

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy



Edge Hill
University

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

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Summary

This policy provides guidance on the University's approach to managing satisfactory academic progress for US Direct Loans Programmes. It provides departments and students with information on how the University calculates this in line with United States Department of Education legislation. It is presented in the format as required and approved by the US Government.

This policy is linked to the [Return of Title IV Funds Policy for Direct Loans Programmes.](#)

Glossary of Terms

Academic failure: where a student fails to meet the minimum academic grades required for their academic studies.

Academic Regulations: these provide the framework within which the University operates to deliver programmes and make awards.

Academic standing: indicates a student's academic progress towards completion of an award.

Appeal: this procedure allows a student, in certain circumstances, to ask for a decision to be reviewed.

Attendance: this refers to a students' attendance at scheduled academic taught sessions as detailed in the [Academic Programme Engagement Policy](#) for their programme

Conditions to progress: the requirements set out in the Academic Regulations which students must achieve to progress to the following academic year.

Cumulative average percentage mark: is the marks obtained by a student in all modules in a specified year/period. This calculation is detailed in the Academic Regulations.

Disbursement: payment of monies by the University from the Federal Aid Programme.

Federal Stafford Loan: is a student loan offered to eligible students. These are available direct from the US Department of Education through the Federal Direct Student Loan Programme (FDSLPL).

Financial Aid denied: where the University determines that a students' financial status doesn't merit financial aid.

Financial Aid eligible: where the University assesses whether a students' satisfactory academic progress is such that they are eligible for financial aid.

Financial Aid probation: is a status applied when a student who has failed to make satisfactory academic progress, successfully appeals to have their financial aid reinstated.

Maximum completion time: indicates the time limit for completion of an award.

Pace of progression: is the rate at which a student progresses through their programme of study.

Plus loans: Federal loans that graduates, professional students or parents of dependent undergraduate students can use to help pay for university study.

Professional or statutory body: is an organisation or body which maintains oversight of knowledge, skills, conduct and practice of that profession or occupation.

Re-assessment: is a collective term for when a student takes a module or assessment again.

Terminate: this refers to when a student's eligibility to financial aid is stopped.

Title IV Funds: this refers to Direct Subsidised/Unsubsidised financial aid loans from the US Department of Education.

United States Department of Education: a cabinet level department of the United States Government.

Withdrawal: the permanent cessation of study and termination of a student's registration with the University. This may be initiated by the University or the student.

Purpose

The Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy provides detailed information on how the University will set out the minimum conditions required for students to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress. It details the University's procedures for monitoring academic progression for students (undertaking full or part time undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate study) who access United States Federal Loans.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Overview

Edge Hill University's [Academic Regulations](#) set out the minimum conditions required for students to demonstrate satisfactory academic progress to continue for the award of an Edge Hill University qualification. The University's Academic Regulations apply equally to all candidates and no student may continue on an Edge Hill programme if the University's minimum standards are not met.

Students who seek to access U.S. Department of Education Student Loans to support their studies will be subject to additional criteria in relation to the award of this financial aid. The University has a responsibility, in accordance with U.S. Department of Education regulations, to ensure that appropriate standards are maintained in the disbursement of these funds to Edge Hill students.

This Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy sets out the University's procedures for monitoring the academic progression of those students seeking to access US Higher Education Act Title IV aid, and specifically the Federal Stafford and PLUS loans. These guidelines apply to all such students including those undertaking undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate programmes and those studying on a full-time or part-time basis.

Please note in addition to the following policy all students are subject to UK Visas and Immigration legislation and requirements.

1. Measuring satisfactory academic progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be measured by a [University Assessment Board](#) (membership and responsibilities are detailed in Academic Regulations H9.6 and H9.7) on an annual basis for all programmes.

Decisions on whether academic progress is satisfactory will be made through an Assessment Board measuring each student's progress against the following qualitative and quantitative standards:

i. Academic standing (qualitative standard)

The University's standard conditions for measuring academic progress are articulated under sections [H and I of the Academic Regulations](#). These regulations require students to achieve at least an aggregate mark of no less than 40% per module of study to directly achieve the required learning outcomes and that all modules associated with the student's current level of study must be completed successfully in order for a student to guarantee progression to the next level/year of study.

To ensure Satisfactory Academic Progress students must, on an ongoing basis, meet the conditions to progress to the next level of study. This will normally require that they have a cumulative average percentage mark of no less than 40% across the 120 credits for the stage (detailed in [Academic Regulations C2.4](#)). Within the integrated masters degree, a minimum Level 5 APM of 50% is required for progression to Level 6.

For those students progressing to Level 5 of undergraduate awards, progression boards will operate discretion taking account of the formative nature of Level 4 assessment and, within the framework of the regulations, and/or programme specific requirements, will use academic judgement to determine a student's overall ability to progress.

At the discretion of an Assessment Board, a non-finalist student may be allowed to progress with outstanding deferral or reassessment of up to 40 credits. In exercising this discretion, the Board will have regard to the student's overall ability to complete successfully.

For programmes that extend beyond two years, at the completion of year two students must also demonstrate that performance at this stage is consistent with the conditions for successful graduation. This requires a student to have:

- achieved passes in the credit and level requirements specified for the stage
- passed any additional requirements specified by the programme associated with the stage including core modules, defined combinations of modules and placements
- achieved an average percentage mark from the counting modules greater than or equal to 40%
- met any professional or statutory body requirements for the stage

Approved credits transferred from other institutions will be included in the number of credits attempted and earned, but the grades will not be included in calculating the student's average percentage mark at Edge Hill.

ii. Registration and timeframe (quantitative standard)

To maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress, students must study at an appropriate pace and complete within a maximum period as defined below:

- **Registration**
Students are responsible for ensuring they are registered on the programme for which they have been admitted via the enrolment process, and for registering on a valid combination of modules following procedures in place and determined by the Head of Academic Registry (Academic Regulations G2.3).

