

Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

Owner: *Job Title: Head of Registry*

Approved by: *Academic Committee*

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Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

1. Aims & objectives

Regent's University London (Regent's) is required to establish a Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) Policy in accordance with U.S. Department of Education regulations. The aim of this policy is to define SAP and provide guidance to ensure that students are meeting U.S. Department of Education requirements for Title IV funding. Students' SAP will be reviewed before each payment period to ensure they are making adequate progress toward completing their degree programmes.

2. Guiding Principles

The SAP Policy is designed to ensure that students and University staff understand the SAP requirements for Title IV funding eligibility. This policy applies to US Direct loans recipients studying at Regent's on degree programmes as outlined in the following policy document.

Students meet SAP requirements when they make progress on all modules and are expected to pass exams and coursework submitted. These students must complete their studies within 150% of the published length of their programme (measured in academic years) to be eligible for Title IV funding.

Students that have exceeded the 150% time limit on their programme cannot receive Title IV funding and funding cannot be reinstated at any point.

3. Policy statement

This policy is intended to ensure that students' academic progress is satisfactory in order to confirm they are eligible for Title IV funding. Regent's believes that by making students and University staff aware of these requirements, the risk of students' funding being terminated can be minimised. As such, the policy aims to be transparent and collaborative, and enhance the experience of students and staff at Regent's.

4. Implementation of this policy

This policy will be made available on the Regent's Registry Intranet pages, accessible to all students and University staff. This policy applies to US Citizens and Eligible Non-Citizens in receipt of Title IV funding, who are studying at Regent's on a degree level course.

This policy is owned by the institution and all relevant staff are responsible for implementing it.

Regent's will ensure that all students' profiles are assessed in line with Regent's regulations for those studying on Regent's programmes. The Registry in collaboration with the Finance Department will monitor students' maximum registration period for their Title IV funding.

The Registry will monitor adherence to the policy and conduct periodic reviews to ensure that the processes are being carried out in accordance with the policy.

Any issues or queries arising as a result of this policy should in the first instance be communicated to the Quality Office team in the Registry for clarification and resolution.

5. Procedure and Process

5.1 Confirming students' SAP

On Regent's UK degrees assessment is conducted at two levels: firstly, at module level and then secondly at programme level. Subject Boards determine marks for each module. Progression and Finalist Boards receive marks for approval from the Subject Boards and determine progression. The specific structure of a programme requires close monitoring of student progress on an annual basis.

Title IV funding recipients are required to be in good standing and to maintain satisfactory academic progress towards their degree requirements for each semester / term in which they are enrolled. Failure to maintain satisfactory progress may result in cancellation of Title IV funding, and the student may have to repay any funds already received.

5.2 Academic Progress

US Federal requirements state that students in receipt of Title IV funding must average a 'C' grade or above in programmes of more than two academic years, the student must have a Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least a C or its equivalent, or have academic standing consistent with the University's requirements for graduation.

Regent's University London defines the minimum standards for a pass at module level on Regent's programmes as follows:

- All undergraduate modules have a minimum pass mark for assessments. The pass mark is 40% at undergraduate level. For a student to receive a pass on a module they must achieve a minimum Total Module Mark (TMM) (weighted average of the grades achieved for all assessment tasks) of 40%.
- All postgraduate modules have a minimum pass mark for assessments. The pass mark at postgraduate level is 50%. For a student to receive a pass on a module they must achieve a minimum Total Module Mark (TMM) (weighted average of the grades achieved for all assessment tasks) of 50%.

In addition, Regent's progression regulations must be adhered to as outlined in the Regent's Academic Regulations and the relevant programme handbooks.

If the student achieves the required standard, they will be placed in good standing for Title IV funding. See the 'Students not making SAP' section below for cases in which students are not deemed to be in good academic standing. If the student does not progress on the course of study then Title IV funding will be suspended.

In addition: If a student studying on a Regent's degree does not comply with the attendance policy as outlined in the University Academic Regulations, Title IV funding may be suspended.

5.3 Students not meeting SAP requirements

Academic Probation does not exist for Regent's UK degree programmes. However, students who initially fail to gain SAP are normally given a specified timescale to redeem their position, as noted in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations.

At the time of determination that the SAP requirement has not been met the student will be put on Financial Aid Warning¹ status for the next payment period. The student will continue to be eligible to receive funding during that period. The student will be issued a Financial Aid Warning letter, indicating the requirements for achieving "SAP met" status, and consequences of failing to return to "SAP met" status.

