

SECRETARIAT

ACADEMIC POLICY SUMMARY SHEET

NAME OF ACADEMIC POLICY:	Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy
PURPOSE OF POLICY AND WHOM IT APPLIES TO:	<p>The policy aims to provide guidance to students in receipt of Federal Student Aid and staff in relation to Satisfactory Academic Progress.</p> <p>The policy applies to students in receipt of Federal Student Aid and staff responsible for assessing Satisfactory Academic Progress.</p>
RESPONSIBLE BOARD/ COMMITTEE WITH ROUTE OF APPROVAL:	Education & Student Life Committee
LEAD STAFF MEMBER RESPONSIBLE FOR ITS UPDATE:	Head of Student Support
PERSONS CONSULTED IN DEVELOPING POLICY:	Members of Student Support
POLICY FINALLY APPROVED BY:	Academic Board
DATE OF ORIGINAL IMPLEMENTATION:	November 2019 and revised periodically
DETAIL OF DISSEMINATION:	The policy was circulated to relevant staff in November 2019 and is available on the Secretariat's portal site.
PROPOSED DATE OF REVIEW	April 2020 and every three years thereafter
SECRETARIAT OFFICER – MAIN CONTACT:	Officer to Education & Student Life Committee
DATE OF LAST REVIEW:	December 2023



Satisfactory Academic Progress Policy

1. Introduction and Scope

This Policy applies to students who are recipients of Federal Student Aid (FSA). The United States Department of Education requires the University of Lincoln to assess students' progress to ensure that they are meeting the requirements for receipt of FSA. If students do not meet the requirements of Satisfactory Academic Progress then they may not be eligible to receive further loans.

Satisfactory Academic Progress is used in the context of this policy for the purpose of determining whether a student continues to meet the requirements for receipt of FSA. For this purpose of this policy, Satisfactory Academic Progress is measured in terms of Quantitative (Pace) and Qualitative (Grade) requirements as set out below.

2. Requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students in receipt of FSA should note that the requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress may be stricter than the University's requirements for a student enrolled in the same programme who is not receiving FSA.

2.1 Quantitative (Pace) Requirements

Students in receipt of FSA must be enrolled at the University and in attendance in accordance with the University's Student Participation Policy ([University Academic & Student Policies – Governance and Compliance \(lincoln.ac.uk\)](http://lincoln.ac.uk)).

The maximum duration of study within which an undergraduate or postgraduate taught student in receipt of FSA must complete their programme is 150% of the published length of the programme. Undergraduate and postgraduate taught students who are in receipt of FSA must also maintain a minimum completion rate to ensure that they graduate within the maximum duration of study length as above. Undergraduate and postgraduate students in receipt of FSA must therefore maintain a completion rate of a minimum of 67% of their credits attempted in each year.

For postgraduate research students in receipt of FSA, the maximum duration of study must not exceed 150% of the normal length of the programme. All deadlines associated with the student's programme progression and any written deadlines agreed with or set by their supervisor, must be met. A student's supervisor will be asked to agree that their research and progress is satisfactory and that they are meeting the required programme deadlines and any deadlines agreed or set by them.

2.2 Qualitative (Grade) Requirements

Students are required to achieve the minimum standards as required by their programme and/or supervisor throughout their course of study at the University of Lincoln, including being of the academic standing required for graduation, in order to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. Students must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0, which is equivalent to a C grade.

For undergraduate students this will equate to the general pass standard as set out in section A.5.3 of the University's Undergraduate Regulations (subject to any variations which apply to the student's particular programme of study).

For taught postgraduate students this will equate to progression standards set out in section A.5.3 of the University's Taught Postgraduate Regulations Section A.5.3 (subject to any variations which apply to the student's particular programme of study).

For postgraduate research students this will equate to the progression standards set out in section 6 of the University's Research Degrees Regulations.

The most recent versions of the above regulations can be accessed via:

<https://secretariat.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/university-regulations/>

3. Other Circumstances Impacting Satisfactory Academic Progress

3.1 Interrupted Study

Periods of interrupted study, including maternity/paternity/adoption leave, are not included in the calculation of Quantitative (Pace) Requirements.

3.2 Study at Other Institutions and Credit Transfers

Any previous attempted or completed period of study taken at another institution for the same programme will be included within the calculation of Quantitative (Pace) Requirements.

Any attempted or completed credits transferred from other credit sources will count towards the calculation of Quantitative (Pace) Requirements. However, these will not be included in calculation towards Qualitative (Grade) Requirements.

3.3 Repeat Years or Reassessment

Where students are either resubmitting assessments or resitting exams but they are not in attendance at the University, then these students are not eligible to receive FSA.

If students are required to repeat their year of study and are in attendance at the University for at least half of the year, then these students are eligible to receive FSA subject to meeting Quantitative (Pace) and Qualitative (Grade) Requirements and any Financial Aid Warning requirements as detailed in section 4.

