maximum, to nearly £5000
- 2 offered fees-only awards (either full or partial)
- 1 offered awards only to applicants who were unemployed
- 1 offered 40 full awards following local auditions and grading
- 1 used CDET auditions with the cut-off point determined by the budget available
- 2 considered all applications, though in one case only half fees were paid and in the other, the contributions (around £1500) were small in relation to the fees payable.

### **3.13.2 Legal studies**

As a general rule, LEAs did not support the Law Society's Common Professional Examination (CPE) and had not done so for some time - that is, it was the subject of a clear policy decision rather than a victim of financial stringency. (The CPE is a 'conversion' course for those who have a non-law first degree). Law graduates and non-law graduates with the CPE have, up till now, taken a vocational course leading to Law/Bar Finals; support had been variously given by LEAs for this stage. The situation is changing as from the beginning of the academic year 1993/94 in that there is a new Legal Practice course, for which the fees are in excess of those charged for the Law Finals course.

Only one of the 17 LEAs in which interviews were conducted still offered support for Law Finals (this LEA had, in fact, only eliminated the CPE in the academic year 1991/92). Law is often deemed ineligible by virtue of being post-graduate and taught mostly in private institutions - two categories which many authorities had eliminated from their schemes. Of the other LEAs submitting relevant documentation and offering major awards, 18 considered Law Finals (though the Diploma in Law and the CPE were ineligible). Maximum support averaged £2000 though one LEA gave a June 30 deadline, after which the budget was shared among the eligible applicants. Another authority would only offer an award for legal studies if the applicant had no previous qualifications - that is, it would not support post-graduate law studies.

*An example of priority categories applied to awards for legal studies*

One authority had drawn up a list of categories of applications for awards for law courses and had put them in order of priority by reference to the applicant's apparent commitment to law. The CPE came lowest on the grounds that the applicant had only decided upon law as a career at a late stage. Those applicants who had come from an educationally disadvantaged background (entering higher education by an Access course) and had proceeded to a Law degree, and those who had funded their own Law degree course while in employment, were accorded higher priority on the grounds that they showed considerable commitment.

### **3.13.3 Theology and training for ordination**

The position regarding theological courses and training for ordination was similar to that of law: being pursued mostly in private institutions and/or at post-graduate level, many were automatically excluded from discretionary awards schemes; support was the exception rather than the rule. Eighteen (10 non-metropolitan, 8 metropolitan) of the authorities returning documentation specifically said that they would consider applications for theology courses but the degree of support was rarely specified (though in one case (metropolitan) it was only 25 per cent maintenance).

### **3.13.4 Alternative medicine**

Only 18 of the LEAs returning documentation specifically mentioned awards for alternative medicine courses such as acupuncture, osteopathy or chiropractic. Of these, nine (3 non-metropolitan, 6 metropolitan) included them within their discretionary awards scheme and seven did not. A further LEA (non-metropolitan) only supported courses at certain colleges and with partial fees, while the stringent general criteria in another authority (metropolitan) would probably have eliminated applicants for alternative medicine courses before their specific request was considered.

## **3.14 Part-time courses**

Specific information about part-time study was available for 30 LEAs still giving new discretionary awards. Sixteen of these (9 non-metropolitan, 7 metropolitan) had withdrawn support for part-time courses. Criteria were attached to awards in the remaining authorities: for example, low income (this was variously interpreted as from £6000 to £11,000), disability or disability combined with low income. Some authorities set maximum amounts of individual support - which was normally in the form of a one-off payment towards fees, travel or books. The range was from £100 to £400. Other

LEAs reserved a specific sum to meet such applications - in one LEA this was £20,000. Elsewhere, LEAs required evidence that the course was related to employment or that the applicant was without a qualification necessary for a career - that is, support was only given for vocational qualifications, not for GCSE or GCE study.

For the majority of the remaining authorities for which specific information about part-time courses was not given, it can be assumed that assistance was not available, as a widespread condition of eligibility for discretionary awards was that study should be full-time (see above).

The position regarding support for part-time study has implications for the relationship between social security benefits and support from the Education Authority. The broad situation is that if an individual is studying for more than 21 hours, he or she is deemed unavailable for work and thus is ineligible for unemployment benefit. Thus it is possible for some individuals to become trapped by the system, needing further qualifications in order to have currency in the employment market but unable to engage in intensive study in order to gain these qualifications as they would thereby lose social security benefits. Wymer (1993) commented that 'the single most important reason for students leaving courses is the absence of financial support, particularly for part-time unemployed students'.

Observations on this issue were made by interviewees when they were asked about changes to the system. In one authority, what was considered an effective local agreement had been reached between the Education Committee and the Department of Social Security (DSS). The arrangement was for those students not included in the 21 hour rule: those full-time students eligible for benefit, being single parents or having disabilities. The students collected their benefit from the DSS who did not enquire about their study, on the understanding that the LEA would make an award for fees, books and travel but no maintenance. There was a clarification between the two agencies of what the rules were so that the LEA did not award a maintenance grant which would conflict with the DSS benefit.

### **3.15 Open University courses**

Thirty-five of the documents mentioned support for Open University first degree courses in their documentation; only one authority included the Open College in its scheme.

Eight (5 non-metropolitan, 3 metropolitan) had recently withdrawn support and the remaining 27 authorities (9 non-metropolitan, 18 metropolitan) generally supported those on low income only (the upper threshold of this ranged from £6000 to £11,000) and was usually in respect of summer school expenses and travel; three LEAs (2 non-metropolitan, 1 metropolitan) gave awards only to students with disabilities. Amounts given were generally modest. For example:

- up to a maximum of £195
- a flat rate payment of £100 (though £25,000 was reserved for this category of award)
- three-quarters of summer school expenses and travel on a first-come, first-served basis
- support outside the discretionary award policy but made under a bursary scheme

Only one authority offered awards for post-experience course fees; generally, policies stipulated that applications should be made to in-service budgets in such cases.

### 3.16 Students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties

In Questionnaire 2, awards officers were asked to give brief details of their Authority's policy with regard to the provision of discretionary awards to students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. There was a degree of confusion as to the position *vis-à-vis* the FEFC's responsibility for students with special educational needs. The position is that the FEFC is responsible for students with learning difficulties, aged 16-25, for whom ordinary provision is inadequate — that is, for students requiring places at specialist residential colleges. One LEA stated that the question in the survey was not applicable as all these students were the responsibility of the FEFC. Another expected the FEFC to meet tuition fees but considered students for maintenance awards alongside other students. Another LEA was paying for three students in residential placements outside the authority from within a special budget. There was a discrete budget for students with special needs in another authority, but this was cash-limited and operated on a first-come, first-served basis. However, a number of aspects of policy were identified.

*the main aspects of policy identified fell into four broad groups*

- Students holding discretionary awards were offered the same additional grants for disability as were holders of mandatory awards (18 LEAs)
- All applications from students with special needs were considered individually rather than according to specific criteria (16 LEAs)
- No different policy for this category of student; they were considered within the overall discretionary awards policy (12 LEAs)
- Additional grants were available for those students with special needs who were offered discretionary awards - for example, extra amounts for travel, equipment and care (8 LEAs)

Significant cuts to the overall discretionary awards budget in one authority meant that students with special educational needs were only considered for an award if they met the criterion of 'exceptionality' - the special needs, *per se*, were insufficient to be 'exceptional' within the discretionary awards policy. In another authority with a restricted budget, however, evidence of special educational needs gave an applicant more 'points', giving them higher priority for consideration for a discretionary award. In a further authority, students with special educational needs were the *only* category of applicant considered for discretionary awards.

### 3.17 Transport

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 requires all LEAs to formulate and fund a transport policy which allows full-time students aged 16-19 access to further education and ensures parity in the treatment of students attending schools with the students attending colleges of further education.

A standard element for travel is included in major awards but not generally in minor ones. Two authorities, however, included a standard element for travel in their *minor* awards, regardless of actual journeys made or where the student lived. In these cases, no further restrictions were made although there was, clearly, an upper limit. In one authority the fixed amount was £45 p.a. for students under 19 and £100 p.a. for students over 19; in the second authority, the fixed amount was £300 p.a.

In most of the other authorities additional support for travel was available for holders of minor awards; in practice, it was limited to those from households with a low income. Again, there was considerable variety in the support offered.