Students who fail to make SAP after the warning period will lose their Federal loan eligibility unless they successfully appeal with an academic plan and are then placed on Financial Aid Probation². After an appeal has been approved, the student will continue to be eligible to receive funding during Financial Aid Probation (one payment period). The student will receive a Financial Aid Suspension letter, which indicates the terms and conditions should the student wish to appeal, the required information which should be included in the appeal, along with any deadlines for an appeal. The Financial Aid Suspension letter also dictates that all Title IV funding is ceased at this point, pending the outcome of the appeal. Students whose appeal is successful will be placed on a formal academic plan for one payment period, and the plan will be monitored by their tutor or appointed instructor in their programme. They will also have their funding disbursed for that payment period. If the student again fails to meet the conditions outlined in the academic plan and does not regain SAP at the end of the end of the payment period, then the student will be permanently suspended from Title IV funding.

5.4 Pace of Progression

All Regent's undergraduate degrees have a minimum expected duration of 6 terms (3 years). The total minimum credit required for a Regent's undergraduate award is 360 credits including 120 credits at level 6 and a minimum of 120 credits at level 5 of which 60 may be obtained on Study Period Aboard. Taught Master's degrees have a total credit pass value of 180 credits at level 7 of which the dissertation or capstone module is normally worth 60 credits.

A student's pace of progression will be measured prior to loan disbursement to ensure that each student completes within the maximum time frame. The maximum time frame to be eligible for Title IV funding is 150% of the published length of the programme, e.g.: 4.5 years for a 3-year undergraduate programme or 1.5 years for a 1-year postgraduate programme.

Any student who has exceeded the maximum time frame and/or who mathematically cannot finish the program within this period will be considered ineligible for Title IV funding.

- A student's pace of progression can be affected by; incompletes, withdrawals and retakes.
- A programme extension request on Regent's programmes must be agreed by Regent's as outlined in the Regent's Academic Regulations but must still be

¹ As defined by the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations; Financial Aid Warning means a status assigned to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress at an institution that evaluates academic progress at the end of each payment period.

² As defined by the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations; Financial Aid Probation means a status assigned by an institution to a student who fails to make satisfactory academic progress and who has appealed and has had eligibility for aid reinstated.

completed within 150% of the published length of the programme to be eligible for Title IV funding.

- Students will not be eligible for funding to support study outside maximum study duration periods.

5.5 Transfer Credits

Transfer Credits from another institution of higher education are approved on an individual basis. Transfer Credits count toward the maximum timeframe for completion of the programme.

5.6 Enrolment Status

If a student leaves their programme of study, even temporarily, or fails to maintain SAP, they may still be required to repay part, or all, of their funding according to US Direct Loans regulations.

Responsibility lies with the student to inform Regent's immediately if there is any change to their circumstances (e.g. temporary or permanent withdrawal, leave of absence or extension). This is important in order to assess the impact on SAP and any impact on the Return of Title IV Funds.

Any Regent's student with Title IV funding is strongly advised to contact the University US Loans Administrator for advice before considering withdrawal as some of the loans funds received by the student may have to be immediately repaid to the US Department of Education. Failure to immediately repay this money is a Federal Offence.

5.7 Appeals

Students who have received notice in writing from Regent's that their Title IV funding has been terminated can appeal within 30 days of receiving the written notification where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. Students will be required to indicate why they believe their Title IV funding should not be terminated and provide reasons for failing to meet the SAP requirements. Students will also be required to supply documentary evidence in support of their appeal.

The definition of 'extenuating circumstances' is not exhaustive and may include:

- Illness with certified evidence.
- Death or serious illness of a close member of the family/partner/friend.
- Any other circumstance deemed to be reasonable by the University e.g. force majeure.

A SAP Appeals Panel will be convened to consider Title IV funding appeals. The decision of the SAP appeals panel will be communicated to the student in writing; however, disbursement of US loans funding will not be made while an appeal is under review. Where a student successfully appeals their SAP, their Title IV funding will be reinstated for the entire period of enrolment in which they were determined to be meeting the SAP requirement.

6. Monitoring of the policy

Monitoring of this policy is conducted throughout the year as part of Regent's normal business processes.

7. Review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure compliance with the U.S. Department of Education Code of Federal Regulations and Regent's Academic Regulations. The review will be carried out by the Registry and any updates will be reviewed by Quality Committee and ratified by Academic Committee.