- **Maximum completion time**

The maximum timeframe allowed for completion for the purpose of these regulations is 150% of the standard published timeframe (Academic Regulations C10.1) for a programme as measured in credit hours. For example, a 3-year undergraduate degree must be completed in no more than 4.5 years.

Approved credits transferred from other institutions will be included in the number of credits attempted and earned and will thus count toward the maximum timeframe for completion.

- **Pace of progression**

A standard academic year usually equates to 120 credits for undergraduate programmes and 180 credits for postgraduate programmes. Deviation from this must be approved by the Head of Academic Registry in order to account for maximum study periods.

Note: Students subject to UK Visa and Immigration legislation and requirements must also complete their educational course within a time frame compliant with their UKVI visa.

2. Financial Aid Statuses

To receive continued loan funding, students must meet the minimum requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress set out in this paper and the Academic Regulations.

- i. **Financial Aid Eligible**

A student who is demonstrating Satisfactory Academic Progress is considered to be Financial Aid Eligible and may receive Title IV Loans.

Where Satisfactory Academic Progress is not achieved, Edge Hill may apply one of the following two statuses:

- ii. **Financial Aid Denied**

Where Satisfactory Academic Progress is not demonstrated, the student can no longer be supported by a Title IV Loan and the student's aid will be terminated immediately. The student will be placed on a Financial Aid Denied status and will be notified in writing by the University that their financial aid has ceased.

The University does not have the right to waive the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirement for any student; however, an appeal may be submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor if exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated (see section 4).

- iii. **Financial Aid Probation**

Where an appeal is upheld against a Financial Aid Denied status, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation and will initially have their financial aid reinstated for the next payment period only. The student will be expected to have resumed Satisfactory Academic Progress or have achieved specified milestones agreed through a formal Learning Agreement prior to the next disbursement of financial aid. Any such Learning Agreement must be agreed through consultation with the student's academic tutor and other relevant specialist staff to ensure that the student is able to meet the required standards by an appropriate point. If the student does not make satisfactory progress or meet the requirements of the action plan by the end of the next payment period, the student will lose eligibility for Title IV aid and be recorded as Financial Aid Denied. A student who has a status of Financial Aid Denied and who wishes to continue their studies must finance it by other means than Title IV loans.

3. Impact of transferred, repeated and non-completed courses

A student's status may be adjusted following enrolment through the student electing to alter their course of study or where a University Assessment board enforces such a course of action. The following statements set out the University's position in relation to the range of statuses that may be applied to a student:

- **Module and/or course transfer**

In principle the concept of transferring is permitted. The maximum completion time rule remains applicable to students that change modules(s) or course and therefore, for the purpose of this policy, such transfers will only be permitted where the programme can be completed within the original standard timeframe specified.

- **Repetition or reassessment due to academic failure**

Where a candidate does not successfully complete a module at the first sitting, a reassessment opportunity will normally be offered unless the student's profile is in such poor standing that withdrawal from the University is appropriate. All marks for reassessed elements will be capped at a mark of 40%. (Academic Regulations H12.6).

Where a student is offered a reassessment opportunity this may be taken alongside the next level of study, in which case the student would maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress status, or a candidate may be required to change their mode of study to a Repeat Year or Part Time study which may impact on the student's status. A student that is required to retake a year and is attending at least half time will be eligible for aid for this repeat year if the student has successfully appealed to continue their eligibility and has met the required academic standards and timeframes detailed in this document, including following an acceptable academic plan that will result in the student completing their programme of study within the acceptable

timeframe. Students that are resubmitting work or resitting examinations but are not in attendance for the required amount of time are not eligible for Title IV loans.

- **Incomplete**

There are no 'incomplete' grades at Edge Hill University. Where a candidate has not submitted, zero is awarded and a reassessment or fail status is applied. These grades will affect the student's Satisfactory Academic Progress.

- **Failure and withdrawal**

In the case where a student is withdrawn or withdraws from study, a Financial Aid Denied status will be applied.

4. Appeals

A student who has received written advice that their Financial Aid will be removed may appeal if they consider that exceptional circumstances surrounding their progress can be demonstrated and evidenced.

It is not possible to draw up a definitive list of what may or may not be considered valid. As a general guide however, exceptional circumstances will usually relate to circumstances that have arisen which are outside of the student's control, such as illness or the death of a close relative, or sudden events which could not be planned for such as accidents or emergencies. Students will be required to supply independent, and verifiable, documentary evidence in support of their appeal.

In submitting an appeal, the student must explain why they failed to make satisfactory academic progress and outline what has changed in their situation that will allow them to make satisfactory progress at the next assessment point. Appeals will only be upheld where the University is confident that the student will be able to make satisfactory progress during the next payment period and meet overall SAP requirements by the end of that payment period.

All appeals must be received within ten days of the notification that financial aid has been withdrawn.

Appeals should be submitted to:

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Edge Hill University
St Helens Road
Ormskirk
Lancashire
L39 4QP

Disbursement of loan funding will not be made while an appeal is being processed.

5. Reinstatement of Aid

Where an appeal is upheld, the student will have their financial aid reinstated but will initially be placed on a Financial Aid Probation status, see section 2. A student will regain loan eligibility only after a successful appeal and their subsequent demonstration of meeting the minimum progression requirements set within the terms of the Probation Status.

End matter

Title	Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy
Policy Owner	International Office
Lead for Updates	Head of International Operations and Administration
Policy Contributor	Head of Academic Registry
Approved by	
Date of Approval	
Date for Review	