### 3.17.1 Type of expenses

Fifty local authorities submitted information about travel policies:

#### *travel policies*

- 20 (15 non-metropolitan, 5 metropolitan) gave travel expenses in the form of financial reimbursement; two of these also offered a choice between a dedicated coach/subsidised local bus service or financial reimbursement
- 7 (4 non-metropolitan, 3 metropolitan) gave travel passes which entitled the holder to free travel or half price fares. In addition, two authorities gave 'scholar passes' which entitled students to have about 15 pence off the price of their bus tickets
- 7 (4 non-metropolitan, 3 metropolitan) offered a choice between travel passes and financial reimbursement; in some cases the distinction was on account of the unavailability of public transport.
- 5 (3 non-metropolitan, 2 metropolitan) only gave travel assistance to students with special educational needs or disabilities
- 4 (2 non-metropolitan, 2 metropolitan) were not offering any travel assistance to new (93/94) students
- 3 (1 non-metropolitan, 2 metropolitan) did not specify the type of travel assistance they gave.
- 2 LEAs gave fixed amounts.

### 3.17.2 Age restrictions

Age restrictions were operating in 31 authorities.

Upper age limit	No. of LEAs operating this restriction
18	4 (3 non-metropolitan, 1 metropolitan) authorities
19	24 (19 non-metropolitan, 5 metropolitan) authorities
21	3 (metropolitan) authorities

Ten authorities had no age restrictions; the others did not comment on this issue. The distinction between upper age limits of 18 and 19 may be the lack, at the time of the research, of a clear definition of 'being 18' - i.e. the student's birthday or the end of the academic year in which he/she becomes 19.

Information about mileage restrictions was provided by 38 LEAs. Minimum distances for qualifying for assistance were:

<b>No. of LEAs operating this restriction</b>	
2 miles	1 (metropolitan)
3 miles	33 (20 non-metropolitan, 13 metropolitan)
4 miles	2 (non-metropolitan)
5 miles	2 (non-metropolitan)

18 (13 non-metropolitan, 5 metropolitan) authorities stipulated that expenses would only be paid if the course/college attended was the nearest available to the student.

### **3.17.3 Thresholds**

Five (non-metropolitan) LEAs required a student/parental contribution before assisting with travelling expenses; the requirements were various.

- £4.00 per week based on one return journey daily or season/cheap day return
- Parental contribution of £40 per term towards travel
- The first £6.80 per week
- The first £73 of expenses except for those from low income households or in receipt of a maintenance award
- Student contribution of £90 a year (£30 per term) with remission for those on income support

### **3.17.4 Maximum awards**

Three (1 non-metropolitan, 2 metropolitan) authorities specified a maximum limit on their travel awards. These were, respectively:

- maximum awards for travel
- £500 per annum
  - £155 per term, on receipt of confirmation from the college that attendance had been satisfactory
  - £90 per annum for students aged between 16 and 17; £180 per annum for students aged 18 years and over.

### **3.18 Small payments**

Very few of the LEAs returning documentation mentioned support from the discretionary awards budget other than that for fees, maintenance or travel. However, 12 (7 non-metropolitan, 5 metropolitan) specified that they gave modest, one-off sums, mostly for books, short residential elements of courses, and equipment Art, catering and hairdressing courses. One LEA met 50-100 per cent of expenses for sports or cultural courses undertaken by students performing at county level, while another offered 16-19 year-olds bursaries for extra-mural activities (fieldwork trips, for example).

In one case, the discretionary awards budget was used to support students aged over 19 who undertook courses of FE in schools: under the legislation pertaining to Local Management of Schools, schools are not permitted to provide this out of their delegated budgets.

Three LEAs (2 non-metropolitan, 1 metropolitan) stated that they had recently withdrawn equipment/book awards.

### **3.19 Appeals**

LEAs' practice is to provide some sort of appeals mechanism. One of the aspects of administration commented upon by a number of interviewees was the fact that with reduced budgets coinciding with an increase in the number of applications, there was a greater degree of unmet need and, hence, greater dissatisfaction. Those applicants who were unsuccessful had to be given an explanation and this might lead to an appeal. These appeals had to be processed and replied to according to LEA procedure; this took time. The success rate of appeals had significant budgetary implications. One authority stated that it held back 10 per cent of the total discretionary awards budget in order to finance awards offered on appeal.

Although the documentation submitted made it apparent that many LEAs made statements about applicants' rights of appeal in their general information material, one authority participating in the interview programme had decided not to mention appeals in its letters of refusal - this was an attempt to discourage appeals. Most authorities made it clear that appeals would not be considered if they were clearly outside policy (for example, if the application was for a particular type of award or a particular course which had been withdrawn), if the applicant simply disagreed with the LEA policy or if the grounds were only that the applicant would be in financial difficulties on account of the refusal. Appeals were meant to be based on an argument to the effect that either LEA policy or procedures had been incorrectly applied or that there were exceptional, mitigating circumstances in the particular case. However, several interviewees commented that some people would still appeal 'just for the sake of it' however unreasonable it was perceived to be by officers. Furthermore, some were supported by letters from their Member of Parliament or local councillor: awards officers interviewed remarked that these supporters often seemed unaware of local policy. Again, responding to such letters was costly in terms of officer time.

There were various regulations regarding the deadlines by which appeals had to be received. Some were based on the date of refusal (for example, ten days after receipt of the letter of refusal) while other authorities published the date of the Appeals Committee meetings and asked for appeals to be received a fortnight before these dates.



There was a wide variety of practice represented in the authorities in the interview programme as regards the procedure once appeals had been received.

Three contrasting examples of appeals procedure

**LEA A**

Applicants who had been refused a discretionary award on account of not fulfilling criteria were considered by the Committee alongside those who had been refused on account of poor school reports. If the application was refused at the first appeal, the applicant was invited to send in more documentary evidence or attend for an interview. The Principal Awards Officer in this authority encouraged the latter option to the extent that about 90 per cent of applicants followed it. In 1992/93, about one-third (105) of refused applicants appealed and of these about half were successful. The officer considered that 'most genuine cases were successful' and that the system was fair.

**LEA B**

Applicants were also able to appear before the panel in person; the officer interviewed found it difficult to see patterns in the Committee's decisions about appeals and thought that it depended on 'who you know'.

**LEA C**

All those who wished to appeal were advised to consult the careers service. Having done this, applicants either returned with their applications supported by the careers service or, having been advised that their intended course might not be the one most suitable for their career plan, returned to the awards officer to say that they had rethought and wished to change their course. The papers of those who would not accept the recommendations of the careers service were not returned to Committee. In this authority, a large number of appeals were being agreed by Committee: in 1991/92, about 40 per cent (304 cases) of all refused applications were successful at a cost of £780,000. These were decisions made over and above the LEA's current policy. The main area of success as regards appeals in this authority was the student aged 25 or over who wanted to take a course in FE to extend career opportunities or to update skills. The example was cited of a woman returner who had completed a traditional secretarial course ten years ago and now needed to acquire word-processing and desk-top publishing skills in order to re-enter employment. The reasoning in such cases was apparent and it was this that made the appeals successful. The officer commented that only very exceptionally would appeals against refusals of Section 1 (6) awards be successful. Some appeals were from students aged over 18 who were not aware that they were responsible for tuition fees; the college invoice - which could be late - was often the first that parents knew about their responsibility for fees. In these cases, Committee would only award fees - no maintenance.

Other points on which authorities in the interview programme differed as regards appeals included whether or not officers made recommendations to members (they mostly did not although they attended the panel so they could be called on for advice) and whether applicants were able to appear in person (the balance was almost even). There was also the issue of whether reappeal was possible - again, in the LEAs in the interview programme the balance was even although there were sometimes stages of appeal.

Awards officers spent a considerable amount of time assisting applicants over their appeals, preparing strategies and advising on relevant documentation; sometimes this was done through college counsellors. In addition, officers prepared full reports on each case for consideration by the panel; in most cases the panel saw copies of supporting documentation sent in by the applicant. This work had implications for the workload of officers in view of the greater number of appeals being reported.

One of the Principal Awards Officer interviewed cited a case which he considered 'a success story' and which illustrated the value of the local administration of discretionary awards and of the appeals procedures. The anecdote is worth repeating here.

