

Satisfactory Academic Progression

All students applying for or receiving US Federal Aid (subsidized, unsubsidized and PLUS) must progress satisfactorily towards completion of a chosen academic program in order to remain eligible to receive US loan support.

Prior to a loan disbursement of any Federal Financial Aid, Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) will be confirmed by the relevant Faculty staff, giving assurance that SAP is being maintained based on an assessment of student progress and achievement in line with qualitative and maximum timeframe measures.

These results will be obtained prior to the disbursement of loan monies at each semester in the academic year to determine whether students have formally met, or not met, the semester pass mark and/or the progression requirements that will determine whether the pace of study remains within the specified parameters.

The guidelines below have been established to encourage students to complete successfully academic programs for which aid is received.

Satisfactory Academic Progress is assessed using policies articulated in the University of Surrey general regulations and programme regulations.

USA Loan students who permanently withdraw from a course should be aware that they may not be regarded as a new entrant for FFEL loan purposes. Applicants would not be entitled to a clean slate for Satisfactory Academic Progress under rules of the Federal Loan program. Prior work must be taken into consideration.

Qualitative (grade-based) measurement

A student:

- Students in Levels 1 need to achieve a minimum of 45% overall to proceed to the next level and to confirm they are making satisfactory progression. All modules must be passed at a minimum level of 40% within each academic year or a retake taken and successfully completed before the start of the next academic year.
- Students in level 2 need to achieve a minimum of 55% overall to proceed to the next level and to confirm they are making satisfactory progression. All modules must be passed at a minimum level of 40% within each academic year or a retake taken and successfully completed before the start of the next academic year.
- Students in Level 3 need to achieve a total pass of 40%+ to receive the degree level certification. Students in level 3 need to attempt and pass every module. Any resits required must be completed within the 133% timeframe or 150% timeframe for University of Surrey.
- If any module is failed either by not sitting the module assessment or by failing the assessment, a mean grade is calculated and awarded for the retake. This mean grade is the average of the achieved retake grade and the minimum pass mark of 40%.
- If any module is failed in a condoned failure situation as agreed by the Academic Board and ratified by the Board of Examiners, the full achieved retake mark will be awarded.

- A student cannot withdraw from any module of the course unless it is a condoned failure agreed by the Academic Board and ratified by the Board of Examiners. Condoned failures are agreed on a case by case basis.

Quantitative (time-based) measurement

A student:

- Should not exceed 150% the published time frame for the course and should remain at least half time in order to be eligible for federal aid. Periods when a student does not receive funds will be included in the maximum timeframe.

The Satisfactory progress with regards to retaining the individual entitlement to Financial Aid is entirely separate from the academic requirements to remain on the course and does not guarantee the outcome of the student's course. Satisfactory Academic progress will be checked before any Stafford and plus loan funds are released to a student at the start of each year and before issuing any subsequent instalments during the year.

Students must complete their course at a pace which ensures that they will graduate within the maximum timeframe.

Pace of Progression: Students must maintain a minimum cumulative completion rate of two-thirds of credits attempted which equals 67%, for progression to the following year of study in order to meet the SAP maximum completion timeframes. For example:

- Undergraduate: where full-time students pursuing a 3 year Bachelor's degree would typically attempt 120 credits over one academic year, students must complete a minimum of 80 out of 120 credits per year to meet SAP standards, and carry forward no more than 60 credits into the next academic year as trailing units.
- Postgraduate Taught : where full-time students pursuing a 1 year Master's degree would typically attempt 180 credits over one academic year, students must complete a minimum of 120 out of 180 credits per year to meet SAP standards, and carry forward no more than 40 credits into the next academic year as trailing units.

Example

Standard Published Program Length	Program Length in Credits	Maximum Federal Timeframe for Completion	Pace
3-year undergraduate degree	360	4.5 years (540 credit hours)	67%
2-year graduate degree	240	3 years (360 credit hours)	67%

Please note that while a student may maintain their eligibility for US Direct Loans, institutional academic progress rules and student visa restrictions may impact on your ability to continue within the program. Conversely, a student may lose eligibility for US Direct Loans, and still meet institution requirements for continued enrolment.