3.4 Incomplete Grades

Where students do not submit assessments or attend examinations they may have their FSA withdrawn as they may no longer meet the Quantitative (Pace) and Qualitative (Grade) Requirements necessary for receipt of FSA.

3.5 Decisions of College Boards of Examiners

Where College Boards of Examiners determine that a student is not permitted to progress to the next stage/level/year of their programme of study, then no further FSA is to be paid.

4. Assessing Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress will be assessed via the following mechanism(s):

4.1 Undergraduate Students

Following the University's June and August Exam Boards, the Student Funding Team in Student Support and colleagues from Academic Registry will assess each undergraduate student's Satisfactory Academic Progress and establish whether the student has met the Quantitative (Pace) and Qualitative (Grade) requirements as set out in this policy. A record of the assessment confirming whether the requirements of Satisfactory Academic Progress have been met will be held by the Student Funding Team.

If students do not meet the requirements of Satisfactory Academic Progress then their FSA is suspended. The student will be notified of this suspension of FSA by email and will be informed that they are permitted to appeal this decision. Undergraduate students are not placed on Financial Aid Warning status.

4.2 Postgraduate Taught and Postgraduate Research Students

Postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students will have their Satisfactory Academic Progress evaluated at the end of the termly payment period and prior to subsequent disbursement.

Prior to this assessment at the end of Semester A and Semester B, academic staff will be asked to provide a report concerning a student's Satisfactory Academic Progress before the second and third disbursements can be made to students. Students are responsible for ensuring that their Satisfactory Academic Progress Termly Progress Report Form is completed and signed by their Personal Tutor, Supervisor, or Programme Lead, and returned to the Student Funding Team in the Student Support Centre at these assessment points.

The Student Funding Team in Student Support and colleagues from Academic Registry will assess assessment results available to date and the reports submitted by the student's Personal Tutor, Programme Lead or Supervisor, to assess whether the student remains on target to meet the Quantitative (Pace) and Qualitative (Grade) requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress as set out above. Postgraduate Research students are also subject to a separate Annual Monitoring Report process to ensure satisfactory progression with their studies. Where a Postgraduate Research student's Satisfactory Academic Progress assessment takes place, the Student Funding Team in Student Support and colleagues from Academic Registry will also consider the Postgraduate Research student's most recent Annual Monitoring Report outcome(s).

A record of the assessment confirming whether the requirements of Satisfactory Academic Progress have been met by a postgraduate taught or postgraduate research student will be held by the Student Funding Team. The requirements of Satisfactory Academic Progress will have been deemed as met if the student's current progress will allow them to complete their credential within 150% of the published timeframe of that credential.

Postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students who do not meet the requirements for Satisfactory Academic Progress will be placed on Financial Aid Warning status for the next payment period. A student can still receive their next disbursement whilst on Financial Aid Warning status. If the student fails to regain Satisfactory Academic Progress by the end of this period and before the subsequent disbursement is due to be issued, their FSA is then suspended. The student will be notified of this suspension of FSA by email and will be informed that they are permitted to appeal this decision.

5. Appeal Process

A student who's FSA has been suspended can make an appeal against this decision. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Head of Student Support (or nominee) via usloans@lincoln.ac.uk within 10 working days of the student being notified of the suspension of their FSA.

An appeal must be made in writing to the Head of Student Support and must include:

- i. Clear indication of the circumstances upon which the appeal is based
- ii. Documentary evidence relevant to support the circumstances stated in the appeal
- iii. An explanation of how the student will ensure that they will make Satisfactory Academic Progress in future, including a written academic plan

Circumstances upon which an appeal may be based include:

- i. Illness affecting attendance at teaching or assessment
- ii. Illness affecting preparation for or of an assessment
- iii. Being the victim of a crime involving injury
- iv. Circumstances of a serious personal or emotional nature
- v. Force majeure or other unpreventable event

The student must provide all material and evidence that they wish to be considered in support of their appeal at the time that the appeal is made.

The Head of Student Support (or nominee) will review the appeal. The appeal should normally be completed within 10 working days. In considering the appeal, the Head of Student Support (or nominee) has the discretion to make enquiries of such persons (including the student, tutors, programme leaders, module co-ordinators and the visa compliance team) as they deem necessary.

The Head of Student Support (or nominee) will consider whether the student should be able to meet

the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirement by the end of the subsequent payment period and whether the student would need to fulfil certain actions before the end of this period to ensure Satisfactory Academic Progress is attainable.

The Head of Student Support (or nominee) will determine whether the appeal is successful or unsuccessful and confirm their decision in writing to the student.

If the appeal is successful, the student will be placed on Financial Aid Probation status and will receive Federal Student Aid for one further payment period. At the end of that period, the student must demonstrate that they have met the Satisfactory Academic Progress requirements or FSA to that student will be suspended. The University may require a student to fulfil certain actions during the Financial Aid Probation period in order that the University can determine that the student has resumed Satisfactory Academic Progress prior to the next disbursement of FSA.

This appeal process is separate to any academic appeal process in place at the University of Lincoln.