*An example of a beneficiary of local discretion*

Mr X, married with two children, was a welder who had recently been made redundant and was on DSS benefit. He wanted to do a course which would give him a qualification in welding inspection and had a job guaranteed with a national industrial company if he was successful. There was no course in the authority in which he lived (on account of insufficient demand) but there was one in a neighbouring authority. However, he could afford neither the travel and fees nor to move without employment. Support was outside the current LEA policy and Mr X had assumed that any application would be in vain. The case had, in fact, been brought to the attention of the awards office through the media. In time, the case was taken to appeal, the advice of the careers office was sought and they approved the case, and Committee awarded Mr X £300 over the year. This saw him through: he qualified successfully, got the promised job, came off DSS benefit, was able to move and was very happy. He expressed his gratitude for the support which he had received. The interviewee observed that this 'success' was achieved by a mere £300 and was the result of the opportunity to consider individual needs. It was advantageous to the country's overall economic situation: 'there's a saving on taxes even if there is a tiny bit more on the rates/community charge'.

source: principal awards officer, interview programme

### **3.20 Concluding comments**

As this chapter shows, discretionary awards policies and practices varied quite considerably between different LEAs in England and Wales. To a certain extent, this is, perhaps, only to be expected, given the tradition of local provision to meet the needs of the local employment scene. But anomalies take on a different complexion when there are increased and more generally shared expectations. A summary of the main findings of the research is presented in the following chapter.

## Chapter 4 Summary and Conclusions

### 4.1 Introduction

The main aims of the study were to collect and compare statistics of English and Welsh local education authority (LEA) discretionary awards made in the academic years 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93, and LEAs' planned budgets for 1993/94; and to collect qualitative information on changes in LEAs' discretionary awards policies and estimate the likely demand for discretionary awards. The questionnaires sought information on LEAs' expenditure on and numbers of the following types of discretionary award: Section 1(6); Section 2 (postgraduate); Section 2 (higher education); Section 2 (further education); and EMAs. The research consisted of three complementary strands: two questionnaire surveys of LEAs; a review of LEA documentation on discretionary awards; and an interview programme in a small number of LEAs. It was not within the remit of the study to draw out the implications of the findings for policy or practice with regard to discretionary awards and no attempt has been made to do this. However, in reporting the results of the research we have tried to set our findings within the context of changes in the educational and economic situations between 1990/91 and 1993/94. This chapter presents a summary of the main conclusions from the various strands of the study.

### 4.2 Expenditure

Overall expenditure on discretionary awards rose by about 14 per cent in cash terms between 1990/91 and 1991/92 (about £252 million compared with about £220 million). Figure A and Table A show that estimated expenditure decreased slightly to about £249 million in 1992/93 (but was still about 13 per cent above the 1990/91 level) and that it is projected to fall further to about £230 million in 1993/94, which would be about four per cent above the 1990/91 level in cash terms. If this projection is fulfilled, expenditure in 1993/94 would be about eight per cent lower in real terms compared with 1990/91. However, it must be remembered that the figures for 1992/93 are estimates and those for 1993/94 are projections and, as such, are subject to error.

Expenditure on some types of award was considerably higher in 1992/93 and 1993/94 than in 1990/91, whereas expenditure on other types of award was considerably lower. The greatest increases have been in expenditure on Section 2 (FE) awards and, to a lesser extent, on EMAs. Details of estimated changes are summarised below.

- Expenditure on Section 2 (FE) awards increased by about 23 per cent in cash terms between 1990/91 and 1991/92 (from about £130 million to about £160 million). Estimated expenditure for 1992/93 was £176 million (about 35 per cent above the 1990/91 level). Projections suggest that expenditure in 1993/94 will fall to £167 million, about 28 per cent above the 1990/91 level in cash terms. If these projections are correct, this represents an increase of about 14 per cent in real terms.
- Similarly, expenditure on EMAs, although much less in total than expenditure on Section 2(FE) awards, increased between 1990/91 and 1991/92 by about 26 per cent (from just over £16 million to just under £21 million). Estimated expenditure for 1992/93 was about £24 million (about 47 per cent above the 1990/91 level). Projections suggest that expenditure in 1993/94 will increase to about £25 million

(about 55 per cent above the 1990/91 level), making EMAs the second largest category of discretionary support in 1993/94. If these projections are correct, this represents an increase of about 37 per cent in real terms.

- On the other hand, expenditure on Section 2 (HE) awards decreased between 1990/91 and 1991/92 by about five per cent from about £47 million to about £44 million. Estimated expenditure for 1992/93 shows a sharper decrease to £28 million (about 39 per cent below the 1990/91 level). Projections suggest that expenditure on Section 2 (HE) awards will fall to about £24 million in 1993/94 (about half of the 1990/91 expenditure - a decrease of about 55 per cent in real terms).

Information on expenditure on Section 1(6), Section 2 (post-graduate) and placement year sandwich students can be found in Table A.

### **4.3 Numbers**

Total numbers of awards are projected to be about 20 per cent higher in 1993/94 than in 1990/91. Yet some categories of award are expected to decrease (Figure B and Table B). These trends follow a similar pattern to those in expenditure.

- The number of Section 2 (FE) awards increased from 147 thousand in 1990/91 to 174 thousand in 1991/92 (an increase of about 18 per cent). A further increase to 188 thousand was estimated for 1992/93 (28 per cent above the 1990/91 level). Projections suggest that the number will increase to 194 thousand in 1993/94 (a third higher than the 1990/91 level). In all four years, Section 2(FE) awards accounted for the largest proportion (between two-thirds and three-quarters) of the discretionary awards made.
- Similarly, the number of Educational Maintenance Allowances increased from 41 thousand in 1990/91 to 48 thousand in 1991/92 (an increase of about 17 per cent). A further increase to 55 thousand (36 per cent above the 1990/91 level) was estimated for 1992/93. Projections suggest a slight decrease to 54 thousand in 1993/94, which, nevertheless, is still one-third higher than the 1990/91 level. Educational Maintenance Allowances were the second most numerous type of award, accounting for about a fifth of all non-mandatory awards.
- On the other hand, the number of Section 2 (HE) awards decreased from about 17 thousand in 1990/91 to about 15 thousand in 1991/92 (a fall of about 10 per cent). There was a much sharper decrease in 1992/93 to an estimated nine thousand in 1992/93 (just over half the 1990/91 number). Further projections suggest that the number of Section 2(HE) awards will fall to about seven thousand in 1993/94 (less than half of the 1990/91 level).

Information on numbers of Section 1(6), Section 2 (post-graduate) and placement year sandwich students can be found in Table B.

### **4.4 Variability**

On the basis of LEAs' projected discretionary awards expenditure for 1993/94, Table C summarises the percentage changes as compared with the baseline expenditure figures

for 1990/91. It shows the very wide variation among authorities and the extent to which their projections tend to lie at the extremes of the spectrum. Both in cash and real terms, the majority of responding authorities are projecting increases or decreases of expenditure in excess of 20 per cent over the period.

This feature of the data serves to emphasise that the overall pattern of change from year to year is most unlikely to be reflected in any given LEA or small group of LEAs.

#### **4.5 Metropolitan and non-metropolitan authorities.**

The following paragraphs describe systematic differences between metropolitan and non-metropolitan authorities as groups. The significant variation within those groups must again be emphasised.

Estimated expenditure by non-metropolitan authorities in 1992/93 was about 19 per cent above the 1990/91 level, and projections suggest that expenditure in 1993/94 will be about 14 per cent above the 1990/91 level in cash terms (Table D). Total expenditure in 1993/94 in real terms was, therefore, projected to be close to the 1990/91 level. On the other hand, estimated expenditure on discretionary awards by metropolitan authorities, which equalled the 1990/91 level in 1992/93, was projected to be about 14 per cent below the 1990/91 level in cash terms in 1993/94 (Table D). This would be a decrease of about a quarter in real terms.

Similarly, there were much greater increases in the overall numbers of awards made by non-metropolitan LEAs (up by 29 per cent) than by metropolitan LEAs (up by nine per cent) between 1990/91 and 1992/93. Projections suggest that numbers of awards in non-metropolitan LEAs will continue to increase to about 35 per cent above the 1990/91 level in 1993/94, whereas those for metropolitan authorities will revert to near the 1990/91 level (Table E).