Financial Aid Probation and/or suspension

Should a student not meet the above-mentioned procedures for Satisfactory Academic Progression, for either the academic standing or Maximum timeframe, they will be issued with a 'Financial Aid Warning'. This warning will last for 1 payment period (i.e. until the

next disbursement), during which time a student can still receive financial aid. Students that fail to regain SAP by the next disbursement will have their financial aid suspended, unless they are successful in an appeal and the school has agreed to place them on probation for the following term, until more assessment marks become available or the failed module can be re-sat. The Academic Board will confirm any probation or suspension period in writing with the individual student. If the student fails to meet the minimum SAP and it becomes mathematically impossible for a student to complete a program within the maximum timeframe, then the student would lose eligibility for FFEL funds.

For a student to be taken off probation, the student would be expected to have re-sat and passed the original assessment if this option is available or to abide by any conditions set out by the Academic Board, and passed all other assessments taken during that term to allow completion within the maximum time by the end of the next term/semester. During this probation period the student will remain entitled to financial aid. **However**, if the student fails to pass any other assessments during this following term/semester within time allowed, they should normally lose their entitlement to receiving US FFEL program support until they achieve the required academic levels set by the School.

Appeals

Students may appeal their suspension of aid, via written appeal to the Academic Board. Any appeal would be considered in line with the general appeal procedures employed by the school.

Students must indicate in writing the reason (s) for failure to meet the necessary Financial Aid SAP requirements and why financial aid should not be suspended. All documentation to support the appeal is required at time of appeal submission.

A student may appeal due to extenuating circumstances beyond their control (e.g. injury, ill health, bereavement, or other special circumstances etc.) and state what has changed in their situation that will allow them to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress at the next evaluation date.

Appeals must be submitted within 14 calendar days of notification in writing either by e-mail to usloans@surrey.ac.uk or for the attention of Yuting Xiao, Fees and Funding Team, Level 5 Senate House, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 7XH, UK.

The Academic Board may require extra evidence, documentation or contributions from the student's supervisor/tutor or Department/Faculty. The decision made by the Academic Board will be sent to the student's Surrey e-mail address. The appeal will be considered on its merits and a response to the appeal will be provided within 14 working days. The appeal decision may be:

- a reinstatement of eligibility of US federal aid
- a financial probationary period with conditions, or
- a denial of US federal aid

Students transferring from another institution

GSA does not, as a general rule, allow transfers from other institutions. However, on rare occasions we may accept applications from students who wish to transfer. Applications will be assessed on a case by case basis. Applicants will be assessed by a rigorous audition process which is appropriate to the level of entry being considered. Previous experience in academic standing is taken into consideration on application along with the appropriateness of the course offered at the previous school before offering the candidate the opportunity to audition for transfer.

Impact of Transfers, Withdrawals, Interruptions, Repeat or Fails on SAP Standards

Generally, all periods of a student's enrolment count when assessing progress, even periods when the student did not receive federal student loans. Some examples of changes to enrolment and how these impact on the measurement of SAP are outlined below:

Change to Enrolment	Counts towards SAP measurement?
Period of approved suspension/suspension of status, including maternity/paternity/adoption leave	No
Change of programme of study	Not unless elements contribute towards the new programme of study (see Transfer into Surrey notes below)
Withdrawal or non-completion of a programme of study and subsequent re-enrolment	No. However, please note, there would be an impact based on date of withdrawal.
Repetition or reassessment due to academic failure	Yes. Both grading and the maximum timeframe will be impacted.
Transfer into Surrey	Yes. Approved credits transferred from other Institutions will be included in the number of credits attempted and completed and will be counted towards the maximum timeframe for completion (150%). However, transfer credits will not be used in grading calculations.

Important Information

Please note that students undertaking any part of their degree in the USA or whose enrolment drops below 50% FTE are not entitled to financial aid. This regulation is not covered by the Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy above and therefore is not subject to a Financial Aid Warning, Probation or Appeal.

Financial Aid Warnings, Probation and Suspensions related solely to students' eligibility to receive Federal Student Aid from the US Department of Education and will not affect enrolment status.

This policy is at least as strict as the policy the institution applies to a student who is not receiving assistance under the title IV, HEA programs

This policy provides for consistent application of standards to all students within categories of students, e.g., fulltime, part-time, undergraduate, and graduate students, and educational programs established by the institution

Questions

Please email usloans@surrey.ac.uk if you have any questions regarding this policy.

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