

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy for the Purposes of Assessing Continuing Eligibility for USA Financial Aid for Students

Version Number 1.1

Effective from 1 September 2017

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Finance Department/Quality and Enhancement Office**

Document Control Information			
Revision History incl. Authorisation: (most recent first)			
Author	Summary of changes	Version	Authorised & Date
Jo Arden/ Annette Cooke	Amalgamation of existing web guidance into a policy	V1.0	SELTEC 23 August 2016
Jo Arden/ Annette Cooke	Amendment made to Appeals Procedure	V1.1	SELTEC (Chair's Action) 17 August 2017
Policy Management and Responsibilities:			
Owner:	This Policy is issued jointly by the Director of Finance and the Head of Quality and Enhancement who have the authority to issue and communicate policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress to recipients of US Loans and has delegated day to day management and communication of the policy to the US Loans Administrator		
Others with responsibilities (please specify):	All subjects of the Policy will be responsible for engaging with and adhering to this policy.		
Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:			
Equality Analysis (E&D, HR) Equality Assessment form	1. <i>This is mandatory. August 2016.</i>		
Legal implications (LPG)	2. <i>N/A</i>		
Information Governance (LPG)	3. <i>LPG has been consulted and contributed to the Policy</i>		
Student facing procedures (QEO)	4. <i>QEO has been consulted and contributed to the Policy</i>		
UKVI Compliance (Student Admin)	5. <i>26/04/2017: To be eligible for this scheme all Tier 4 sponsored students who apply for or are in receipt of USA Financial Aid must ensure they fully comply with the terms and conditions of their visa in line with the current Immigration Rules that govern the United Kingdom</i> https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules and the Tier 4 student visa route https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa . Any immigration breaches which removes the right to study will subsequently nullify any further eligibility for USA Financial Aid on their current course with the University of Salford.		
Consultation:			
Staff Trades Unions via HR Students via USSU Relevant external bodies (specify)	Students' Union – response to Policy received from SU on 19 August 2016		
Review:			
Review due:	Annually before 1 June 2018		
Document location:	University Policy & Procedure Pages and on askUS and Finance websites		
http://www.salford.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/governance/policies-and-procedures			
The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document.			

1.0 Purpose

US Federal regulations require that a student must be making satisfactory academic progress (SAP) in order to be eligible to receive federal aid from the US Department of Education (Ed).

The purpose of the document is to outline the terms and conditions a student must meet in order to receive funding.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all students registered at the University of Salford and who are in receipt of financial support via the following financial programmes:

- Federal Direct Subsidized Loan;
- Federal Direct Unsubsidized;
- Federal Direct PLUS Loans.

3.0 Policy Statements

- 3.1 Students shall be registered on an eligible programme in order to establish eligibility for financial support. Once registered, funds will be disbursed throughout the academic year, at the start of each term, in three instalments. Students must make satisfactory academic progress (SAP) in order to retain eligibility for financial support.
- 3.2 SAP requires a student to progress to the next level or stage of their programme at the end of each year of registration or to complete annual programme requirements.
- 3.3 For students registered on either undergraduate or taught postgraduate programmes, the requirements for module completion and progression are detailed in the Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes. Undergraduate students must have achieved a minimum level mark of 40% and postgraduate students must have achieved a minimum level mark of 50%.
- 3.4 For students registered on a postgraduate research programme, progression points and deadlines for submission of relevant documentation are detailed in the Research Award Regulations.
- 3.5 Confirmation of SAP must be received from the relevant programme leader or supervisor at the end of each payment period. In line with US Federal Regulations, any student who does not meet SAP requirements at the review point will be placed on academic probation for the following period. If SAP has not been achieved during the period of probation, a student will become ineligible for federal financial aid for the following period and will be sent a notification of ineligibility. Where a student does not subsequently meet the requirements for SAP, financial aid may be withdrawn.
- 3.6 In order to remain eligible for financial support, students shall complete their programme in no more than 150% of the approved length of the programme. The length of a taught programme is defined within the Programme Specification for the relevant programme and in the Research Award Regulations for research programmes.
- 3.7 The timescales indicated above include any previous period of study at other institutions for the same programme. If a student is required to retake part of their programme in a subsequent period of registration or has an approved interruption of study in place, this will affect the length of time it will take to complete their programme.

- 3.8 A student shall become ineligible for further financial support when it becomes mathematically impossible to complete their programme within the stated timescales.
- 3.9 If a student transfers to a different programme and, as a result, is required to attempt new modules, no additional allowance towards SAP will be permitted.
- 3.10 Any periods of absence from the University must be approved in advance through the University's Interruption of Study process. A student will not be entitled to receive federal funding during a period of interruption.
- 3.11 An appeal may be submitted against the decision of the US Loans Administrator to withhold financial aid. Appeals must be submitted via the SAP Appeals Form to the US Loans Administrator within ten working days of receipt of the Notice of Suspension of financial aid. Forms must include information to explain why SAP was not achieved and what has changed for the student to enable them to make satisfactory progress at the next evaluation point. Appeals may be submitted on the basis of:
- illness or injury;
 - death of a relative;
 - other personal mitigating circumstances.

Appeals should be sent to:

Ms Jo Arden, US Loans Administrator, Finance Division, Maxwell Building,
University of Salford, M5 4WT

Email: J.Arden@salford.ac.uk

- 3.12 Appeals will be considered by the Associate Dean (Academic) of the student's School and a response issued to the student normally within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. In some cases, the Associate Dean (Academic) may wish to arrange a meeting with the student to discuss the circumstances outlined in the appeal.
- 3.13 The Associate Dean (Academic) shall review each appeal on its individual merits. The decision of the Associate Dean (Academic) is final.

4.0 Policy Enforcement / What happens when the policy/procedure is not followed

Failure to comply with the requirements of this Policy could lead to the student becoming ineligible for US financial aid and could lead to a withdrawal of funds.

5.0 Related Documentation

The following documents can be found on the University Policy & Procedure pages

<http://www.salford.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/governance/policies-and-procedures> or under 'P' via the Staff Channel A-Z index.

- Academic Regulations for Taught Programmes
- Research Award Regulations

FSA Handbook and regulations:

<http://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/attachments/1516Vol1Ch1.pdf>

www.ifap.ed.gov/qahome/qaassessments/sap.html

6.0 Appendices

Appendix A – Process

Appendix A

CANCELLATION OF US FEDERAL LOAN DUE TO NON-PARTICIPATION/NON-ATTENDANCE