#### **4.6 Average value of award**

The average value of an award in 1992/93 was about six per cent below the 1990/91 level, and projections for 1993/94 suggest that the average for that year will be about 13 per cent below the 1990/91 level in cash terms (Table F) - a decrease of about a quarter in real terms. Since the average value of an FE award is substantially less than that of an HE award, this decrease is largely attributable to the increasing proportion of FE awards since 1990/91 and the real-terms decline in their value.

#### **4.7 Policy issues**

##### **4.7.1 Demand for discretionary awards**

In Questionnaire 2, awards officers were asked what, if any, changes in demand for discretionary awards the authority had identified since 1990/91 and by what means (e.g. records of enquiries or applications). They were also asked what, in their view, were the main reasons for any changes identified.

Two-thirds (49) of the 72 awards officers responding to Questionnaire 2 reported that there had been an increase in demand for discretionary awards since 1990/91. Few authorities, however, appeared to keep records that would enable officers to demonstrate

that there had been an increase in demand. The main areas for which an increase in demand had been observed were vocational FE and access courses. Increases in demand had been noted from 16-19 year olds and mature students. The main reasons suggested by awards officers for increases in demand were:

- redundancy and unemployment;
- other effects of the recession;
- increased staying on rates for 16-19 year olds; and
- colleges offering a wider variety of courses.

Seven awards officers reported a decrease in demand, at least for some types of award, in their authority. The main reasons given for decreases in demand were that:

- courses which were previously non-designated had become designated and thus eligible for mandatory awards; and
- there was greater local awareness that discretionary awards policies had become more restricted.

#### **4.7.2 Conditions for eligibility**

Despite the continuing increase in the total number of awards, nine of the 75 LEAs returning documentation were planning to make no new discretionary awards in 1993/94. Almost all the remaining 66 had introduced, or were planning to introduce, stricter conditions of eligibility for HE discretionary awards. The majority either had introduced, or were planning to introduce, stricter conditions of eligibility for FE awards, including restrictions on students' age, level of course, and eligibility for and level of maintenance. Most LEAs restricted award holders to the nearest college at which their chosen course was available.

#### **4.7.3 Private institutions**

The majority of LEAs providing documentation normally offered awards to students at private institutions only when there was no similar course available in the public sector.

- About half of the 75 LEAs providing documentation indicated that they would consider providing awards for performing arts courses in private institutions, but most restricted awards to courses at institutions accredited by the Council for Dance Education and Training (CDET) or the National Council for Drama Training (NCDT).
- Only 18 LEAs providing relevant documentation said that they would consider support for Law Finals.
- Eighteen of the 75 Authorities providing documentation indicated that they would support theology/ordination training courses, but the level of support was unspecified.

#### **4.7.4 Diversity of LEA policies**

There was *very little consistency* among authorities' policies for discretionary awards. A group of LEAs might have similar criteria in one field (e.g. age limits) but vary in another (e.g. subjects supported, acceptable institutions, student's educational background). Similarly, the level of parental income at which a maintenance award might be offered varied, as did the level of support given to students actually receiving a maintenance grant. There is no such thing as a typical LEA discretionary awards policy: in practice, potential students' prospects of receiving discretionary awards support depend on where they live.

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# Appendix 1

## Project Steering Group

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David Line	Surrey County Council Awards Service
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Michael Stock	Head of Research and Statistics, Further Education Funding Council
Chris Wormald (Secretary) until end January 1994	Department for Education
Kathryn Coates (Secretary) from beginning February 1994	Department for Education

## Appendix 2

### Administration And Technical Details

#### Appendix 2.1: Documentations submitted with Questionnaire One

##### *Public documents*

Detailed information booklets 25

Summary information, leaflets 24

Partial information (eg leaflet on only one type of support) 9

##### *Restricted documents*

Committee minutes, policy discussion papers 17

**No. of LEAs submitting material 75**

N.B. The most informative document from each LEA is listed.  
16 of the 75 LEAs also sent subsidiary material

## Appendix 2.2: The Interview Programme

Interviews were conducted in:

- Two inner London boroughs
- Three outer London boroughs
- Six English shire counties
- Five metropolitan boroughs
- One Welsh authority

The policy areas discussed included:

### **1 POLICY FORMULATION**

Responsibility for the formulation of policy.

The forum for policy decisions.

The stage of the financial planning cycle at which policy is decided.

The principles underpinning policies.

The factors which affect and restrain policy (eg political decisions, hard data, regular information sources collected by Awards Officers).

Performance indicators applied to awards policy.

### **2 CHANGES IN POLICY (within the past five years)**

Length of time that the existing principles and policies have been in existence.

Ease with which policy can be changed.

Examples of changes in different subject areas and/or for different constituencies. When and how the changes occurred.

Policy review procedures.

### **3 THE EFFECTS OF CHANGES IN POLICY**

The authority's perceptions of the effects of policy changes on applicants, institutions and the LEA (eg increased competition, more/fewer partial awards, geographical/course/age restrictions, greater/fewer opportunities for identified groups, application rates).

### **4 PROCEDURES FOR PROCESSING AWARDS**

Mechanisms for dealing with applications.

Timetables for decision-making.

Management of internal tests of eligibility.

Use of means tests; changes in parental income.

Comparability of forms for discretionary and mandatory awards.

Fees above CLEA recommended levels.

Appeals procedures.

Changes in procedures and mechanisms.

### **5 SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGES TO THE SYSTEM**

Interviewees were invited to suggest ways in which the discretionary awards system might be improved within existing resources.

## Appendix 2.3: Defining 'independent status'

You are an **independent** student if you meet one of the following conditions:

- you are 25 or over before the start of the academic year for which you are applying for a grant; or
- you have been married for at least two years before the start of the academic year for which you are applying for a grant; or
- you have been self-supporting for at least three years before you start your course. This includes any time when you were unemployed or on a Government training scheme.
- you have no parent living.

If you are an independent student, your parents will not be expected to contribute to your grant.

There are other circumstances in which your parents will not be asked to contribute. These are where:

- your parents cannot be traced or it is not practicable to contact them;
- your parents live abroad and an assessment would put them in danger: this may apply if you are a refugee; or
- you are in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, or you are under a custodianship on your 18th birthday or immediately before your course if you are not 18 when it begins.

Source: DFE (1992) *Student Grants & Loans: a brief guide 1992/3*. London: DFE.

## Appendix 2.4. Survey administration and response rates

The administration of the study was carried out by the NFER's Field Research Services Department. Questionnaires were sent to the Principal/Chief Awards Officers of the 117 LEAs in England and Wales in May 1993. Each LEA was sent two questionnaires: a short questionnaire (Questionnaire 1) seeking summary information on student numbers by type of award, to be returned to NFER within two weeks of receipt; and a longer questionnaire (Questionnaire 2) seeking more detailed information, which LEAs were given longer to complete. A detailed timetable for the study is given below.

<b>Timetable:</b>	
Chief Education Officers approached explaining the nature of the survey	4th May 1993
Awards Officers approached, enclosing Questionnaire 1	14th May 1993
Awards Officers approached, enclosing Questionnaire 2	25th May 1993
Reminder concerning Questionnaire 1	2nd June 1993
Reminder concerning Questionnaire 2	30th June 1993
Acknowledgement for return of questionnaires from	19th August 1993
Telephone reminders for return of questionnaires, at monthly intervals as appropriate	August to December 1993
Query letters sent to Awards Officers to clarify data in Questionnaire 2	24th January 1994

Table A2.4.1 gives full details of response rates. Some 83 (72 per cent) of the 117 LEAs completed Questionnaire 1 in time for inclusion in the analyses; a further four LEAs returned Questionnaire 1 too late for inclusion. Policy documentation was provided by 75 LEAs (64 per cent). After an extensive telephone reminder exercise, 72 (62 per cent) of the LEAs returned Questionnaire 2. An account of the telephone reminder exercises is given below.

### **Telephone Reminders**

Since the written reminders to LEAs in June produced a disappointing response, the Project Steering Group decided that an approach should be made to non-responding LEAs by telephone. The Gulbenkian Foundation and the Sir John Cass's Foundation kindly provided additional funds for this and a subsequent telephone reminder exercise was undertaken.

During the period July to October 1993, 243 telephone calls were made to 80 LEAs. A further round of 102 telephone calls to 50 LEAs was made in early November. In general, LEAs responded very positively. Awards officers seemed convinced of the relevance

of the survey and were willing to complete the questionnaire. The main reasons for delay were an overload of other work and difficulties in extracting the required data from computer systems.

At the end of November, in order to encourage non-responding LEAs to complete Questionnaire 2, a letter was sent by the Gulbenkian Foundation to the 47 LEAs that had not returned Questionnaire 2 by that time. A final round of telephoning began in the week of 13th December. Some 83 telephone calls were made at this stage.

Details of the total number of telephone calls made to LEAs and received from them are given in Table A2.4.2.

**Table A2.4.1. Response rates for the survey**

	Questionnaire 1	Documentation	Questionnaire 2
LEAs returning completed questionnaires/documentation in time for inclusion in the survey	83 (72%)	75 (64%)	**72 (62%)
LEAs returning completed questionnaires too late for inclusion in the survey	4		
LEAs returning questionnaire or other data which was not in usable form	*2		3
LEAs not returning questionnaires	28		42
Total No. of LEAs contacted	117	117	117

\*These LEAs returned data in the form as kept on their own computer records. Unfortunately, it was found impossible to extract the required data from them.

\*\* Many LEAs were unable to provide all the information requested (see Table A2.5.1)

**Table A2.4.2. Telephone calls to LEAs**

Month	Telephone Calls	No. of LEAs
April - June 1993	59	15
July, August, September, October	243	80
November	102	50
December	83	46
Total (April - December 1993)	487	97

*Reasons given by LEAs for refusal to take part in the surveys*

Very few LEAs explicitly refused to complete the questionnaires. Reasons given by those that did so are given below

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<b>Questionnaire 1 completed; unable to complete questionnaire 2:</b>	
Information not available in the required form	1
New computer system	1
Chronic staff shortage, combined with changeover from manual to computerised system	1
Relevant member of staff terminally ill	1

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<b>Unable to complete either questionnaire</b>	
All data held manually	1
Staff shortage	1
Information not readily accessible and acute staff shortage	2
Nobody in post of Awards Officer	1
Other work took precedence	3

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Both Questionnaires	8
Questionnaire 2 only	4
	12

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## Appendix 2.5: Technical Issues

### 1. Data quality

On receipt, returns were scanned visually for any gross anomalies. In some cases, this resulted in discussion with the relevant Awards Officers to clarify the problem. The most frequent difficulties were in providing the breakdown into types of award, although the totals over all awards could be provided, and in providing projections for 1993/94.

After data entry and verification, the frequency distributions for each entry were examined for potential outliers, and a check was made to ascertain that, for expenditure and student numbers, the overall total equalled the sum of the entries under Section 1(6), Section 2 postgraduate, other Section 2, sandwich students and Educational Maintenance Allowances (EMAs). The breakdown of other Section 2 awards into HE and FE was also checked for consistency.

Small discrepancies in these totals were ignored, but major ones were investigated. A common problem arose from the fact that officers provided a breakdown into HE and FE of **all** awards, not just non-postgraduate Section 2 awards. As Section 1(6) awards, Postgraduate Section 2 awards and awards to placement year sandwich students are, by definition, HE and educational maintenance allowances are FE, the correct figures could be derived.

Several LEAs made amendments to the summary 503G data provided for 1990/91 and, in some cases, 1991/92, on the questionnaire. Some of these amendments were relatively minor, but others were substantial. In the case of one ex-ILEA authority, the overall total for 1990/91 was revised from over £3 million to less than £600,000. Another ex-ILEA authority felt unable to provide even an overall total for 1990/91 - it has, therefore, been treated as a non-responding authority in the analyses described below.

One LEA indicated that information was available, at the time of collection, only on a financial year basis, rather than on an academic year basis as requested. Another LEA provided estimates of the expenditure on 'other section 2' awards for 1992/93 and 1993/94 on a financial year basis. No reason was given in either case.

### 2. Expenditure and student numbers for responding LEAs

#### 2.1 *Imputing for missing information*

For 83 authorities, complete information was available for 1990/91 with declining numbers for subsequent years. In particular, as noted above, authorities were sometimes able to provide totals but not the breakdown. Data were imputed separately for each category of award, i.e. separately for each row of the Financial Information and Student Numbers tables of Questionnaire 1, as described below.

Consider row 1 (Section 1(6) awards) in the Financial Information table. Taking all LEAs with values for both 1990/91 and 1991/92, the overall expenditure in 1991/92 was calculated as a percentage of the overall expenditure in 1990/91. This 'imputing factor' was then applied to the 1990/91 value for LEAs with no 1991/92 value to provide a complete set of values for 1991/92, some provided by LEAs and some imputed. Similarly, an 'imputing factor' was derived using authorities with actual (i.e. not



imputed) values for each of 1991/92 and 1992/93. Applying this factor to 1991/92 values (actual or imputed) in authorities with no 1992/93 values leads to a complete set of values for 1992/93. The same process was then used for 1993/94, in each case using only values actually provided by authorities to compute the 'imputing factor'. In theory, this could mean that values for 1993/94 had been imputed in three stages from 1990/91 values.

For each year the values (actual and imputed) were then summed over all responding LEAs to provide estimates of total expenditure on Section 1(6) awards.

The other rows of the Financial Information table were treated similarly, as was each row of the Student Numbers table.

## **2.2 Standard errors**

The method of computing the 'imputing factors' described above is clearly equivalent to regression through the origin, regressing the values for the later of two years on those for the earlier. As such, and assuming normality, the standard error is given by standard theory. However, for some authorities 1993/94 values will have been imputed using the product of two or three of these regression coefficients, making analytic techniques considerably more complex.

An alternative technique was therefore used. When each of the three 'imputing factors' derived for each row was calculated, the standard deviations of the residuals were also calculated, again based only on authorities with entries for both the relevant years. For an LEA with a value for 1990/91 but not for 1992/93, an estimate for the latter is obtained by adding to the imputed value a term obtained by taking a random sample from a normal distribution with mean 0 (as residuals must have mean 0) and standard deviation as calculated above. If two or three stages of imputation were required, two or three such terms, each drawn from the appropriate normal distribution, were added.

Having done this for each LEA, the total over all responding LEAs for each year was computed. This process was repeated 1000 times and the standard error of the distribution of values obtained was calculated.

## **2.3 Missing values**

The method of imputing for missing values described above was carried out on a row-by-row basis. As some rows, in particular the overall total, had more complete data than others, the final estimated total for any year does not necessarily equal the sum of the estimated components. However, the discrepancies are relatively small (generally less than 0.5 per cent) and considerably smaller than the standard errors of the estimated totals for rows 3 and 6 for 1993/94.

# **3 National estimates of expenditure and student numbers**

## **3.1 Grossing up**

It would be possible to provide grossed-up figures by assuming that the 83 responding authorities represent 83/117 of the overall expenditure on discretionary awards and number of such awards. However, it is unlikely that responding LEAs were, strictly, a random sample of all authorities. Therefore, it was decided to stratify authorities by an overall measure of size, in terms of total activity on discretionary awards in 1990/91. Questionnaire 1 returns were used where available, and 503G returns otherwise. Ideally,

it might be best to stratify separately for estimating expenditure and number of awards, but this would cause complications in the estimation of the value of the average award. Therefore, stratification was based on financial information, whilst the grossing-up factors for each stratum were based on financial information for estimating total expenditure and on student numbers for estimating the total number of awards.

The response rates within strata varied from 12 out of 20 authorities (60 per cent) to 16 from 19 (84 per cent). Even within strata, those responding may not represent a random subsample, but the stratification should at least provide some measure of control.

For the one authority which made a Questionnaire 1 return but could not provide a total expenditure figure for 1990/91, allocation to a stratum was made on the basis of a 'best guess', taking into account the information which it provided for later years, and the patterns of response of other ex-ILEA authorities.

In practice the stratification based on numbers does not differ markedly from that based on expenditure.

Results are presented overall, and for metropolitan and non-metropolitan authorities separately.

### **3.2 Standard errors**

Within each stratum, standard errors were estimated as in 2.2 above. Standard errors for the overall total then follow by standard theory.

The magnitude of the standard error in the estimate for a given year depends on the proportion of authorities for whom entries must be imputed, as well as how well the regression model fits the data. The largest standard errors are for 1993/94, and are approximately:

- 1% for the overall total
- 3% for other Section 2 FE.
- 5% for maintenance awards
- 5% for other Section 2 HE
- 5% for post-graduate Section 2 awards
- 3% for Section 1(6) awards
- 10% for awards to placement year sandwich students.

The relatively high standard errors for awards to sandwich students arise because the regression model used does not fit the data well, but these awards account for a very small percentage of the total, both in terms of expenditure and number of awards.

It should be noted that these values attempt to assess the possible error in the estimates arising from the imputation process and from grossing up, and assume that the figures provided by the authorities are, themselves, not subject to error.

The methodology also assumes that authorities are, in the main, all behaving in a similar manner. Inspection of the returns suggests that, while this is broadly true, even within strata there is considerable variation between LEAs in pattern of provision, and that not

all LEAs are changing in the same way. As the 'population' of LEAs is relatively small, the addition or omission of a few authorities could have a marked effect on overall results.

Where appropriate, expenditure has been expressed in terms of 1990/91 prices by using the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) deflator, published by the Central Statistical Office (CSO). This is a general inflation indicator, covering all goods and services provided in the economy, and is used to re-price public expenditure. Using these data and taking 1990/91 as the base level, the inflation rates were 5.5 per cent, 9.1 per cent and 12.9 per cent for 1991/92, 1992/93 and 1993/94, respectively.

## **4. Questionnaire 2**

### **4.1. Response to the survey**

By the closing date, 72 authorities (62%) had returned Questionnaire 2. Few authorities were able to provide all the information requested, and the number of LEAs providing complete information for each question is given in Table A2.5.1. This table also shows the percentage of total expenditure on discretionary awards, and total number of such awards, for the academic year 1990/91, accounted for by the responding LEAs. This is based on the LEAs' responses to Questionnaire 1 or, where this was not available, Form 503G data.

Not only was the overall response rate poor, but there is evidence that, on a question-by-question basis, those LEAs replying were unrepresentative of LEAs as a whole, in that LEAs with relatively low expenditure on discretionary awards were more likely to respond.

For all except the first three questions, responding LEAs are, on average, smaller than LEAs overall, in terms of both expenditure on discretionary awards and number of such awards.

The response rates for metropolitan and non-metropolitan LEAs do not differ significantly.

In view of the poor overall response to this questionnaire, and the bias towards lower-spending authorities, grossed up results from this questionnaire were not reported. However, appropriate data has been reported where relevant.

**Table A2.5.1****Responding LEAs as a percentage of all LEAs - number of LEAs, expenditure and number of awards**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Number of LEAs responding</b>	<b>Percentage of LEAs responding</b>	<b>Percentage of expenditure</b>	<b>Percentage of awards</b>
Expenditure on all discretionary awards by fees and maintenance for 1992/93	57	49%	50%	50%
Expenditure on FE discretionary awards by fees and maintenance for 1992/93	55	47%	48%	49%
New Section 2 awards: student numbers by level for 1992/93	57	49%	53%	48%
New awards to students at publicly maintained institutions by subject for 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93 - numbers and expenditure	21	18%	11%	11%
Total numbers of awards to students at private institutions for 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93	35	30%	23%	20%
New awards to students at private institutions for 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93 - numbers and expenditure	34	29%	23%	20%
New awards to students at private institutions by subject for 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93 - numbers and expenditure	30	26%	18%	17%
Numbers of new awards to students at institutions outside England and Wales for 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93	41	35%	30%	29%
<b>Total number of LEAs returning Questionnaire 2</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>62%</b>

# **Appendix 3**

## **The Questionnaires**

**DISCRETIONARY AWARDS**

**A SURVEY OF PRINCIPAL/SENIOR  
AWARDS OFFICERS IN LEAS**

**QUESTIONNAIRE 1**

**SUMMARY INFORMATION**

The information we have entered into the tables in this questionnaire for 1990/91 and 1991/92 has been calculated from the Authority's FORM 503G data, which were kindly provided to us by DFE. If you are not happy with any of these figures, please amend them accordingly (if necessary, attach an explanatory note). Please note that forms and amendments received by DFE after early February 1993 are not included in the figures.

We should be grateful if you would make the best estimates you can (on the same basis as in Form 503G) for the 1992/3 and 1993/4 academic years.

**HOW TO COMPLETE THE TABLES IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. *All expenditure data should be in whole numbers rounded to the nearest pound omitting pence and pound signs.*
2. *If there were no students in a specified category for any year(s), please enter zero in the appropriate box (es).*
3. *If you are unable to provide an exact figure for expenditure or student numbers, please make the best estimate you can. All estimates should be prefixed with an (E).*

*Example: an estimate of £1,500,000 should be entered as (E)1500000*

Please return this completed questionnaire to the NFER, using one of the pre-paid labels provided, **WITHIN TWO WEEKS OF RECEIPT.**

If you have any queries please contact: Mrs. Anne Milne, Field Research Services  
NFER, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough Berkshire SL1 2DQ  
(0753) 574123 Ext. 271

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

NFER  
USE

- 1a. Please give details of the Authority's spending on discretionary awards (fees and maintenance) in the **ACADEMIC YEARS** listed below.

*You should include expenditure on all (ie new **and** continuing) awards whether paid:*

- *at or above the mandatory rate;*
- *at 50 - 99% of the mandatory rate;*
- *or at less than 50 % of the mandatory rate.*

*You should include the cost of fees and maintenance paid to full-, part-time and sandwich students in all kinds of establishments including private colleges (eg for dance, drama and law).*

*You should NOT include expenditure on the Authority's own administration costs.*

**THE AUTHORITY'S EXPENDITURE ON DISCRETIONARY AWARDS BY ACADEMIC YEAR**

Type of Award	1990/91 £	1991/92 £	1992/93 £ (estimate)	1993/94 £ (estimate)
1. Section 1(6) awards				
2. Postgraduate Section 2 awards				
3. *All other Section 2 awards for full- and part-time courses				
4. Placement year sandwich students (ie fees only)				
5. Maintenance Allowances (paid to school pupils and students under Regulation 4(e) (i) of the Scholarships and Other Benefits Regulations 1977.)				
6. TOTAL (for each year)				

9/1

9/2

9/3

9/4

9/5

9/6

- \*b. If possible, please break-down expenditure on the Section 2 awards in row 3 above (ie excluding postgraduate) by higher and further education. Enter the break-down of the figures below.

Higher education and further education should be defined as for FORM 503 G.

	1990/91 £	1991/92 £	1992/93 £ (estimate)	1993/94 £ (estimate)
7. Higher Education				
8. Further Education				

9/7

9/8

# STUDENT NUMBERS

NFER  
USE

- 2a. Please give details of the number of students who were paid each category of discretionary awards by the Authority in the **ACADEMIC YEARS** listed below.

## STUDENT NUMBERS BY ACADEMIC YEAR

Type of Award	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94 (projected)
1. Section 1(6) awards				
2. Postgraduate Section 2 awards				
3. *All other Section 2 awards for full- and part-time courses				
4. Placement year sandwich students (ie fees only)				
5. Maintenance Allowances (paid to school pupils and students under Regulation 4(e) (i) of the Scholarships and Other Benefits Regulations 1977.)				
6. TOTAL (for each year)				

9/9

9/10

9/11

9/12

9/13

9/14

- \*b. If possible, please break-down student numbers on the Section 2 awards in row 3 above (ie excluding postgraduate) by higher and further education. Please enter the break-down below.

	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	1993/94 (projected)
7. Higher Education				
8. Further Education				

9/15

9/16

3. If you were unable to provide any of the information sought by this questionnaire, please give reasons.

Card 17

9-11

12-14

15-17



**THE AUTHORITY'S POLICY ON DISCRETIONARY AWARDS**

NFER  
USE

4. Please give brief details of any significant changes in the Authority's discretionary awards policies since 1990/91.  
(eg changes in criteria (such as changes in levels of awards for certain types of course) quotas, changes in fees policy, proportions of mandatory rates paid.)

Year of change(s)	CHANGES (including, if possible, reasons and effects)

18-20

21-23

24-26

27-29

30-32

33-35

36-38

39-41

5. We would be grateful if you would send us any relevant documentation on the Authority's discretionary awards policy.  
(eg committee papers, internal guidelines for officers, awards booklets or other materials sent to applicants)

(please tick)

Documentation included

42

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE 1**

**PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS**

**NAME OF OFFICER COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE**

.....

**POSITION** .....

**TELEPHONE NO** ..... **EXT** .....

Please return the completed questionnaire to the NFER using the pre-paid label provided.

## **DISCRETIONARY AWARDS**

# **A SURVEY OF PRINCIPAL/SENIOR AWARDS OFFICERS IN LEAS**

### **Questionnaire 2 Detailed Information**

The topics covered in this questionnaire are:

- I SECTION 2 DISCRETIONARY AWARDS (FORM 503G DATA)**
- II STUDENTS AT PUBLICLY MAINTAINED INSTITUTIONS BY SUBJECT**
- III STUDENTS AT PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS**
- IV STUDENTS AT INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE ENGLAND AND WALES**
- V STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES**
- VI DEMAND FOR DISCRETIONARY AWARDS**

We are aware that some of the tables in this questionnaire will be time-consuming to complete and that some Authorities may not have ready access to all the information required. In recognition of this fact, we are allowing a longer time for the return of this questionnaire. In view of the undoubted importance of the issues under investigation, we would be grateful if you could complete as many of the tables as possible before returning the questionnaire to the NFER.

**If you do not have exact figures please make the best estimate you can.**

Please return this completed questionnaire to the NFER, using one of the pre-paid labels provided, **WITHIN FOUR WEEKS.**

If you have any queries please contact: Mrs Anne Milne, Field Research Services,  
NFER, The Mere, Upton Park, Slough,  
Berkshire, SL1 2DQ (0753) 574123 Ext. 271

This questionnaire seeks more detailed information on the discretionary awards (**maintenance and fees**) made to students in the **ACADEMIC YEARS: 1990/91; 1991/92; AND 1992/93** in the following categories:

- Section 2 awards for full- and part-time courses (including postgraduate ).
- Section 1 (6) awards (except Part I of the questionnaire).

*It covers new awards (unless otherwise stated) paid:*

- *at or above the mandatory rate;*
- *at 50-99% of the mandatory rate;*
- *at less than 50% of the mandatory rate.*

*You should include the cost of fees and maintenance to full-, part-time and sandwich students in all kinds of establishments including private colleges (eg for dance, drama, law, etc.).*

*You should **NOT** include information on:*

- Maintenance Allowances paid to school pupils and students under Regulation 4(e) (i) of the Scholarship and Other Benefits Regulations 1977;
- Nil-maintenance awards paid to Sandwich Course students (ie those on placement year) ;
- the Authority's own administration costs.

#### **HOW TO COMPLETE THE TABLES IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. *All expenditure data should be in whole numbers rounded to the nearest pound omitting pence and pound signs.*
2. *If there were **no** students in a specified category for **any** year(s), please enter zero in the appropriate box (es).*
3. *If you are unable to provide an exact figure for expenditure or student numbers, please make the best estimate you can. All estimates should be prefixed with an (E).  
*Example: an estimate of £1,500,000 should be entered as (E) 1,500,000**
4. *Please do **not** enter numbers in the shaded boxes in Parts II and III.*

**PART I: SECTION 2 DISCRETIONARY AWARDS (FORM 503G DATA)**

**THE AUTHORITY'S EXPENDITURE ON SECTION 2 DISCRETIONARY AWARDS (NEW AND ALL)**

1. Please break-down the Authority's expenditure on (new and all) Section 2 awards (including postgraduate) in the Academic year 1992/93 by fees and maintenance.

**THE AUTHORITY'S EXPENDITURE ON SECTION 2 DISCRETIONARY AWARDS BY FEES AND MAINTENANCE**

SECTION 2 AWARDS (HE & FE)	ESTIMATED OUTTURN FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 1992/93	
	NEW AWARDS £	ALL AWARDS £
Fees		
Maintenance		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

Card 1

9

29

49

2. If possible, please break-down the Authority's expenditure on FURTHER EDUCATION Section 2 discretionary awards in the Academic year 1992/93 by fees and maintenance.

**THE AUTHORITY'S EXPENDITURE ON FURTHER EDUCATION SECTION 2 DISCRETIONARY AWARDS BY FEES AND MAINTENANCE**

SECTION 2 AWARDS (FE)	ESTIMATED OUTTURN FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 1992/93	
	NEW AWARDS £	ALL AWARDS £
Fees		
Maintenance		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

Card 2

9

29

49

**STUDENT NUMBERS ON NEW SECTION 2 AWARDS (including nil-Maintenance awards)**

3. If possible, please break-down the total number of NEW Section 2 discretionary awards (and NEW nil-maintenance awards) made by the Authority in the Academic year 1992/93 by level (ie postgraduate, other higher education, further education).

Nil-maintenance awards should be defined in the same way as for FORM 503G

**NEW SECTION 2 AWARDS: STUDENT NUMBERS BY LEVEL**

NEW SECTION 2 AWARDS	ESTIMATED NUMBERS FOR 1992/93	
	ALL NEW AWARDS	NEW NIL-MAINTENANCE AWARDS
Postgraduate		
Other Higher Education		
Further Education		
<b>TOTAL</b>		

Card 3

9

19

29

39

4. If you were unable to provide any of the information for Part I of this questionnaire, please give reasons.

Question No.	Reasons

49-52

53-56

57-60

61-64

65-68

69-72

5. If possible, please break-down student numbers on NEW Section 2 (including postgraduate) and Section 1(6) discretionary awards to students in **PUBLICLY MAINTAINED INSTITUTIONS** in the **Academic years 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93** into the following subject areas.

Publicly maintained institutions are those which are maintained or assisted by recurrent grants out of public funds.

*Do NOT enter figures in the shaded rows. Any students studying those subjects should be recorded as 'ALL other FE, HE or postgraduate', as appropriate.*

PLEASE NOTE that this information has been requested separately for awards made to students at private institutions in PART III of this questionnaire.

**STUDENT NUMBERS ON NEW S(2) (INCL. POSTGRADUATE) & S1(6) AWARDS IN PUBLICLY MAINTAINED INSTITUTIONS BY SUBJECT**

	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	
Section 1(6) Medicine/Dentistry second degree				9 / 4
<i>* Section 1(6) (all other courses)</i>				
* Access courses (any subject)				24
* Basic literacy & numeracy				39
* All GCE, GCSE courses (any subject)				54
* Open University (any subject)				9 / 5
Art Foundation				24
Art & Design (other than Foundation)				39
Dance				54
Drama				9 / 6
Music				24
Agriculture & Horticulture etc				39
<i>Secretarial</i>				
<i>Theology</i>				
<i>Alternative medicine (eg osteopathy, naturopathy, acupuncture)</i>				
<i>Languages</i>				
Postgraduate Law: Common Professional Exam/Diploma in Law				54
Postgraduate Law: Law Finals				9 / 7
All other postgraduate				24
All other HE				39
All other FE				54
<b>TOTAL (for each year)</b>				9 / 8

\* Do not duplicate entries by coding these courses by subject

6. If possible, please break-down expenditure on NEW Section 2 (including postgraduate) and Section 1(6) discretionary awards to students in PUBLICLY MAINTAINED INSTITUTIONS in the Academic years 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93 into the following subject areas.

*Do NOT enter figures in the shaded rows. Any students studying those subjects should be recorded as 'ALL other FE, HE or postgraduate', as appropriate.*

PLEASE NOTE that this information has been requested separately for awards made to students at private institutions in PART III of this questionnaire.

**EXPENDITURE ON NEW S(2) (INCL. POSTGRADUATE) & S1(6) AWARDS  
(INCL. POSTGRADUATE) IN PUBLICLY MAINTAINED INSTITUTIONS BY SUBJECT**

	1990/91 - £	1991/92 - £	1992/93 - £	
Section 1(6) Medicine/Dentistry second degree				24 / 8
<b>* Section 1(6) (all other courses)</b>				
* Access courses (any subject)				54
* Basic literacy & numeracy				9 / 9
* All GCE, GCSE courses (any subject)				39
* Open University (any subject)				9 / 10
Art Foundation				39
Art & Design (other than Foundation)				9 / 11
Dance				39
Drama				9 / 12
Music				39
Agriculture & Horticulture etc				9 / 13
<b>Secretarial</b>				
<b>Theology</b>				
<b>Alternative medicine (eg osteopathy, naturopathy, acupuncture)*</b>				
<b>Languages</b>				
Postgraduate Law: Common Professional Exam/Diploma in Law				39
Postgraduate Law: Law Finals				9 / 14
All other postgraduate				39
All other HE				9 / 15
All other FE				39
<b>TOTAL (for each year)</b>				9 / 16

\* Do not duplicate entries by coding these courses by subject

7. If you were unable to provide any of the information for **Part II** of this questionnaire, please give reasons.

Question No.	Reasons

Card 16  
(cont)

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39 - 42

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43 - 46

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47 - 50

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51 - 54

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55 - 58

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59 - 62



**PART III: STUDENTS AT PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS**

Private institutions are those which are neither maintained nor assisted by recurrent grants out of public funds.

8. Please enter the **total number** of students and **total expenditure** (ie fees plus maintenance) on ALL (ie new and continuing) Section 2 (including postgraduate) discretionary awards made to students at private institutions in the Academic years 1990/1, 1991/92 and 1992/3.

<b>ALL SECTION AWARDS AT PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS</b>	<b>1990/91</b>	<b>1991/92</b>	<b>1992/3</b>	63 /17
<b>Total number of students</b>				
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	9 /18

Please note that the remainder of Part III is concerned with NEW awards to students at private institutions

9. If possible, please break-down the number of NEW Section 2 discretionary awards made to students at private institutions by level.

**STUDENT NUMBERS ON NEW SECTION 2 AWARDS AT PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS BY LEVEL**

<b>NEW SECTION 2 AWARDS AT PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS</b>	<b>1990/91</b>	<b>1991/92</b>	<b>1992/93</b>	
<b>Postgraduate</b>				39
<b>Other Higher Education</b>				54
<b>Further Education</b>				9 /19
<b>TOTAL (for each year)</b>				24

10. Please break-down the Authority's expenditure on NEW Section 2 awards (including postgraduate) made to students at private institutions by fees and maintenance.

**THE AUTHORITY'S EXPENDITURE ON NEW SECTION 2 DISCRETIONARY AWARDS MADE TO STUDENTS AT PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS BY FEES AND MAINTENANCE**

<b>NEW SECTION 2 AWARDS AT PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS</b>	<b>1990/91 £</b>	<b>1991/92 £</b>	<b>1992/93 £</b>
<b>Fees</b>			
<b>Maintenance</b>			
<b>TOTAL (for each year)</b>			

39 /19

9 /20

39

11. Does the Authority make nil-maintenance awards (ie as a matter of policy, regardless of family income) to students at private institutions?

*(please circle)*

**YES      1**

**NO        2**

69

11b. If YES, please give details.

71 - 2

73 - 4

75 - 6

11c. Please give details of any changes in policy on this issue since 1990/91.

Card 21

9 - 10

11 - 12

13 - 14

12a. Does the Authority make partial fee-only awards to students at private institutions?

*(please circle)*

YES 1

NO 2

Card 21  
(cont)

15

12b. If YES, please give details below.

Type of course/subject area	Range of partial fees (eg 50-75% of mandatory rate)

16 - 19

20 - 23

24 - 27

28 - 31

32 - 35

36 - 39

13. If possible, please break-down student numbers on NEW Section 2 (including postgraduate) and Section 1 (6) discretionary awards to students in PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS in the Academic years 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93 into the following subject areas.

*Do NOT enter figures in the shaded row. Any students studying those subjects should be recorded as 'ALL other FE, HE or postgraduate', as appropriate.*

**STUDENT NUMBERS ON NEW S(2) & S1(6) AWARDS (INCL. POSTGRADUATE) IN PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS BY SUBJECT**

	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93	
* Section 1(6) Medicine/Dentistry second degree				40 /21
* Section 1(6) (all other courses)				
* Access courses (any subject)				
* Basic literacy and numeracy				
* All GCSE, GCE courses (any subject)				
* Open University (any subject)				
Art Foundation				55
Art & Design (other than Foundation)				9 /22
Dance				24
Drama				39
Music				54
Agriculture & Horticulture				9 /23
Secretarial				24
Theology				39
Alternative medicine (eg osteopathy, naturopathy, acupuncture)				54
Languages				9 /24
Post graduate Law: Common Professional Exam/Diploma in Law				24
Postgraduate Law: Law Finals				39
All other postgraduate				54
All other HE				9 /25
All other FE				24
<b>TOTAL (for each year)</b>				<b>39</b>

\* Do not duplicate entries by coding these courses by subject

13. If possible, please break-down expenditure on NEW Section 2 (including postgraduate) and Section 1 (6) discretionary awards to students in **PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS** in the **Academic years 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93** into the following subject areas.

*Do NOT enter figures in the shaded row. Any students studying those subjects should be recorded as 'ALL other FE, HE or postgraduate', as appropriate.*

**EXPENDITURE ON NEW S(2) & S1(6) AWARDS (INCL. POSTGRADUATE) IN PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS BY SUBJECT**

	1990/91 - £	1991/92 - £	1992/93 - £	
<b>* Section 1(6)</b> Medicine/Dentistry second degree				
<b>* Section 1(6) (all other courses)</b>				9 /26
<b>* Access courses (any subject)</b>				
<b>* Basic literacy and numeracy</b>				
<b>* All GCSE, GCE courses (any subject)</b>				
<b>* Open University (any subject)</b>				
Art Foundation				39
Art & Design (other than Foundation)				9 /27
Dance				39
Drama				9 /28
Music				39
Agriculture & Horticulture				9 /29
Secretarial				39
Theology				9 /30
Alternative medicine (eg osteopathy, naturopathy, acupuncture)				39
Languages				9 /31
Post graduate Law: Common Professional Exam/Diploma in Law				39
Postgraduate Law: Law Finals				9 /32
All other postgraduate				39
All other HE				9 /33
All other FE				39
<b>TOTAL (for each year)</b>				9 /34

\* Do not duplicate entries by coding these courses by subject

## PART IV: STUDENTS AT INSTITUTIONS OUTSIDE ENGLAND AND WALES

This includes Scotland; Northern Ireland; other EC countries; non-EC countries.

15. Please enter the total number of students paid NEW discretionary awards (all types) for study outside England (in the case of English Authorities) or outside Wales (in the case of Welsh Authorities) in the academic years 1990/91, 1991/92 and 1992/93.

If none, please enter zero in the appropriate box(es).

No. of students paid <b>NEW</b> discretionary awards to study outside England or outside Wales (as appropriate)	1990/91	1991/92	1992/93

39 /34

**PLEASE NOTE:** More detailed information (eg country, subject, level) will be sought from selected LEAs.

16. If you were unable to provide any of the information for PARTS III or IV of this questionnaire, please give reasons.

Question No.	Reasons

Card 34  
(cont)

54 - 57

58 - 61

62 - 65

66 - 69

70 - 73

74 - 77

**PART V: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES AND/OR LEARNING DIFFICULTIES**

17a. Please give brief details of the Authority's policy with regard to the provision of discretionary awards to students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties

9 - 10

11 - 12

13 - 14

17b. Does the Authority collect systematic information on discretionary awards made to students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties?

*(please circle)*

YES 1

NO 2

15

17c. How, if at all, has the Authority's policy with regard to these students changed since 1990/91?

16 - 17

18-19

20-21

**PLEASE NOTE:** more detailed information (eg numbers of such students receiving awards at standard and enhanced rates) will be sought for selected LEAs.

## PART VI: DEMAND FOR DISCRETIONARY AWARDS

18. What changes in demand for discretionary awards since 1990/91, if any, has the Authority identified and how (eg statistics of enquiries or applications)? What, in your view, are the reasons for any changes identified?

Changes in demand	Reason for changes

22 - 5

26 - 9

30 - 3

34 - 7

38 - 41

42 - 5



19. To what extent has the Authority's policy on new discretionary awards been determined by the cost of continuing awards? Please give details

46 - 7

48 - 9

50 - 1

20. If you have any further comments on discretionary award provision, please use the space below.

52 - 3

54 - 5

56 - 7

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE 2**

*PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS*

**NAME OF OFFICER COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE**

.....

**POSITION**

.....

**TELEPHONE NO** ..... **EXT** .....

Please return the completed questionnaire to the NFER using the pre-paid label provided.